

The Tales of Boccaccio and Chaucer

A study of selected stories from *The Canterbury Tales* and *The Decameron*.

The seminar will explore the art of Chaucer and Boccaccio through the study of several tales by each.

Moderator:	Henry Barton
Date and Time:	Wednesday 10:00 AM - Noon 10 weeks, starting February 21, 2018
Format:	Seminar
Location:	Smith College, Lily Hall 308, Northampton

Description: Bawdy, pious, realistic, fantastic--the tales of Chaucer and Boccaccio still speak to us more than six centuries after their composition. We will read representative tales by each author, some of which have common sources, and explore what these tales have to say to us. Where appropriate specific tales by each author will be compared. We will also consider the relationship of the frame narratives--the pilgrimage to Canterbury and the retreat from the plague in the countryside--to the tales. Finally, we will consider whether these tales still meet the classical standard for art: do they give us *dulce* and *utile* -- sweetness of pleasure and usefulness of knowledge?

Role of participants: The moderator will select several tales by each author. Each participant will select a tale and prepare a presentation about its possible sources and lead a discussion with focus on the tale's meaning and relevance to our lives today.

Resources: Participants will need copies of the full texts of *The Canterbury Tales* in verse translation and the full text of *The Decameron* in prose translation. The moderator will suggest several translations of each work, which are widely available in paperback.

About the Moderator: The moderator has taught literature including works by Chaucer and Boccaccio in translation on the college level. He has been a participant in three LIR seminars.

Maximum number of participants: 16

Emeriti accepted: yes

Course # 18SBC