



COURSE DESCRIPTION

## 2016 Winter Session (2016-2017 Academic Year)

ENGL 346B-002: Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*: A World of Words and a Sea of Stories - Stephen Partridge

### Chaucer and the Middle Ages

Term 1

**MWF, 11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.**

With the help of a reader-friendly edition and a series of structured but gentle lessons, you will acquire facility in reading Chaucer's Middle English. More importantly, you will learn how Chaucer makes use of his language's power in assembling a series of narratives ostensibly told by the diverse company of pilgrims he met on the way to Canterbury. The pilgrims' tales create a conversation about many themes, including class, love, sex and gender, work, language, the nature of narrative itself, and the pleasures and travails of studenthood, and our class meetings will reflect the collection's spirit with regular sessions of open discussion. We will consider the linguistic and literary innovations that led readers to consider Chaucer the "father of English poetry" together with the sense of humour – by turns satirical, bawdy, and self-deprecating – that makes reading his poetry a constant joy.