

University of Wisconsin – Madison  
Department of History  
Spring Semester, 2013-2014

History 115: Medieval Europe 410-1500

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 01:00-02:15  
Mosse Humanities 1131



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Office: Mosse Humanities 4114  
Office hours:  
02:30-3:30 Tuesdays  
02:30-3:20 Thursdays

TA: Alexander Olson

#### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is about the Middle Ages, the thousand years “in the middle” between Antiquity and the early modern period. The course will concentrate primarily on Western Europe, but we will take several excursions further afield from North America to the Arabian Peninsula.

#### READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Please bring all of the primary or secondary sources assigned for that week (with the exception of the textbook) to your discussion sections. When it comes to sources available on-line, you can bring them to sections in either paper or electronic format.

The following primary sources are available at the University of Wisconsin bookstore and on reserve at the College Library (Helen C. White Hall, 600 North Park Street). If you wish, you

can use different editions as long as you are aware of and accept the inconveniences this might cause you.

- St. Augustine, *Confessions* (Penguin Classics)
- *RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in English* (Liturgical Press)
- Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* (Penguin Classics)
- Abelard & Heloise, *The Letters and Other Writings* (Hackett Publications)
- Christine de Pizan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* (Penguin Classics)
- *Poems of Arab Andalousia* (City Lights Publisher)
- Chretien de Troy, *Lancelot: The Knight of the Cart* (Yale University Press)

Other primary sources assigned for the class are available via various sites identified in the syllabus.

All of the secondary sources (= articles) assigned for the class (see Week 3 and Week 8) are available electronically via Memorial Library Catalogue. Locating and downloading these articles independently is an important part of the assignment. If you have trouble doing so, please ask your friendly librarian for help.

#### THE TEXTBOOK:

The textbook, Backman, *The Worlds of Medieval Europe*, is available at the University Book Store and on reserve at the College Library. The purpose of the textbook is to complement the lectures. Although you are responsible for the information that it contains for the midterm and the final exam, it will not be an object of discussion in sections.

#### GRADING:

Short papers:	7% each, 49% total
Midterm:	11%
Final:	25%
Participation:	15%

#### SHORT PAPERS:

You have to write seven short responses to questions based on the assigned readings. Each response should be about 1000 words. There are fourteen questions in total, which means that you have to reply to only half of them. It is entirely up to you to choose the questions that you want to answer. The papers are due in sections where the assigned readings are to be discussed. No later papers will be accepted. No electronic submissions will be accepted. You cannot write an extra paper to compensate for a poor grade. You do not have to do any outside research for any of the short responses. While grading, we will be asking the following questions:

- (a) Are spelling and grammar adequate?

- (b) Are there both an introduction and a conclusion?
- (c) Is the essay well-structured? Does each paragraph develop one theme / idea? Are there effective transitions between paragraphs?
- (d) Are there two brief (sentence-length) quotations from the assigned text(s)?
- (e) Are these quotations well integrated into the essay? Are they relevant? Do they come from different parts of the assigned text(s)?
- (f) Does the essay reflect a careful reading of the assigned text(s) or does it discuss the topic very generally?
- (g) Does the essay answer the question asked?

When quoting the assigned text(s) or referring to specific passages, you should identify the page numbers either in parenthesis or in a footnote. Please do not forget to do the readings, even if you are not writing a response (otherwise, you will not get a good grade for participation AND will have a lot of catching up to do before the final exam!).

#### THE MIDTERM:

The midterm will be a take-home. The penalty for late midterms will be 10% per day beginning with the day when it is due. The midterm will contain the following assignments:

- [1] Quotations (you will have to identify the author, the title and the approximate date of the primary source, from which a quotation is drawn. You will then have to place the quotation in historical context and discuss its significance).
- [2] Essay(s)

#### THE FINAL EXAM

The final exam will contain a combination of the following assignments:

- [1] Blank map (you will have to match a list of geographical / political entities with numbers on a blank map).
- [2] IDs.
- [3] Quotations.
- [4] Essay(s).

On both the midterm and the final, there might be a possibility to gain extra-credit points for answering a question about one or more images shown during lecture. There will be a study sheet to help you prepare for the final exam.

#### TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM:

As a courtesy to your fellow students, I ask that you turn off all devices that access the internet during lectures.

#### WRITING CENTER:

The Writing Center is a very useful resource if you want help with your papers. Information about the Center can be found here:

<http://www.writing.wisc.edu/>

You can also contact the History Department's Research & Writing Specialist TA, David Rodriguez: [dmrodriguez@wisc.edu](mailto:dmrodriguez@wisc.edu)

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

The University of Wisconsin considers academic honesty to be a very serious issue. I will always enforce the university policies on academic honesty. I suggest that you read carefully the following website dealing with the rules about plagiarism:  
[http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA\\_plagiarism.html](http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html)

If you have questions about plagiarism, please contact me or your TA. Further information about student codes of conduct is found here:

<http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html#points>

## DISABILITY

Disability guidelines for course accommodations are found at the UW McBurney Disability Resource Center site: <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu>

## SCHEDULE

### WEEK 1

January 21 (T): **The Roman Empire.**

January 23 (R): **The Rise of Christianity.**

### WEEK 2: **Barbarian Conquest and Successor States.**

January 28 (T)

January 30 (R)

Short paper. Answer one of the following questions.

[1] Why did Augustine consider it worthwhile to write about such apparently minute episodes of his life as stealing some pears from a garden as an adolescent?

[2] Why did Augustine choose to convert to Christianity and what alternatives did he consider?

Reading Assignment: St. Augustine, *Confessions*, Books 1-8 (pages 21-179).

Textbook: Chapter 1 (“The Roman World at its Height”) and Chapter 2 (“The Rise of Christianity”).

### WEEK 3: **The Early Church.**

February 4 (T) and February 6 (R)

Short paper:

IF YOUR LAST NAME BEGINS WITH LETTERS A-L: Evaluate Walter Goffart’s argument that Rome has conquered the barbarians.

IF YOUR LAST NAME BEGINS WITH LETTERS M-Z: According to Peter Heather, what events led to the Fall of Rome?

Reading Assignment:

IF YOUR LAST NAME BEGINS WITH LETTERS A-L: Walter Goffart, “Rome’s Final Conquest: The Barbarians,” *History Compass* 6:3 (2008) 855–883.

IF YOUR LAST NAME BEGINS WITH LETTERS M-Z: Peter Heather, "The Huns and the End of the Roman Empire in Western Europe," *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 110, No. 435 (Feb., 1995), 4-41.

Textbook: Chapter 3 ("Early Germanic Society")

**WEEK 4: Byzantium.**

February 11 (T) and February 13 (R)

Short Paper: Why did men and women choose to become monks and nuns?

Reading Assignment: *RB 1980: The Rule of St. Benedict in English* (entire).

Textbook: Chapter 4 ("Cloister and Culture")

**WEEK 5: Islam.**

February 18 (T) and February 20 (R)

Short paper: According to Procopius, what was Justinian like as an Emperor?

Reading Assignment:

[I] Procopius, *The Wars of Justinian*

"The Reconquest of Africa" (<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/procop-wars4-9.asp> )

"The Nika Revolt" (<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/procop-wars1.asp> )

"Hagia Sophia" (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/procop-deaed1.asp>)

[II] Procopius, *Secret History*

"Portrait of Justinian" ( <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/proc/shp/shp11.htm> )

"Marriage to Theodora" ( <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/proc/shp/shp13.htm> )

"Profligacy" ( <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/proc/shp/shp22.htm> )

Textbook: Chapter 5 ("The Emergence of the Medieval Worlds")

**WEEK 6 The Carolingian Renaissance.**

Sections: mid-term due in the beginning of sections.

February 25 (T)

February 27 (R): NO CLASS (I will be attending the International Symposium on Crusade Studies in St. Louis. In compensation, the mid-term will be a take-home instead of an in-class.)

Reading Assignment: *Poems of Arab Andalusia* (pages TBA)

**WEEK 7: The Vikings.**

March 4 (T) and March 6 (R)

Short paper: According to Einhard, what made Charlemagne a good ruler?

Reading Assignment: Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, 15-44.

Textbook: Chapter 6 ("The Carolingian Era")

**WEEK 8: The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century.**

March 11 (T) and March 13 (R)

Short paper: According to the article that you have read, why did the Viking settlement in Greenland fail?

Reading Assignment:

Thomas H. McGovern, Andrew J. Dugmore and Christian Keller, "Norse Greenland Settlement: Reflections on Climate Change, Trade, and the Contrasting Fates of Human Settlements in the North Atlantic Islands," *Arctic Anthropology*, 44:1 (January 1, 2007): 12-36 [skip the section "Misleading Memores," 25-29].  
Textbook: Chapter 7 ("The Time of Troubles")

**WEEK 9: SPRING BREAK**

March 18 (T) and March 20 (R)

**WEEK 10: The Crusades.**

March 25 (T) and March 27 (R)

Short paper. Answer one of the following questions.

[1] To what extent was Heloise an equal partner in her relationship with Abelard?

[2] Why did Abelard suffer from persecutions throughout his life?

Reading Assignment: Abelard & Heloise, *The Letters and Other Writings* (Abelard, *The Calamities of Peter Abelard*, pages 1-46 and First Letter, Heloise to Abelard, pages 49-62).

Textbook: Chapter 10 ("The Reform of the Church") and Chapter 11 ("The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century")

**WEEK 11: Medieval Castles and Siege Warfare.**

March 18 (T) and March 20 (R)

Short paper. To what extent, according to its contemporaries, the First Crusade was an instance of holy war?

Reading Assignment:

The Siege and Capture of Antioch. Collected Accounts (<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/cde-antioch.asp>)

**WEEK 12: Chivalry.**

April 1 (T) and April 3 (R).

Short paper. "Crusader castles are the most evident expression of a cultural dialogue between east and west." Evaluate this statement.

Reading Assignment: Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (Cambridge 2007) 203-257. [available via learn@UW].

**WEEK 13: Heretics and Friars.**

April 8 (T) and April 10 (R)

Short paper: According to Chretien de Troyes, what were the main characteristics of a perfect knight?

Reading Assignment: Chretien de Troyes, *Lancelot: The Knight of the Cart*, pages 1-125.

**WEEK 14: The Renaissance (I).**

April 15 (T) and April 17 (R)

Short paper.

Reading Assignment:

*The Inquisition Record of Jacques Fournier Bishop of Pamiers 1318-1325*, translated by Nancy Stork (San Jose State University, 2004).

[1] “Confession of Agnes Francou”

<http://web.archive.org/web/20071120005311/http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/english/Fournier/afrauco.htm>

[2] “Confession of Barthélemy Amilhac”

<http://web.archive.org/web/20071120005321/http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/english/Fournier/amilhac.htm>

[3] “Jacqueline den Carot of Ax”

<http://web.archive.org/web/20071120005326/http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/english/Fournier/den-carot.htm>

Textbook: Chapter 12 (“The Papal Monarchy”).

### WEEK 15: **The Renaissance (II).**

April 22 (T) and April 24 (R)

Short paper: How did Petrarch want himself to be remembered?

Reading Assignment:

Petrarch, “The Ascent of Mont Ventoux” (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/petrarch-ventoux.asp>)

Petrarch, “To Posterity” (<http://history.hanover.edu/texts/petrarch/pet01.html>)

Textbook: Chapter 17 (“The Crises of the Fourteenth Century”); Chapter 18 (“Signs of a New Era”); Chapter 20 (“The Renaissance in Medieval Context”)

### WEEK 16: **Looking Forward.**

April 29 (T): The East: the Fall of Byzantium.

May 1 (R): The West: the Hundred Years War.

Short paper. According to Christine de Pizan, what were the duties of a woman within her family and also within society at large?

Reading Assignment: Christine de Pizan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* [Part I, Chapters 9, 10, 13, 15, 19, 20; Part II, Chapters 9, 10, 11; Part II, Chapter 8]; Christine de Pizan, “The Song of Joan of Arc,” <http://www.indiana.edu/~dmdhist/joan.htm#christine> (XXV-XXXVI)

### WEEK 17: **Review.**

May 6 (T) and May 8 (R)

Short paper: What was the role of Joan of Arc in turning the tide of the Hundred Years War?

Reading Assignment:

[1] “Joan of Arc’s Letter to the English” and “Letter of Guy and André de Laval to their Mother” in *Joan of Arc, la Pucelle: selected sources*, translated and annotated by Craig Taylor (Manchester, New York, 2006) [available via learn@UW]

[2] “Relieving the Siege of Orléans” in Kelly DeVries, *Joan of Arc. A Military Leader* (Thrupp, 1999) 54-96 [available via learn@UW]

Recommended: Historians debate the siege of Orleans

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00713yq>

### Goals of the History Major

(approved by the department, March 23, 2011; revised by the department, February 27, 2013)

The goal of the history major is to offer students the knowledge and skills they need to gain a critical perspective on the past. Students will learn to define important historical questions, analyze relevant evidence with rigor and creativity, and present convincing arguments and conclusions based on original research in a manner that contributes to academic and public discussions. In History, as in other humanistic disciplines, students will practice resourceful inquiry and careful reading. They will advance their writing and public speaking skills to engage historical and contemporary issues.

To insure that students gain exposure to some of the great diversity of topics, methodologies, and philosophical concerns that inform the study of history, the department requires a combination of courses that offers breadth, depth, and variety of exposition. Through those courses, students should develop:

1. Broad acquaintance with several geographic areas of the world and with both the pre-modern and modern eras.
2. Familiarity with the range of sources and modes through which historical information can be found and expressed. Sources may include textual, oral, physical, and visual materials. The data within them may be qualitative or quantitative, and they may be available in printed, digital, or other formats. Modes of expression may include textbooks, monographs, scholarly articles, essays, literary works, or digital presentations.
3. In-depth understanding of a topic of their choice through original or creative research.
4. The ability to identify the skills developed in the history major and to articulate the applicability of those skills to a variety of endeavors and career paths beyond the professional practice of history.

### Skills Developed in the Major

#### *Define Important Historical Questions*

1. Pose a historical question and explain its academic and public implications.
2. Using appropriate research procedures and aids, find the secondary resources in history and other disciplines available to answer a historical question.
3. Evaluate the evidentiary and theoretical bases of pertinent historical conversations in order to highlight opportunities for further investigation.

#### *Collect and Analyze Evidence*

1. Identify the range and limitations of primary sources available to engage the historical problem under investigation.
2. Examine the context in which sources were created, search for chronological and other relationships among them, and assess the sources in light of that knowledge.
3. Employ and, if necessary, modify appropriate theoretical frameworks to examine sources and develop arguments.

#### *Present Original Conclusions*

1. Present original and coherent findings through clearly written, persuasive arguments and narratives.
2. Orally convey persuasive arguments, whether in formal presentations or informal discussions.
3. Use appropriate presentation formats and platforms to share information with academic and public audiences.

#### *Contribute to Ongoing Discussions*

1. Extend insights from research to analysis of other historical problems.
2. Demonstrate the relevance of a historical perspective to contemporary issues.
3. Recognize, challenge, and avoid false analogies, overgeneralizations, anachronisms, and other logical fallacies.