

**Medieval Europe (History 221)**  
**Spring 2006**

Instructor: Anne Barton  
Class: T, R 9:30-10:45  
Room: McIver 222

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& by appointment

Welcome to medieval history! In our romantic imaginations, the history of the Middle Ages is concerned primarily with knights in shining armor, damsels in distress, and quests after such items as the “Holy Grail.” While the nobility, women, and Christianity will all play a part in our course, the sources we examine and the questions we ask of them will bear little resemblance to scenes from King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. Instead, we will be looking at a wide variety of sources to see 1) how the exercise of government changed over this period as kings and nobles struggled to exert their authority; 2) how the beliefs, practices, & institutional functions of Christianity changed over this period; 3) how women participated in various facets of medieval culture; and 4) how individuals were defined by the various groups to which they belonged. The Middle Ages - roughly the period from 500 (the end of the Roman Empire in the West) to 1400, or 1500, or 1600 (depending on when the Renaissance occurred in a particular location) – could be described as a period in which people were engaged in defining who was “in” and who was “out” of various groups. In order to create such a definition, each person’s role in medieval society had to be defined, and further, so did each aspect of his or her role. Thus, we will look at changes in the history of law & government, the history of Christianity, and the history of women through the prism of a society that was attempting to codify precisely what it meant to be a part of that society. It would also be useful for you to keep in mind that while for many historians the Middle Ages marks the beginning of modern history, for others the Middle Ages is a period characterized primarily by its differences from the modern (or post-modern) world in which we live. We will be engaged in a search for modern institutions which have their origins in the medieval period, but we will not be blind to the differences that exist between that age and our own.

To formulate our own conclusions about these questions, we will be using primary sources (those written during the Middle Ages). In order to make good oral and written evaluations of these sources, you must always consider the biases, both positive and negative, of the author and the nature of the source. All historical sources are not created equal; you’ll need to make informed judgments about each of them. Since this is a history course, the topics of our discussions will be roughly chronological, but we will be more concerned with analytical methods than with strict chronology. In other words, you will spend more time in this class reading and analyzing primary source materials than you will spend memorizing names and dates.

## **Discussion Preparation and Writing Assignments**

For the purposes of evaluation (grading), we will focus on two interrelated skills. The first, active discussion of the material, requires reading the material before the day of the lecture with which it is connected so that you can contribute both comments and informed questions to the discussion.

Because this is a writing intensive (WI) course, we will also be exploring a wide variety of ways to write about history. Each of the writing assignments will aid you in becoming a better interpreter of the primary sources left to us by medieval people.

**In-class writing:** At the beginning of each discussion, students will take 5-10 minutes to answer a specific question which will serve as a starting point for the discussion. These timed writings will be collected and graded on a “+ √ -“ scale with “+” being the highest score and “-“ being the lowest.

**5 Short Writing Assignments:** These periodic one-page writing assignments will focus on the process of constructing a brief essay (introduction, evidence, conclusion) and help to prepare you to write the three longer essays.

**3 essays of 4-5 pages:** These essays allow students to focus separately on three of the forms of writing practiced by historians – argument, comparison, and examination of an historical question. All three of the essays will be revised and accompanied by a brief (1/2 to 1 page) explanation of how the author has addressed the comments of the reader (instructor). No grade will appear on the first draft of any of these essays. After the first draft of the first essay has been returned to the students, each student will be required to meet with the instructor to outline the changes he/she will make in the revised version of the essay.

## **Student Learning Outcomes**

At the end of the course you will be able to

- construct an analytical essay using related primary source material as evidence to support an argument in answer to a specific historical question.
- demonstrate familiarity with argumentative, comparative, and historiographical styles of writing about historical issues.
- understand which elements in medieval society can be seen as origins for modern beliefs or institutions and which cannot.

## **For Your Information**

Attendance: After you have missed three class periods for any reason, your final average for the course will be reduced by one percentage point (ie from 84 to 83) for each additional absence.

Honor code: Any violation of the honor code (such as plagiarism or cheating) will be dealt with according to UNCG's academic integrity policy. I am particularly concerned about plagiarism from the web. I do not want you to use websites for any of the writing assignments unless a particular website is specifically included as part of the assignment. The primary sources and the lectures will provide you with sufficient information to complete the assignments. For specific explanations about UNCG's academic integrity policy, see the Student Affairs website at <http://saf.dept.uncg.edu/conduct/policies/academic.integrity.html>.

Assignment completion: Failure to complete any part of the course – in-class writings, discussions, periodic short writing assignments, or any of the three essays– will result in an “F” for the course.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Discussion	10%
In-Class Writing	10%
Short Writing Assignments	15%
First Essay (argument)	15%
Second Essay (comparison)	25%
Third Essay (historiography)	25%

### **Required Texts**

*Alfred the Great. Asser's Life of Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources.* Translated with an introduction and notes by Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Penguin, 1983) ISBN 0-14-04409-2.

*The Letters of Abelard and Heloise,* ed. Betty Radice (Penguin, revised edition 2003) ISBN 0-140-44899-3.

Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec and Enide.* trans. Dorothy Gilbert (University of California Press, 1992) ISBN 0-520-07346-0.

Jean Froissart, *Chronicles,* ed. and trans. Geoffrey Brereton (Penguin, 1968) ISBN 0-14-044200-6.

Patrick Geary, *Readings in Medieval History,* 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Broadview, 2003). ISBN 1-55111-550-6.

C. Warren Hollister and Judith Bennett, *Medieval Europe: A Short History,* 10<sup>th</sup> edition (McGraw-Hill, 2002). ISBN 0-07-295515-5.

## **Lecture Schedule**

Tuesday, January 10: Introductions

Thursday, January 12: Roman Origins

Readings: Geary – *Theodosian Code* (1-28); Hollister & Bennett – 5-16

Tuesday, January 17: Christian Origins I: the Gospels & the Early Creeds

Readings: Handout – Nicene Creed and Vincent of Lérins-Definition of Orthodoxy;  
Handout – New Testament excerpts; Hollister & Bennett – 17-29

Thursday, January 19: Christian Origins II: Late Antique Female Sanctity

Readings: *The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas* (61-68)

Tuesday, January 24: Benedict and his *Rule*

Readings: Geary – *The Rule of Saint Benedict* (168-198); Hollister & Bennett – 56-60

Thursday, January 26: Germanic Origins: Clovis

Readings: Geary – *The Tomb of Childeric: Father of Clovis* (120-128); *Salic Law* (129-136); Gregory of Tours *History of the Franks* (139-161); Hollister & Bennett: 30-48

***First Short Writing Assignment Due***

Tuesday, January 31: Frankish Women: Fredegund, Brunhild, & Balthild

Readings: Geary - *Life of Saint Balthild* (162-167); Handout – Gregory of Tours on Frankish Queens

Thursday, February 2: Charlemagne and his Empire

Readings: Geary – *Life of Charles the Great* (282-296); Selected Capitularies (297-320); Hollister & Bennett: 97-102; 104-118

Tuesday, February 7: Alfred the Great

Readings: Alfred the Great - Asser's *Life of Alfred* (66-110); *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 888-900* (111-120); Extracts from the laws of King Alfred (163-170); Hollister & Bennett – 128-132

Thursday, February 9: Byzantium & Islam

Readings: Handout – excerpts from the *Qu'ran*; Hollister & Bennett: 68-95  
***First Draft of First Essay Due***

Tuesday, February 14: Aristocratic Power: Lords and Vassals

Readings: Geary – Fulbert of Chartres *Letter to William of Aquitaine* (386); Hugh of Lusignan *Agreement between Lord and Vassal* (387-392); Galbert of Bruges *The Murder of Charles the Good* (393-406); Hollister & Bennett – 135-139; 180-184

Thursday, February 16: Banal Lordship: Peasants and their Lords  
Readings: Hollister & Bennett – 159-167

Tuesday, February 21: Monastic Reforms: Cluny & Cîteaux  
Readings: Geary – Cluniac Charters (321-327); Bernard of Clairvaux *Sermons on Song of Songs* (350-359); Hollister & Bennett – 194-201

Thursday, February 23: Investiture Controversy I  
Readings: Geary – Pope Gregory VII and King Henry IV *The Investiture Controversy* (609-634); Handout – The *Dictatus papae*; Hollister & Bennett – 201-208  
**Second Draft of First Essay Due**

Tuesday, February 28: Investiture Controversy II  
Readings: Geary – *The Concordat of Worms* (635)

Thursday, March 2: First Crusade  
Readings: Geary – The First Crusade, Four Accounts (407-442); Hollister & Bennett – 225-235  
**Second Short Writing Assignment Due**

Tuesday, March 7: No class. Spring Break.

Thursday, March 9: No class. Spring Break.

Tuesday, March 14: At the Church Door: 12<sup>th</sup>-century Marriage Reforms  
Readings: Handout – Marriage Documents

Thursday, March 16: Heloise & Abelard  
Readings: *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise – Historia calamitatum* (3-43); Letters 2-5 (46-89)

Tuesday, March 21: “A White Mantle of Churches”: Gothic Architecture  
Readings: *Erec and Enide* (41-152); Hollister & Bennett – 300-307  
**Third Short Writing Assignment Due**

Thursday, March 23: The Romances of the Twelfth Century : Erec and Enide  
Readings: *Erec and Enide* (152-252)

Tuesday, March 28: Religious Response to the Growth of Towns: the Mendicants & the Heretics  
Readings: Geary – *The Rule of Saint Francis of Assisi* (470-473); Clare of Assisi *Testament* (474-477); Canonization Process of St. Dominic (478-492); Jacques Fournier *Inquisition Records* (524-544); Hollister & Bennett – 192-194; 208-213  
**First Draft of Second Essay Due**

Thursday, March 30: Royal Centralization: the Example of England

Readings: Geary – Domesday Book (758-765); Richard Fitz Nigel *Dialogue of the Exchequer* (766-775); *The Huntingdonshire Eyre of 1286* (794-797); Magna Carta (776-793); Hollister & Bennett – 266-277

Tuesday, April 4: Innocent III

Readings: Hollister & Bennett – 254-259

***Fourth Short Writing Assignment Due***

Thursday, April 6: The Late Medieval Papacy: Babylonian Captivity, Schism, & Conciliarism

Readings: Geary – Marsilius of Padua *Discourses* (545-566); Hollister & Bennett – 336-339

Tuesday, April 11: The Hundred Years' War & Social Unrest

Readings: Froissart *Chronicles* 146-166; 211-230; Hollister & Bennett – 347-349

***Second Draft of Second Essay Due***

Thursday, April 13: The Deposition of Richard II & the Emergence of Parliament

Readings: Froissart *Chronicles* 421-471; Hollister & Bennett: 350-353

Tuesday, April 18: La Pucelle: Joan of Arc

Readings: Geary – The Trial of Joan of Arc (742-757)

Thursday, April 20: the Black Death: Boccaccio's *Decameron*

Readings: Handout – Excerpts from Boccaccio's *Decameron*; Hollister & Bennett – 326-335

***First Draft of Third Essay Due***

Tuesday, April 25: Late Medieval Women: Chaucer's *Wife of Bath* and Margery Kempe

Readings: Geary – *The Book of Margery Kempe* (567-599); Handout – Geoffrey Chaucer *Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale*

Thursday, April 27: Periodization: What were the Middle Ages?

***Fifth Short Writing Assignment Due***

Thursday, May 4 at 12 noon in my office (25 Foust)

***Final Draft of Third Essay Due***