

University of Wisconsin – Madison
Department of History

Fall 2024

History 115: Medieval Europe 410-1500

HUMANITIES 1101

Tuesdays and Thursdays

8:00 – 9:15

in-person



Prof. Elizabeth Lapina
lapina@wisc.edu

TA: Kelly A. Kornell
kkornell@wisc.edu

Office: 4131 Mosse Humanities
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9:20 – 10:20

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

We will begin this class with a discussion of the rise of Christianity and the role of Christianity in forging the new medieval civilization. We will continue with the relations between Romans and barbarians and with the fall (or “fall”?) of Rome. We will then move on to major heirs of the Roman Empire, both in Western Europe and in the Middle East. After dealing with the Vikings – and, hopefully, dispelling a myth or two about them – we will move on to a major episode in the history of relations between Church and State, the Investiture Controversy. In the last few weeks of class, we will discuss what is known as the age of castles and cathedrals.

Some of the features of this period were the founding of first universities, the appearance of the new chivalric culture, the expansion of Latin Europe into the Middle East during the crusades, and the rise – and brutal suppression – of heresy.

This 4-credit course meets as a group for 4 hours per week (according to UW-Madison's credit hour policy, each lecture counts as 1.5 hours and each discussion counts as an hour). The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and/or studying for quizzes and exams for this course.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To acquire a broad understanding of the main developments of the medieval period, from the end of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the Renaissance
- To learn to engage critically with a wide variety of primary sources both orally and in writing

READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Please bring all of the primary sources assigned for that week 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). All reading should be done by Wednesday of the week when they are assigned. Please note that you have to use these specific editions.

- St. Augustine, *Confessions* (Norton Library)
- Gregory of Tours (Penguin Classics)
- Abelard & Heloise, *The Letters and Other Writings* (Hackett Publications)
- *The Last Duel* (film directed by Ridley Scott, 2021 → there is a copy of the DVD in the library, but you can also find a copy on your own on-line)

GRADING:

Final Exam (a take-home):	25%
At home short responses:	30%
In-class short responses:	25% (only 10/12 will count for your grade)
Participation in sections:	20%

SHORT RESPONSES (AT HOME)

- should be about two to three pages long (double-spaced)
- should have a brief introduction and a brief conclusion (one or two sentences should suffice most of the time)

- should be proof-read before submitting
- should demonstrate an engagement with the primary source
- should include the specified number of quotations from the primary source (with page numbers in parenthesis) – failure to include the specified number quotations will result automatically in an “F” / “0/100”

SHORT RESPONSES (IN CLASS)

Short responses will consist of a single question based on a text that I will make available to the class. There will be no opportunity to make-up short responses. However, only 10 / 12 short responses will count for your grade (this means that you can miss two short responses and still get 100% on this portion of your grade).

FINAL EXAM:

The final exam will consist of

- (1) quotations from primary sources that you will have to identify and discuss
- (2) short essays

HONORS

Students taking the class for Honors credit need to contact the instructor ASAP.

TECHNOLOGY IN THE CLASSROOM:

As a courtesy to your fellow students, I ask that you not to go on the internet during lectures.

HISTORY LAB and WRITING CENTER:

The History Lab and Writing Center are both very useful resource if you want help with your papers. Information can be found here:

<https://history.wisc.edu/thehistorylab.htm>

<http://www.writing.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

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>

All work submitted in this course must be your own. Any outside contributions (including AI sources) must be properly quoted and cited every time they are used. Failure to do so constitutes an academic integrity violation.

DISABILITY AND LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES

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

In general, I take health and life circumstances, whatever they are, very seriously. If you begin to suspect that any such circumstances might prevent you from succeeding in the class, please, talk to the instructor and we will brainstorm a solution.

GRADING:

92-100% A
87-91.9% AB
82-86.9% B
77-81.9% BC
72-76.9% C
67-71.9% D
0-66.9% F

SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

September 5: Introduction to the Course

WEEK 2

September 10: Rise of Christianity

September 12: Rise of Christianity

Reading Assignment: Augustine, *Confessions*

p. 22: chapters 3.5 and 3.6

p. 23: 3.8

p. 24: 4.9

p. 25: 5.11 and 6.12

p. 27: 6.14

p. 28: 8.16 and 9.17

p. 30: 1.1

p. 33: 4.7

p. 44: 1.1

p. 45: 2.2

WEEK 3

September 17: Barbarian Conquests and the “Dark” Ages

September 19: Barbarian Conquests and the “Dark” Ages

Reading Assignment: Augustine, *Confessions* (selections)

p. 62: 3.3

p. 63: 3.4

p. 65: 5.9

p. 66: 6.10

p. 67: 6.11, 7.12
69: 8.14
p. 84: 6.9
p. 85: 6.10
p. 86: 7.11, 7.12
p. 87: 8.13
p. 93: 12.22
p. 94: 13.23
p. 95: 15.25
p. 118: 1.2 and 2.3
p. 119: 2.4
p. 120: 2.5
p. 134: 11.27
p. 135: 12.29
p. 136: 12.30

WEEK 4

September 24: Barbarian Conquests and the “Dark” Ages

September 26: Empire in the East: Byzantium

Reading Assignment: Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*
(chapters I.35, 36, 39, 40, 41, 42, 47, 48)

Response Paper # 1 due on Canvas on WEDNESDAY, September 25th at midnight:

Discuss three episodes where Augustine’s experience as he tells it in the *Confessions* is relatable to a significant number of today’s teens and young adults. Make sure to include at least three quotations (with page numbers in parenthesis) from the edition of the *Confessions*, which we are using in this class.

WEEK 5

October 1: Rise of Islam

October 3: Empire in the West: Charlemagne

Reading Assignment: Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*
(chapters II: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, 17, 27, 29, 30, 37, 38, 43)

WEEK 6:

October 8: The Vikings

October 10: The Vikings

Reading Assignment: *Egil’s Saga* (folder “Egil’s Saga” on Canvas)

p. 67 (chapter 40)

p. 73-82 (chapters 43-46)

pp. 88 – 120 (chapters 50-59) [*start reading these chapters*]

WEEK 7:

October 15: The Vikings

October 17: The Vikings

Reading Assignment: *Egil's Saga* (file "Egil's Saga" on Canvas)
pp. 88 – 120 (chapters 50-59) [*finish reading these chapters*]
p. 153 – 159 (chapters 72, 73)
p. 157 (chapter 73)
p. 186 (chapter 82)
p. 201-205 (chapter 88, 89)

WEEK 8:

October 22: Pilgrimage in the Middle Ages.

October 24: 1/3 class will meet at the Chazen Study Room

Reading Assignment:

- Holt, "Introduction," *When Money Talks* (folder "Coins" on Canvas).
- "Abbasid Dirham"
- *Feel free to bring any unusual coins that you might have at home for show-and-tell in sections.*

Response Paper # 2 due on Canvas on WEDNESDAY, October 23rd at midnight.

Choose one topic.

- [1] Would you like to have Egil on your team (pick any sport or non-sport activity)? Make sure to include at least three quotations (with page numbers in parenthesis) from the edition of the *Egil's Saga*, which we are using in this class.
- [2] Why does Egil commit so much violence? Make sure to include at least three quotations (with page numbers in parenthesis) from the edition of the *Egil's Saga*, which we are using in this class.

WEEK 9:

October 29: 1/3 class will meet at the Chazen Study Room

October 31: 1/3 class will meet at the Chazen Study Room

Reading Assignment (folder "Coins" on Canvas):

- Naismith, "Money and Coinage"
- "Solidus with Constans and Constantine"
- *Feel free to bring any unusual coins that you might have at home for show-and-tell in sections.*

WEEK 10:

November 5: The Investiture Controversy.

November 7: The Investiture Controversy: Henry IV versus Gregory VI. In-class debate.

Come to class prepared to engage in a role-playing activity and to explain why you, as a medieval person, support (a) Henry IV or (b) Gregory VII. Assemble a list of suitable quotations from the primary sources.

Reading Assignment (folder "Investiture Controversy" on Canvas):

- Pope Gregory VII. "A Letter to Supporters in Lombardy"
- Pope Gregory VII. *The Dictatus Papae*

- Pope Gregory VII. Admonition to Henry
- Henry IV to Gregory (1075)
- Henry IV to Gregory (1076)
- Synod of Worms (1076)
- (*Recommended*: Maureen C. Miller, “Introduction”)

WEEK 11:

November 12: The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century

November 14: The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century

Reading Assignment: Abelard and Heloise, *The Letters and Other Writings* (Abelard, *The Calamities of Peter Abelard*, pages 1-46).

WEEK 12:

November 19: Chivalry

November 21: Chivalry

Reading Assignment: Abelard and Heloise, *The Letters and Other Writings* (Heloise to Abelard, First Letter, pages 49-62, and Third Letter, pages 71-84).

WEEK 13:

November 26: Heresy and Persecution

November 28: HAPPY THANKSGIVING!!!

Reading Assignment (folder “Lancelot” on Canvas):

- Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot. The Knight of the Cart*; Pages 1-15; 116-119; 124-127; 144-149.

Response Paper # 3 due on Canvas on WEDNESDAY, November 27th at midnight. How is the story of the relationship between Abelard and Heloise different in his version and her version? Why do you think Heloise chose to tell the story the way she did? Make sure to include at least three quotations (with page numbers in parenthesis) from the edition of *The Letters and Other Writings*, which we are using in this class.

WEEK 14:

December 3: The Crusades

December 5: Discussion of the *The Last Duel*

Watch: *The Last Duel* (2021). You will have to find a way to watch the film on your own.

Trigger warning: the film has graphic scenes of sexual violence (as well as graphic scenes of other types of violence). If, for whatever reason, this poses a problem, let me know *ahead of time* (before December 5th), and I will give you an alternative assignment. Also, note that the film is long.

WEEK 15

December 10: REVIEW

FINAL EXAM: take-home; submit on Canvas by midnight 12/18/2024