

HISTORY 215

The Middle Ages

Fall 2008

Professor Ben R. McRee
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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

- September 9 Christianity and Church Government
Hollister and Bennett, chapters 1-2
Tierney, reading no. 6 (“Two Famous Conversions”) and chapter 5 (“The Rise of the Papacy”)
McRee, “Women, Ministry, and Church Order in Early Christianity” by Francine Cardman (pp. 2-39)
- September 11 DISCUSSION: MONASTICISM
Herlihy, pp. 67-93
Tierney, chapter 6
- September 16 Theodoric and Boethius—A Tale of Two Cultures
Hollister and Bennett, chapters 3-4
Tierney, reading nos. 10, 11, 14, 15
Quiz 1
- September 18 Charlemagne
Hollister and Bennett, chapters 5, 6
Tierney, chapter 8, and reading nos. 27, 28
- September 23 DISCUSSION: VIKING RAIDERS
Sturluson, all
- September 25 The Aristocracy
Tierney, reading nos. 32-34
McRee, “The ‘Feudal Revolution’” by Thomas N. Bisson (pp. 136-165)
- September 30 The Peasantry
Herlihy, pp. 43-55
Tierney, chapter 25
- October 2 Economic Expansion
Hollister and Bennett, chapter 7
Tierney, no. 35
Quiz 2
- October 7 DISCUSSION: THE PIRENNE THESIS
McRee, “The Pirenne Thesis, Slavery, and the Origins of the European Economy” (pp. 57-110)
- October 9 Urban Life
Herlihy, pp. 176-189
Tierney, chapter 15, and reading no. 95
- October 14 **Review for Mid-Term Exam**

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
McRae, “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.