

Exam Preparation

The exam runs 90 minutes and takes place **Tuesday 9 February in Theologicum 0.135, 08:15–09:45.**

Structure and Specification

1. Lecture material (33% of your mark — count 30 minutes)
2. Seminar material (67% of your mark — count 60 minutes)

The lecture part of the exam will require you to answer four out of twelve questions provided concerning the Thursday lectures and lecture readings in one or two short paragraphs each.

The seminar part of the exam will require you to write one or two essays on the Old English literature and the philosophical tradition studied this term. (You may or may not receive a choice of questions.)

Preparation

As this is a graduate course, the seminar part of the exam will be more about applying knowledge in essay form and less about reproducing isolated facts from memory. You will still have to memorize concepts, but you will be asked to explain their use by historical thinkers and poets rather than define them out of context, and you will be expected to integrate a variety of acquired information into a single answer taking the form of an expository essay. This means you will have to show considerable scholarly independence, as you will be asked to answer only one or two questions, yet to achieve a top score you will have to bring in a variety of concepts and schools of thought that may not be specifically referenced in the question. Indeed, the greater the number of concepts and schools of thoughts you can *credibly* make relevant to the question and discuss competently, the higher your score.

Since your answers will take the form of short essays, you would do well to apply your training in outlining: there will be no time to write a full draft followed by a final answer, but you can jot down a quick outline of your logical structure before starting on your answer.

To prepare for all this,

1. Make sure you are familiar with the key concepts and slides (at studium.langeslag.org/fate15);
2. Study the historical theoretical positions we have discussed, including the relevant philosophical and theological positions from Greek Antiquity to Boethius and his Anglo-Saxon interpreter;
3. Be able to explain all the main points in *The Consolation of Philosophy*, as well as the most important divergences in the Old English translation as read for homework and/or discussed in class;

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4. Ensure you have a ready understanding of the application of the following themes in each of the Old English and Old Norse texts discussed:
 - Free will and determinism
 - Fate and providence
 - Grace
 - Transience
 - Religion
 - Heroism
 - Seafaring imagery
 5. For the Old English passages **actually translated in class** (e.g. ll. 1–5 of *Metre 9*, and 46–74 of *Metre 20*), come prepared to understand and discuss them with little or no glossing (exam questions may include quotations);
 6. Wherever we have discussed Old English terminology (e.g. *wyrd*, *metod*, *foreþonc*, *gesceadwisnes*), come prepared to reflect such discussion into your answer;
 7. Wherever possible, be able to bring the poetry and the philosophy into a coherent, unified discussion.

Once you have studied these various elements, the single best way to prepare is to write several short essays, informed by all your readings and our class discussions, on each of the major topics we have discussed with reference to Boethius, Augustine, and Greek philosophy: the possibility of free will, the existence of evil, the tension between providence and free will, etc., and bring Old English literature into your discussion wherever possible. Then when the exam comes, you will be able to draw on your prepared expositions.

It'll be fine. Be excellent!