HISTORY 215
The Middle Ages
Fall 2008

Professor Ben R. McRee
Stager Hall Room 303
Campus Phone 4232
ben.mcree@fandm.edu

Office Hours
M 9:30-10:30
T 1:30-2:30
R 11:00-12:00

Texts
The following books may be purchased at the campus bookstore:

Jean Froissart, Chronicles
David Herlihy, ed., Medieval Culture and Society
C. Warren Hollister and Judith M. Bennett, Medieval Europe: A Short History
Ben R. McRee, Interpretations of the Western World
Snorri Sturluson, King Harald's Saga
Brian Tierney, ed., The Middle Ages: Sources of Medieval History

Course Description
This course surveys European history from the fall of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the sixteenth century. It will pay particular attention to traditional themes such as the growth of Christianity, the development of feudal relations, the conflict between church and state, and the Hundred Years War, while also exploring the social experiences of knights and ladies, monks and priests, townsfolk and peasants as they responded to the challenges of warfare, famine, and disease. It will also devote considerable attention to the sources and analytical techniques used by historians to explore the past, providing a strong foundation for other history courses you may wish to take.

Course Requirements
There will be five scheduled quizzes during the semester, the best four of which will count towards your grade for the course. No make-up quizzes will be given.

There will be a mid-term examination and a comprehensive final examination. To pass the course you must take both examinations and you must earn a passing grade on the final. The date and time for the final will be announced by the Registrar. You must make yourself available to take the final exam at the scheduled time during finals week.

You will also complete a six to eight-page research paper. Further details relating to this assignment will be provided in class. All papers must be prepared in accordance with the
instructions appended below. Late papers will be penalized. To pass the course you must hand in your paper within ten days of the deadline.

In computing your grade the following weights will be given to your work:

- Quizzes: 20%
- Paper: 30%
- Mid-Term Examination: 20%
- Final Examination: 30%

Attendance and punctuality are expected. Excessive absences or tardiness will adversely affect your grade. If you miss more than three class meetings, your average for the semester will be reduced by five percent for each additional absence beyond the third. Four absences, for example, will bring a five percent penalty, five absences a ten percent penalty, and so on. Arrival after attendance has been taken will count as half an absence for this purpose.

**Instructions for Formatting Paper**

- Work must be printed at the highest quality possible, double-spaced (equivalent to a line spacing of 20 to 24 points), have reasonable margins (about one inch), and use one of the following fonts (or a reasonable facsimile):
  - 12 point Baskerville
  - 12 point Times
  - 10 point Courier
  - 12 point Cochin
- Number your pages—do it by hand if you have to.
- Do not attach a cover sheet to your work. Type your name in the upper right-hand corner of the first page instead.
- Include a word count at the end of your work (but don’t count words in notes).
- Use a staple or paper clip to fasten the pages together.
- Use proper references for quotations and examples. Historians favor footnotes (i.e., notes at the feet of the appropriate pages), so you should put your references in that form.
- Include a “Works Cited” page at the end of your paper, listing *only those works actually cited* in your footnotes.
- Be sure to spell-check and proofread your work carefully before handing it in.
- Don’t use “impact” as a verb! It might affect my evaluation of your work.
- Printed copies (electronic submissions will not be accepted) are due at the beginning of class. Late papers will be penalized.

**Class Topics and Assignments**

September 4  
Defining the Middle Ages
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 9</td>
<td>Christianity and Church Government</td>
<td>Hollister and Bennett, chapters 1-2</td>
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<td>Tierney, reading no. 6 (&quot;Two Famous Conversions&quot;) and chapter 5 (&quot;The Rise of the Papacy&quot;)</td>
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<td>McRee, &quot;Women, Ministry, and Church Order in Early Christianity&quot; by Francine Cardman (pp. 2-39)</td>
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<td>September 11</td>
<td>DISCUSSION: MONASTICISM</td>
<td>Herlihy, pp. 67-93</td>
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<td>Tierney, chapter 6</td>
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<td>September 16</td>
<td>Theodoric and Boethius—A Tale of Two Cultures</td>
<td>Hollister and Bennett, chapters 3-4</td>
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<td>Tierney, reading nos. 10, 11, 14, 15</td>
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<td>Quiz 1</td>
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<td>September 18</td>
<td>Charlemagne</td>
<td>Hollister and Bennett, chapters 5, 6</td>
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<td>Tierney, chapter 8, and reading nos. 27, 28</td>
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<td>September 23</td>
<td>DISCUSSION: VIKING RAIDERS</td>
<td>Sturluson, all</td>
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<td>September 25</td>
<td>The Aristocracy</td>
<td>Tierney, reading nos. 32-34</td>
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<td>McRee, “The ‘Feudal Revolution’” by Thomas N. Bisson (pp. 136-165)</td>
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<td>September 30</td>
<td>The Peasantry</td>
<td>Herlihy, pp. 43-55</td>
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<td>Tierney, chapter 25</td>
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<td>October 2</td>
<td>Economic Expansion</td>
<td>Hollister and Bennett, chapter 7</td>
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<td>Tierney, no. 35</td>
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<td>Quiz 2</td>
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<td>October 9</td>
<td>Urban Life</td>
<td>Herlihy, pp. 176-189</td>
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<td>Tierney, chapter 15, and reading no. 95</td>
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<td>October 14</td>
<td>Review for Mid-Term Exam</td>
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October 16  
**Mid-Term Examination**

**FALL BREAK**

October 23  DISCUSSION: THE LIFE OF THE NOBILITY  
Herlihy, pp. 229-281

October 28  New Religious Movements  
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 8  
Herlihy, pp. 302-308  
Tierney, chapter 21

October 30  The First Crusade and After  
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 9  
Tierney, chapter 13

November 4  DISCUSSION: DEFINING THE CRUSADES  
McRee, “Defining the Crusades” (pp. 166-223)  
**Quiz 3**

November 6  The Investiture Struggle  
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 10  
Tierney, chapter 12

November 11  The Growth of Monarchy  
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 11  
Tierney, chapters 18, 22

November 13  DISCUSSION: SCHOLASTICISM AND EDUCATION  
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 12  
Herlihy, pp. 190-228  
Tierney, pp. 268-273

November 18  The Religion of the People  
Herlihy pp. 292-302, 308-314  
Tierney, chapter 31  
**PAPER DUE**

November 20  The Black Death  
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 13  
Herlihy: pp. 351-358  
**Quiz 4**
November 25  DISCUSSION: THE IMPACT OF THE BLACK DEATH
Herlihy, pp. 358-361
Tierney, chapter 29
McRee, “Responses to and Effects of the Black Death” (pp. 224-272)

THANKSGIVING BREAK

December 2  The Church Under Siege
Tierney, chapters 27, 33
Froissart, pp. 37-110

December 4  Chivalry and Late Medieval Warfare
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 14
Froissart, pp. 111-198

December 9  DISCUSSION: FROISSART’S WORLD
Froissart, pp. 201-259
Quiz 5

December 11  The Waning of the Middle Ages
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 15
Tierney, chapter 35

Final Exam—Time and Date to be announced by the Registrar.