

GERMAN 411  
MWF 9:30am - 10:20am  
Prof. Annegret Oehme  
Office hours: <https://oehme.youcanbook.me>

Autumn 2017  
CDH 105  
[oehme@uw.edu](mailto:oehme@uw.edu)  
Denny 330

## **Studies in Medieval Literature and Culture: The Art of Love in Medieval German Literature**

### Course Description

A damsel in distress saved by an adoring knight – this common image of the medieval times only offers a very small insight into the rich literature of the Middle Ages and its concepts of love. This class introduces students to central medieval concepts with a specific focus on love in courtly and religious literature. The course explores these concepts of love by examining Gottfried von Staßburg's *Tristan*, Medieval Courtly Love Poems, Mechthild von Magdeburg's *Das Fließende Licht der Gottheit* and Martin Luther's *Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen*. The readings in this class serve as case studies to discuss the human need to bond with others and God, physically and spiritually, by the means of love. Students will have direct access to medieval material and, in the process, both learn how to access pre-modern narratives and understand the importance of materiality and performance for medieval literature. Over the course of the quarter, students work in teams on three major creative projects: writing a modern love poem, drafting a continuation of *Tristan*, and creating a conversation between Mechthild von Magdeburg and Martin Luther within a social media platform. Students taking the course for ad hoc honors credits will be invited to design posters on different aspects of Luther's concept of love as well. At the end of the quarter, students will present these projects to the public and all of the projects will be presented on our departmental website and social media. A jury composed of three faculty members will evaluate the projects and award the prizes in the context of a public presentation and reception at the end of the quarter.

### Learning Goals

By the end of the quarter you will have encountered different discourses on love in medieval German literature and, in the process, will have gained a better understanding of medieval literature, language, and culture and learned how to access pre-modern narratives. These overall objectives encompass many particular goals as well. As a result of this class, you should be able to read and analyze texts from various epochs closely and work in teams, apply questions that have occupied human thought to a variety of cultural contexts and approaches thus translating your knowledge through group work and individual research. Over the course of the quarter you will expand your knowledge of the Middle Ages and literature as well as deepen your German. As we will explore various materials from medieval songs to early modern pamphlets, you will become versed about the importance of materiality and form in literature and experiment with these forms by yourself.

### Course Material

**Course Reader:** Rams Copy Center, 4144 University Way

### **On Canvas**

- Spreckelsen, Tilman. "Das ist kein Liebeslied." (Frankfurter Allgemeine, 05/22/2015).
- Die Deutschen – Luther und die Nation

**Media available via streaming:** *Tristan & Isolde* (2006)

This film is available through our streaming page. Here are instructions for first-time use:

1. Log into MyUW
2. Under "Quick Links" on MyFrontPage, click on "IT Connect"
3. Under the tab called "Software & Hardware," click on "Acquiring Software & Hardware"
4. Scroll down the next page. Under "Collaboration Tools," click on "UW Google Apps"

5. Scroll down the next page, and follow the steps in “Start Using Google Apps.”

6. After you’ve activated UW Google Apps, click on the following link:

<https://sites.google.com/a/uw.edu/filmgerm/>

Once you’ve completed all these steps, you’ll be able to access the page in the future by simply clicking on the above link and logging into your UWNetID.

### Requirements and Grading

In addition to reading and preparing all materials before class, you are expected to:

- participate in class discussions and group activities
- complete all the assignments described below

Your course grade will be calculated in the following way:

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|--|------|
| • Modern <i>Minnesang</i> poem                                     | 30 % |
| • Tristan Continuation   | 25 % |
| • Luther and Mechthild v. Magdeburg Dialogue                       | 25 % |
| • Participation (attendance, oral participation, group work, etc.) | 20 % |

All assignments to be completed in German.

Because each assignment builds upon the previous one, *no late work will be accepted*.

### Participation and Class Room Environment

The success of this class depends on you sharing your thoughts and questions with me and your classmates. Don’t be shy and share your insights with all – our classroom serves as a space to discuss and learn together. To ensure success and provide a safe environment for everybody, all discussions are expected to be conducted in a respectful manner and in a professional behavior. Diverse experiences and perspectives have an important place in our classroom. We intent to present material in a respectful way regarding gender, sexuality, disability, socioeconomic status, age, culture, ethnicity, race, and disability. Let’s create a welcoming and respectful learning environment together. By participating in this class you are committing to establishing this classroom as a safe environment for everybody. No discriminatory and disrespectful behavior will be tolerated.

### Accommodations

UW is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with UW, you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires accommodation, please notify us within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements early in the semester. (Additionally, if you have not done so, please register with DRS <http://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs>)

### Communication and Office Hours

- I will try to respond to your messages within 24 hours of receipt between Monday and Friday.
- We will use Canvas. Please set your notifications on your account accordingly to get notified about important messages!
- If you message me a question that might concern the whole class, I will post it on Canvas.
- Sign up for office hours with me with the reason for your visit here: <https://oehme.youcanbook.me..>  
This allows me to serve you best.

### Readings and Homework

Always bring your text (printed) to class. Please prepare readings by reading them actively (make notes, summaries, marks on the paper).

### Assignments

- Modern *Minnesang* poem: Working in a small group, you will write your own modern *Minnesong*. This project will help you comprehend the consequences and choices of medieval poets and the

similarities / differences compared with our modern lives. The projects will be submitted on Canvas and presented to peers in class.

- Tristan Continuation: Working in a small group, you will write your own continuation of Tristan. This project will help you reflect on what mattered to a medieval audience and what matters to a modern audience. The project is accompanied by a short written reflection. The projects will be submitted on Canvas and presented to peers in class.
- Luther & Mechthild v. Magdeburg Dialogue: Working in a small group, you will create an imaginary interaction between Mechthild von Magdeburg and Luther within the framework of a social media platform of their choice. This project will help you comprehend the consequences and choices of textualization and reflect on the changes in how God was perceived. The projects will be submitted on Canvas and presented to peers in class.

### Academic Integrity

In a case of plagiarism or cheating, the instructor will follow UW's procedures and report the case.

### Schedule

Wed, Sept 27:	<b>Introduction</b>
Fri, Sept 29:	<b>Welcome to the Middle Ages!</b> Read: The Middle Ages/ Medieval Society (Reader, 1-11) Homework: Read the Syllabus!
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Mon, Oct 2:	<b>Introduction Minnesang</b> Read: Das ist kein Liebeslied (Canvas)
Wed, Oct 4:	<b>Minnesang</b> Read: Frühphase des Minnesangs (Reader, 12-13)
Fri, Oct 6:	<b>Minnesang</b> Read: Dienstminne – Hohe Minne – Entsagungsminne (Reader, 13-19)
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Mon, Oct 9:	<b>Excursion to UW Libraries' Special Collections</b>
Wed, Oct 11:	<b>Minnesang</b> Read: Minnesang und Handschriften (Reader, 20-21)
Fri, Oct 13:	<b>Minnesang</b> Read: Alternative Konzepte – Erfüllungsminne (Reader, 21-23)
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Mon, Oct 16:	<b>Minnesang</b> Read: Tagelied (Reader, 23-25)
Wed, Oct 18:	<b>Minnesang</b> Read: Fiktionalität und Aufführungspraxis (Reader, 25-28)
Fri, Oct 20:	<b>Minnesang: Project Preparation</b>
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Mon, Oct 23:	<b>Minnesang: Project Presentations</b>
Wed, Oct 25:	<b>Tristan</b> Read: Tristan und Isolde (Reader, 29-33), Der "Tristan" (Reader, 35-40)
Fri, Oct 27:	<b>Tristan</b> Read: Tristan und Isolde (Reader, 41-45)
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Mon, Oct 30:	<b>Tristan</b>

	Read: Tristan und Isolde (Reader, 46-51)
Wed, Nov 01:	<b>Tristan</b> Read: Tristan und Isolde (Reader, 52-58)
Fri, Nov 03:	<b>Tristan</b> Read: Tristan und Isolde (Reader, 59-63, Reader, 64-71)
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Mon, Nov 06:	<b>Tristan</b> Read: Tristan und Isolde (Reader, 72-76 / or 77-82)
Wed, Nov 08:	<b>Tristan: Project Presentations</b>
<del>Fri, Nov 10:</del>	<del>[Veterans Day]</del>
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Mon, Nov 13:	<b>Online Movie Forum</b> Watch: Tristan & Isolde (2006)
Wed, Nov 15:	<b>Mystik</b> Read: Das Hohelied (Reader, 83-92)
Fri, Nov 17:	<b>Mystik</b> Read: Monastic Life (Reader: 93-113), Das Fließende Licht der Gottheit (Reader: 114-118)
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Mon, Nov 20:	<b>Mystik</b> Read: Das Fließende Licht der Gottheit (Reader: 119-125)
Wed, Nov 22:	<b>Mystik</b> Read: Das Fließende Licht der Gottheit (Reader: 126-131)
<del>Fri, Nov 24:</del>	<del>[Thanksgiving]</del>
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Mon, Nov 27:	<b>Ausblick: Luther und das Ende des Mittelalters</b> Watch: Die Deutschen Read: Die Deutschen (Reader: 132-137)
Wed, Nov 29:	<b>Ausblick: Luther und das Ende des Mittelalters</b> Read: Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen (Reader: 141-142) Read: Die Lieder Martin Luthers (Reader: 138-140)
Fri, Dec 01:	<b>Ausblick: Luther und das Ende des Mittelalters</b>
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Mon, Dec 04:	<b>Ausblick: Luther und das Ende des Mittelalters</b>
Wed, Dec 06:	<b>Mechthild &amp; Luther: Project Presentations</b>
Fri, Dec 08:	<b>Competition: Project Presentations</b>

**A note about respectfulness**

Please arrive on time for class. If you fear that you will be consistently late, due to your preceding class's distance from ours, let me know this as soon as possible.

Please don't call me by my first name; use Dr. or Prof. Oehme.

Finally, it is really rude to text and email in class or check social media, and it's distracting to the people around you. Please don't.

**Disclaimer**

“A class is a process, an independent organism with its own goals and dynamics. It is always something more than even the most imaginative lesson plan can predict.” (Thomas P. Kasulis)

Your learning is our principal concern. As a class we may discover that we want to spend more time on certain topics and less time on others. I will consider changing the schedule if such a change would benefit most students’ learning in the course. Therefore, this syllabus is subject to change.