

ENGLISH 3304: CHAUCER

John McNamara

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The course will focus on the major narratives in *The Canterbury Tales*, situating Chaucer and his works in their social-historical context. As such, we will study how the late medieval context shaped his works, while at the same time recognizing how they forecast many of the features of the early modern culture that was beginning to emerge in 14th-century England. Under the guidance of the instructor, students will learn to read the tales in their original Middle English, and class discussions will involve close reading of the texts as products of both literate and oral culture.

There will be three tests in the semester: a quiz on the *General Prologue*, a mid-term test, and a final examination. In addition, there will be a term paper involving some outside research while focusing in detail on one of Chaucer's texts.