

History 101: Introduction to Medieval and Early Modern Europe
MWF King 341: Section 1 10:00-10:50; Section 2 1:30-2:20

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Office Hours Monday 2:30-4, Friday 11-12:30 and by
appointment

Course description: History 101 provides an introduction to the history of the Mediterranean world and northern Europe from the end of the Roman Empire to the age of absolutism, with a primary focus on the period from 950 to 1650. We will examine the medieval institutions that developed from the crises of the ancient world and the changing political, social, economic and religious landscapes that emerged in the early modern period. During lecture and discussions, we will question preconceptions about these periods: were the Middle Ages a static or even “dark” time, in which people slaved under the twin burdens of bare subsistence and dogmatic belief? Should we understand the breakdowns and breakthroughs that followed—the Renaissance and Reformation, colonialism and capitalism, the Scientific Revolution and the rise of the modern state system—within a context of religious fervor and epic persecution, or rational thought and technological advancement?

Course goals and expectations: The course is designed to engage students who are unfamiliar with European history and wish to learn both the subject matter and the methods used to understand history. As you will discover, there is no one correct way of constructing the historical past—we are constantly creating new narratives and new perspectives. This is the art (and fun!) of studying history. My goal is that this course will not only introduce you to some of the major trends and events that have shaped the European past, but also develop three basic tools of the historian: critical reading, analytical thinking and clear communication. To these ends, you are asked to actively attend to lectures, discuss both primary texts and secondary literature in class, and complete several written assignments, including a midterm and a final exam. There will also be one, possibly two movies shown outside of class time.*

Course materials:

All required books are available at the Oberlin Bookstore and are on reserve in the library. I have decided not to assign a textbook—if you want to have a reference book for the material we discuss in the course, you might want to purchase one (recommended ones below).

Required:

- P. Geary, ed. *Readings in Medieval History, Volume II* (2010) (4th edition you can make the 3rd edition work as well)
- J. Bennett, *A Medieval Life: Cecilia Penifader of Brigstock*
- M. Clanchy, ed. and Betty Radice, trans. *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*
- G. Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, trans. G.H. McWilliam (1995 or 2003)
- B. de Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies* (1992)
- B. Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre* (document collection) (2009)

Recommended textbooks:

- Lynn Hunt, et al., *The Making of the West*, 2nd concise edition, Volume I (2007)
- Brian Tierney, *The Middle Ages, Volume I: Sources of Medieval History* (1999)

* Popcorn provided

Good websites for primary documents:

Internet Medieval Sourcebook <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/Sbook.html>

The Labyrinth <http://labyrinth.georgetown.edu/>

EuroDocs http://eudocs.lib.byu.edu/index.php/Main_Page

European History Primary Sources <http://primary-sources.eui.eu/>

Requirements and Grading:

Map quizzes	10%
Two 5-page papers	20% each; 40% total
Midterm	20%
Final exam	30%

Grading based on the following: A+ 100-97; A 96-93; A- 92-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+ 79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; D 65-69, F below 65.

All written work must be turned in to receive credit for this class.

Details:

1. Map Quizzes. Learning the basic geography of northern Europe and the Mediterranean world is crucial for understanding its history in the medieval and early modern periods. There will be three map quizzes over the course of the semester, indicated on the syllabus. A week before each quiz, I will post on Blackboard the relevant map and what specifically you should identify. The individual quizzes emphasize bodies of land and water and cities or regions that figure largely in the time period or events we're discussing that week.
2. Essays. You will complete two 5-page essays, each on a question that I will hand out at least one week before the essay is due. These papers will allow you to evaluate both primary and secondary sources and argue a point that you substantiate from those materials. The first is due Friday, October 1 at the beginning of class and the second is due Friday, November 19 at 5PM because there is no class that day.
3. Midterm and Final Exams. Based on what you've learned from readings and class lectures, you will complete passage identifications, term identifications, and essay questions.

All written assignments should be typed and double-spaced, with at least ½ in. margins on all sides. All pages numbered! Your grade takes note of the brilliance of your ideas but also the clarity of your expression, the ironclad tightness of your grammar and the impeccability of your spelling. Proofread! Edit! When you have citations and you need to include footnotes and a bibliography, refer to some of the reference guides from the Oberlin History Department that I have posted on Blackboard. When in doubt, get in touch with me.

Class Policies:

Attendance and participation: The course has both lecture and discussion components and therefore, your attendance and participation is important (we need your insights!) If you are able, please let me know before class begins that you will be absent. 4 or more unexcused absences can result in a failing grade or being dropped from the course. If you are over 15 minutes late, you will be counted absent.

Disabilities: If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to Jane Boomer in the

Office of Disability Services in Peters G-27/G-28.

Lateness: Late assignments will be penalized by dropping 3 points from your grade every day a paper is late.

Plagiarism: All work turned in for this course must be your own. The College requires that students sign an "Honor Code" for all assignments. This pledge states: "I affirm that I have adhered to the Honor Code in this assignment." For further information, see the student Honor Code which you can access via Blackboard>Lookup/Directories>Honor Code. If you turn something in without pledging the honor code, I will wait to grade it until you do. If you have questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me or raise it in class.

****Finding and doing the assignments**: All required books are available at the Oberlin Bookstore and are on reserve in the library. Readings posted on blackboard are labeled Bb. They are located under Course Documents in the file "Reading Assignments". For sources from the Geary reader, the assignment will read G and the document number and name. The readings listed for a particular class should be done before that class. **ABOVE ALL, BRING READINGS TO CLASS!**

Schedule of Classes and Assignments

Section I The High Middle Ages, 950-1300

Week 1 *Introduction: Christianity and the Roman World*

9/8 What is medieval? How do we know, and what do we know?

Raoul Glaber, *Histories* (handout) and how do we read texts?

9/10 When Rome fell... Bb: Peter Brown, "Virtutes Sanctorum: Deeds of Saints," in *The Rise of Western Christendom*, 93-116; Saint Benedict of Nursia, *Rule for Monasteries*

Week 2 *A Society of Orders; Conflict and Religious Reform*

9/13 Peasants. Bennett, *Cecilia*, skim chapter 1, read chapters 2 and 4.

9/15 Lords, Vassals, and Houses of God. Bennett, *Cecilia*, chapter 3; G: 27. Fulbert of Chartres, *Letter to William of Aquitaine* and 28. Hugh of Lusignan, *Agreement between Lord and Vassal*

Movie night! 6PM TBA

9/17 Popes and Kings. Bb: Harold Berman, *The Papal Revolution*; G: 40. Investiture Conflict (selections)

Week 3 *The Expansion of Europe*

9/20 Economic Revival Bb: Robert Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950-1350* (selections); Bennett, *Cecilia of Brigstock*, chapter 7

9/22 The Crusades I. Bernard of Clairvaux, *On the New Knighthood*, <http://www.the-orb.net/encyclop/religion/monastic/bernard.html>; Jean Richard, "The Crusade of Urban II".

9/24 The Crusades II. Yuval Harari, "Eyewitnessing in Accounts of the First Crusade"; G: 30. *Four Accounts of the First Crusade*.

Map quiz

Week 4 *Urban, spiritual and philosophical growth*

9/27 Communal movement; laws and institutions. Bb. Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City States in Renaissance Italy*, 22-29, 34-44, 51-55; *The Communal Revolt at Laon* <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/guibert-laon.html>; *Urban Privilege of Lorris*, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/lorris.html>

9/30 12th-century Renaissance. Bb. Richard Southern, "Medieval Humanism"; begin reading *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise* Letter I: *History of My Calamities*, pp. 3-43
10/1 The rigors of the philosophical life. *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, Letters II-VI, and Letters between Peter the Venerable and Heloise, pp. 47-111, 217-227; Bennett, *Cecilia*, skim chapter 9

Week 5 *Religious Orthodoxy and Heresy; the height of papal power* (or the church and its critics)
10/4 *Bring Geary to class. The papacy under Innocent III. G: 30. *Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, 1215* (selections); Bb. *Peter Waldo and the Waldensians*; Elizabeth Petroff, *The Beguine Movement* (selections).

First paper due

10/6 Poverty-problem or solution? Bb. Richard Southern, *The New Orders*; G: 31. *Rule of Saint Francis*; G: 32. Clare of Assisi, *Testament*
10/8 Piety and Heresy. Bb: James Given, "The Inquisitors of Languedoc and the Medieval Technology of Power"; G: 36. Jacques Fournier, *Inquisition Records*

Week 6 *The growth of the secular state and representative institutions*

10/11 England. Bb: Tierney, *The Development of Medieval Government*, pp. 390-403; G. 54. *Magna Carta* (selections).
10/13 France and the Empire Bb: Tierney, *Medieval Government*, pp. 375-380, 384-390; G: 47. Joinville, *Life of Saint Louis*, G: 44 *The Golden Bull* (introduction and titles)
10/15 Iberian Peninsula and Italy. Bb: Tierney, *Medieval Government*, pp. 380-384; G: 58. *Las Siete Partidas*

Map Quiz

Week 7 *The apogee of learning and belief; Midterm Exam (its nadir?)*

10/18 Scholasticism and Visual Culture. G: 35. Thomas Aquinas, *Proof of God's Existence*
Bb. E. Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism* (selections)
10/20 Visit to Special Collections-4th Floor, Mudd
10/22 **Midterm Exam**

Week 8 10/25-10/29 **No Classes-Fall Recess**

Section II Late Middle Ages and Early Modern Period, 1300-1600

Week 9 *14th Century: Crisis and Renewal*

11/1 Famine, Plague, and Ice. Bennett, *Cecilia of Brigstock*, chapter 5; Bb. David Herlihy, *The Black Death*, 19-38; Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, Day I, Introduction;
11/3 The Hundred Year's War; Peasant Revolts; Bb. Michael Wolfe, *Walled Towns and the Shaping of France*, 57-74; G: 49. Froissart's *Chronicles*, 688-700 only
11/5 Mysticism and Militarism-A Crisis of Belief? Bb. Megan McLaughlin, *The Woman Warrior*, *Women's Studies* 17 (1990); G: 50. *Trial of Joan of Arc*

Week 10 *Renaissance ideals; high and low culture*

11/8 The quest for human perfection. Bb: Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (81-87, 104-7, 199-208, 240-243). Begin Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, Preface; Day I stories 1-6, 10, conclusion; Day II stories 5, 9; Day III story 4, 7, 8, 10;
11/10 Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, Day IV introduction; Day V story 8, 10; Day VI complete; Day VIII stories 5, 7; Author's Epilogue.
11/12 Competing narratives. Bb. Joan Kelly, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?" in Bridenthal, Koonz, Stuard, eds. *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*. G: 62.

Gregorio Dati, *Diary*.

Week 11 *The Age of Revolutions: or what does it mean to be early modern?*)

11/15 Print Culture. Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe* (selections) 12-45, 70-101

11/16. Movie Night! TBA

11/17 New Monarchies. Bb. J.H. Elliott, *A Europe of Composite Monarchies*

11/19 **No Class. Paper due at 5PM**

Week 12 *Europe Looks West*

11/22 Conquest and Colonialism I. Bb. Anthony Pagden, “The Legacy of Rome”; Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*; 3-56

Map Quiz

11/24. Conquest and Colonialism II. Las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*, 96-130; Bb. Juan Gines de Sepulveda, *Democrates Alter*.

11/26 **Thanksgiving-No Class**

Week 13 *Protestant Reformation and its aftermath: the Christian world divided (again)*

11/29 Medieval or Renaissance Man. Bb. Martin Luther, “The Freedom of a Christian Man,” in Hillerbrand, ed. *The Protestant Reformation*; begin Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre*, introduction (1-32 only), documents 1, 2, 8-10.

12/1 Religious Wars. Diefendorf, documents 15, 16, 20, 23, 32, 34

12/3 Broken Communities. Bb. Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze* (selections)

Week 14 *The Properties of Belief: Changing Elites*

12/6 The Counter-Reformation. Bb. Mark Forster, *Catholic Revival in the Age of the Baroque*, selections

12/8 Popular and Elite Culture. Bb. Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process* (selections)

12/10 Civility and the Scientific Revolution. Bb. Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*, 126-192

Week 15 *Conclusion*

12/ 13 An orderly society. Bb. Elizabeth Brown, *On 1500*.

Week 16

Exam schedule

Section 1: Monday December 20 2-4 PM

Section 2: Monday December 20 7-9 PM