

HISTORY 221: THE MEDIEVAL LEGACY



Course Information: History 221-01 to 221-04 (CRN 83901, 84650, 84786, 86078). Classrooms: SOEB 120 for lectures (MW) and different classrooms for discussions (Fridays, at 9 AM or 10 AM).

Professor's Information:

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Teaching Assistant Information:

Richard Smith, sections 2 and 4
Matthew Esterline, sections 1 and 3

Professor's Office Hours: Mondays 10:00-11:00, Tuesdays 1:00-2:00, Wednesdays 11:00-12:00 and by appointment

Teaching Assistant's Office Hours: your TA will have some OH during the week.

Course Description:

This course explores the rich legacy of Medieval Europe. The Middle Ages lasted from the collapse of the Roman Empire in the west (around 500 AD) until the so-called Renaissance (14th to 16th centuries AD). This is an enormous time span, and I have no intention of trying to cover every event and every aspect of the Middle Ages. Rather, we will focus on the central core of the Middle Ages, from circa 750-1300. In so doing we will further subdivide our period into the Early Middle Ages (750-1050) and the High or Central Middle Ages (1050-1300). But the course will not primarily be about mastering a body of material; rather it will concern itself with learning to think like a historian, particularly by interpreting texts. As such we will be concerned not to present a narrative or synthesis, but rather to consider a series of problems of interpretation. Some of them are related to fundamental questions of epistemology, or how we know what we know: how do we know about the Middle Ages? What types of evidence exist, and of what quality is each category of evidence? What sorts of things does this evidence let us know about the Middle Ages, and what sorts of things does the evidentiary corpus prevent us from learning? Another broad category of questions involve the historian who asks the questions. Historians shape history by asking particular questions. Thus, if a historian asked “What powers did kings have in 11th-century France?”, the sort of history that she would produce would necessarily rely on certain categories of evidence, and would produce certain kinds of answers. If another historian asked, however, a different question, such as “how did the culture of the Early Middle Ages differ from that of the High Middle Ages?”, then he might well look to different sources (evidence) and might produce a ‘history’ that looks very different from that produced by the first historian. Clearly we cannot ask every question that is possible of our sources in a single semester, but we will try to explore a variety of different approaches, each with somewhat different questions, sources, and subsequent histories.

What is history?

History is a process, and one of interpretation to boot; it is not merely the location and recitation of some inert set of objective facts. Historians - whether professors or students - must actively engage with sources by asking questions of them. Without a question, there cannot be an interpretation, and there cannot therefore be history. “Facts” are not objective, since “facts” must be selected by some person, and the process of selection (as well as that of interpretation) is subjective, not objective. There is no ‘natural’ or ‘objective’ reason why one ‘fact’ is more important than others. Whether you find the fact that Charlemagne was crowned Emperor in 800 more significant than the fact that Frankish kings practiced polygyny is only a reflection of what questions you are interested in (one fact concerns politics, the other social and legal practice); neither is ‘objectively’ more important.

It is thus the historian’s job to read many sources, thereby awakening questions that he or she may then use to form interpretations based on those sources. Good history is thus about persuading others of the plausibility of one’s interpretation - doing so requires one to a) formulate good questions; b) locate and master ‘good evidence’; c) interpret that evidence in the light of the question(s) one has asked; and d) communicate those interpretations in writing (or sometimes orally). Since this is an introductory course, many of the questions will have been pre-selected by me. I have also provided you with a body of evidence (your primary source readings) with which to address those questions and, hopefully, provoke some new ones.

Your task is to read the evidence in the light of the questions I have posed and formulate an interpretation of that evidence. To accomplish this well, you will need to read the material and come to lecture. Lecture will provide the context, some facts, most of the questions and some of the interpretations - without it, you will have trouble deciding what to do with the readings. If you don’t do the readings, however, you will undoubtedly fail, since you will not be able to provide the evidence needed to support the interpretations that you must make on exams, quizzes, and so forth. I am mostly interested in seeing you master the methods of the historian - the ability to present a plausible interpretation of evidence in a logical and coherent fashion.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. General Education Learning Outcomes (SLOs marked ‘A’ are GHP; those marked ‘B’ are GL)

SLO-A1. Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives. (connected to LG3)

SLO-A2. Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing (connected to LG1)

SLO-B1. Find, interpret and evaluate information on diverse cultures (connected to LG1)

SLO-B2. Describe interconnections among regions of the world. (Must include substantial focus on at least one

culture, nation or sub-nationality beyond Great Britain and North America). (connected to LG 3)
 SLO-B3. Use diverse cultural frames of reference and alternative perspectives to analyze issues (connected to LG 5)

B. Course-Specific Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to do the following:

1. Define a suite of political, religious, and social characteristics that characterize the period after 500 CE as 'medieval'. Some of these include kingship, secular and religious clergy, lordship, peasants, crusading, and chivalry. (SLO-A1, SLO-B3)
2. Identify and explain changes to these political, religious and social characteristics over the period 500 to 1500, by paying attention to the number, quality, and content of primary sources available for interpretation. (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1, SLO-B2)
3. Compare and contrast modern assumptions about political, religious and social institutions and structures with those encountered in sources from the Middle Ages; recognize and explain events, movements, and belief structures of the past using terms and contexts appropriate to the period under study. (SLO-A1, SLO-B3)
4. Recognize and evaluate salient features of primary source (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1, SLO-B2). These features include authorial subjectivity as shaped by social and geographic considerations, differences in generic structures and expectations (that is, formal characteristics of genres), and interpretive value as compared to other comparable sources.
5. Recognize an academic argument, evaluate its qualities, and relate it to other narratives (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1, SLO-B3)
6. Sift, select, and synthesize a variety of sources in order to address, in writing, a problem connected to one of the classic questions of historical analysis, namely comparison, change over time, and/or causation. (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B2)
7. Recognize and employ specific methodological approaches to the interpretation of the past, including (but not limited to) chronology, periodization, comparison/contrast, continuity/change, class, and gender. (SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1, SLO-B3)

TEACHING METHODS

This course combines two main teaching methods. On Mondays and Wednesdays, we meet as a full class for lecture by Prof. Barton. On Fridays, the class divides into discussion sections, each of which is led by a Teaching Assistant. Note: discussion sections meet in different classrooms from the main lecture and are not interchangeable. You must attend the section in which you are enrolled!

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Quizzes** (15%) (SLOs: A1, A2, B1, B2, B3; Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

A weekly objective quiz on the assigned reading is required. Quizzes will be administered through Canvas. I will open them after lecture on Wednesday, and you will have until Friday morning at 9 AM to take the quiz. Typically the quiz will involve about 10 multiple-choice, true-or-false, or other short-format objective questions. The quizzes are unapologetically designed to encourage students to complete the assigned reading. That means that the multiple choice questions on the quiz should be easy for anyone who has done a good job reading the assigned material.

2. **Midterm Exam** (25%) (SLOs: A1, A2, B1, B2, B3; Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7)

The midterm exam includes an in-class portion and a take-home essay. The in-class portion consists of a series of short answer questions; the take-home essay will require synthesis of course themes and the use of examples from the reading.

3. **Historian's Toolbox Assignments** (20%) (SLOs: SLO-A1, SLO-A2, SLO-B1; Course Learning Outcome: 5)

Doing history does not merely entail memorizing facts about the past. It requires you to locate, evaluate, criticize, and evaluate multiple kinds of evidence. For this set of assignments, students will perform tasks designed to familiarize themselves with some of the techniques that historians must master (and that professors sometimes take for granted). Among these will be locating sources in the library, evaluating which of several potential sources is most useful to a particular topic, recognizing the argument of a modern author, understanding what is contained in footnotes as well as how to make your own footnotes, recognizing the components of a printed academic work, learning how to annotate your reading, evaluating web sites, and assigning significance. While that sounds like a lot to do, keep in mind that these assignments are intended a) to dovetail with Historian's Toolbox Moments presented in lecture, and b) to be completed with a minimum of time and effort (indeed, most of them will require as a 'product' only a couple of sentences). I anticipate that there will be 5-10 of these assignments, but the assignment sheet delivered the first week of class will provide full details.

4. Final Exam (25%) (SLOs: A1, A2, B1, B2, B3; Course Learning Outcomes: 1, 2, 4, 6, 7).

The final exam comes in two parts, an in-class part and a take-home part. The format will be identical to the midterm.

5. Discussion Section Grade (15%) (SLOs: A1, A2, B1, B2, B3; Course Learning Outcomes, 1-7)

Your TAs have discretion with how this grade is defined and evaluated.. Your TAs will at a minimum reward attendance and frequent, perceptive verbal participation in the discussion of sources. Your TA may also construct his own subsidiary assessment instruments, potentially including weekly in-class writing, quizzes, short oral presentations, etc. Your TA will provide you of a breakdown of how your discussion grade will be determined.

EVALUATION AND GRADING

The weight of the final course grade represented by each of the various assignments is indicated as follows:

Quizzes	15%
Midterm:	25%
Historian's Toolbox	20%
Final Exam:	25%
Discussion Section	15%

Grading Scale:

100-97% = A+	89-87 = B+	59 or lower = F
96-93 = A	86-83 = B	
92-90 = A-	82-80 = B-	
79-77 = C+	69-67 = D+	
76-73 = C	66-63 = D	
70-72 = C-	60-62 = D-	

REQUIRED BOOKS

All books are available for sale in the UNCG bookstore.

1. Wim Blockmans and Peter Hoppenbrouwers, *Introduction to Medieval Europe, 300-1550*, 2nd edition (Routledge, 2014). [ISBN: 9780415675871]
2. Patrick Geary, ed., *Readings in Medieval History*, 5th edition (University of Toronto Press, 2010) [ISBN:9781442634398]

READING ADVICE

Because most of the original sources (and much of the content) will be totally unfamiliar to you, I recommend taking notes on them as you read. It is also useful to write a brief summary (2-3 sentences) of each document/source so that you can remember the basic gist of it for class discussion. It's much easier to note down important points as you read than it is to go back and find those points again once you've finished reading. Finally, I recommend reading each document more than once. Sometimes it will take two readings for something to make sense to you. Because the amount of reading for our course is fairly small, you'll have plenty of time for re-reading.

Schedule of Classes and Readings

Week 1

August 22: Course Introduction

August 24: History, Historians, and Historiography

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 1-11

Reading: A medieval document: Juhel of Mayenne Finds a Priory (Canvas)

Reading: The Tomb of Childeric, in Geary, p. 99-105.

August 26: Discussion: Being Historians

Week 2

August 29: Europe in 800: Geo-political Contours

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 15-27 (these pages are optional), and 27-43 (required)

August 31: Charlemagne and the Franks

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 103-117

Reading: Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne*, in Geary, 233-247

Reading: Plate 3, in Geary, between p. 224-225

September 2: Discussion: Einhard's Life of Charlemagne

Week 3

September 5: NO CLASS (Labor Day)

September 7: A Renaissance in the Ninth Century?

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 257-269

Reading: Capitulary of Mantua, 781, in Geary, 249

Reading: the Synod of Frankfurt, 794, in Geary, 252-256

Reading: Charles the Great on the study of Literature, in Geary, 256-257

Reading: the General capitulary for the missi, 802, in Geary, 262-266

Reading: Paul Dutton, ed., "Letters of Alcuin," from *Carolingian Civilization* (Broadview, 1993), 106-119. Only read pp. 106-109.

Reading: Plate 5, in Geary (between pp. 224 and 225)

September 9: Discussion: Carolingian ideas of reform and renaissance

Week 4

September 12: Early Medieval Christianity: Beliefs, Bishops and Priests

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 50-85

September 14: Monks, Nuns and Miracles

Reading: the Benedictine Rule (in Geary, 136-162). Pay special attention to chaps. 4-7, 22, 23, 33, 38-40, 48, 59, 63-64, 68-73. Make sure you know what Benedict means by 'God's Work' [Lat. *Opus dei*].

Reading: Plate 4, in Geary (between p. 224-225), and <http://stgallplan.org/>

Reading: the Miracles of St Foy, in Geary, 286-292

Reading: Plate 9, in Geary, between p. 512-513

September 16: Discussion: monks and miracles

Week 5

- September 19: Early medieval Society: Class and Gender
 Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 86-103
- September 21: Early Medieval Queens and Nuns
 Reading: *Life of Saint Balthild*, in Geary, pp. 131-135
 Reading: Plate 7, in Geary, between p. 224-225
 Reading: Excerpts from the Divorce of Lothar and Teutberga (on Canvas)
- September 23: Discussion: Gender and class

Week 6

- September 26: the Vikings
 Reading: Three Sources on the Vikings in France
<http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/halsall/source/843bertin.asp>
- September 28: Alfred of Wessex
 Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 117-125
 Reading: Asser's Life of King Alfred, in Geary, p. 194 (Geary's intro), 200-208
 Reading: the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, in Geary, 208-214
 Reading: Plate 6, in Geary, between pp. 224-225
- September 30: Discussion: King Alfred

Week 7

- October 3: Comparative Fate of Post-Carolingian Kingdoms
 Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 154-155 (yes! Two pages only!)
- October 5: Economic, Demographic, and Urban Take-off
 Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 129-134, 240-256, 297-316
 Reading: a town charter (canvas)
 Reading: guild regulations (TBA)
- October 7: MIDTERM (in discussion sections)

Week 8

- October 10: Aristocratic Society: Lordship
 Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 143-150
 Reading: Fulbert of Chartres, Letter to William of Aquitaine, in Geary, p. 334
 Reading: Hugh of Lusignan, Agreement between Lord and Vassal, in Geary, 335-339
 Reading: Galbert of Bruges, excerpts from *The Murder of Charles the Good*, in Geary, 339-351
- October 12: High Medieval Kingship, part I
 Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 167-178
 Reading: the Assize of Clarendon (on canvas)
- October 14: Discussion: lords and kings

Week 9

- October 17: No Class (Fall Break)
- October 19: A Localized World: Manors, Peasants and Lords
 Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 134-143, 150-152
 Readings: Documents concerning servitude (on canvas)
- October 21: Discussion: servitude

Week 10

- October 24: the High Medieval Church, 1: the Rise of the Papacy

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 189-199

Reading: Pope Gregory VII and King Henry IV [of Germany], Letters, in Geary, pp. 507-529. Geary has arranged these letters strangely: I recommend reading only these letters, and in this order:

- a. Gregory VII to Henry IV, Admonishing him, pp. 509-510
- b. Henry IV, to various including Gregory VII, from the Synod of Worms, January 1076, p. 522 to end of p. 524
- c. Gregory VII, Roman Lenten Synod of 1076 and Excommunication of Henry IV (Feb 1076), pp. 510-511
- d. Gregory VII, to all Faithful in Germany (Sept 1076), pp. 516-517
- e. Henry IV, Promise (1076), Surrender (1076), and Vow at Canossa (1077), pp. 526-527 (start of p. 526 to halfway down first column on 527)
- f. Gregory VII, Account of Canossa (1077), p. 517

Reading: the Concordat of Worms, in Geary, 529-530

October 26: the High Medieval Church, 2: Law, Reform and Heresy in the 12th century

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 199-217

Reading: Rule of St Francis, in Geary 407-410

Reading: Thomas of Cantimpré, Defense of the Mendicants, in Geary, 422-424

Reading: Jacques Fournier, Inquisition Records, in Geary, 429-447

October 28: Discussion: the high medieval church

Week 11

October 31: the Papal Monarchy: Innocent III

Reading: Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council, in Geary, 384-406, focusing on these canons: numbers 1, 3, 6-8, 10, 11, 13, 14-18, 21, 27, 29, 32, 38, 42-46, 51-52, 62, 67-70

November 2: High Medieval Kingship, part II: King John and Saint Louis

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 182-187

Reading: Magna Carta, in Geary, p. 636-641 (Geary prints several versions of the document; only read this one). Pay special attention to the following clauses: 2-9, 12, 14, 15, 20, 28, 38, 39, 40, 52, 54, and 61

Reading: the Trial of Enguerrand de Coucy, 1259 (on canvas)

November 4: discussion: Popes and kings c.1200

Week 12

November 7: the Crusades

Reading: "The First Crusade, Four Accounts," in Geary, 352-383; focus on 352-362

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 221-235

November 9: High Medieval Culture: Abelard and Heloise

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 269-288

Reading: "Letter 1", from the Letters of Abelard and Heloise, on Canvas

Reading: "Letter 2", from the Letters of Abelard and Heloise, on Canvas

November 11: Discussion: Crusades, Abelard and Heloise

Week 13

November 14: the Late Middle Ages: Plague and Insurrection

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers: 327-343, 347-354

Reading: The Black Death, in Geary, 491-500

November 16: The Hundred Years War

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 357-363, and 380-383

Reading: Froissart, excerpts in Geary, 590-602

November 18: Discussion: calamities of the 14th century

Week 14

November 21: Late Medieval Women

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers 343-346

Reading: The Trial of Joan of Arc, in Geary, 602-615

November 23: No Class (Thanksgiving)

November 25: No class (Thanksgiving)

Week 15

November 28: Church Developments: the Papacy and Popular Piety

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 398-420

Reading: Decrees of the Council of Constance (1414-18), on Canvas

November 30: Kings and States in the Fourteenth Century

Reading: Blockmans and Hoppenbrouwers, 380-396

Reading: The Deposition of King Richard II, on Canvas

December 2: Discussion: Late Medieval Institutions, Joan of Arc

Week 16

December 5: Summing Up the Middle Ages

December 6 (Tuesday): Reading Day

DUE: December 12, 8:00-11:00: In-class final exam (short answers) and due-date for take-home portion of final exam.

Academic Integrity Policy

Students are expected to include the following statement on all formal writing submitted for the course: "I have adhered to the UNCG Academic Policy in preparing and submitting this assignment." If you are unfamiliar with the policy, please read it carefully at <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>.

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating are serious academic offenses. Consulting sources on the internet and using their words, even slightly rephrased, is an obvious example of plagiarism. So too is copying work of another student.

To forestall the temptation to plagiarize, all formal written work this semester will be filtered through the Turn It In software. I'll provide more information in class.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected at all class meetings. You should check in with your TA before each lecture commences, and your TA will take attendance at Friday discussion sections. Failure to attend class with regularity will negatively impact your grade for the course. Missing more than 2 lectures without prior permission will result in a one-point deduction from the final grade average for each subsequent absence.

Additional Requirements and Advice

1. In case later consultation should prove necessary, students should keep copies of all graded assignments until the end of the semester (at least).
2. All course requirements must be completed to receive a grade for the class.
3. Late Work: Assignments are due on the date and at the time listed on the syllabus; if a crisis (such as illness) arises, it is your responsibility to contact me. If you do not contact me, the work (when eventually received) will be penalized, usually at the rate of 1/3 of a letter grade per day. .
4. Consultation of websites not assigned on the syllabus: many students feel that they can obtain the “answer” (or even a good interpretation) concerning a historical problem by simply looking it up on the web. While the web has many uses, this is almost invariably a fatal strategy. Looking up someone else’s ideas is no substitute for your own analysis. Some observations from the instructor’s point of view: 1) use of a web-site without citing it is plagiarism, which, if detected, can result in serious academic penalties (see above); 2) instructors can often detect uncited use of a website when either the writing style of the student’s paper changes drastically, or when facts/ideas/dates/people not discussed in class or in any of the assigned readings appear in an assignment. Again, I don’t want to discourage you from gaining more perspectives by using the web. What I’m saying is that ultimately you are being evaluated on your analysis of the assigned readings, not on your ability to plug the ideas of some web site into your essay.

CANVAS SITE

All materials for the course (except for the required books) will be posted on the Canvas site for the course. This is particularly important for announcements and E-Reserves. It is a good idea to check the Canvas site regularly. You can get to Canvas from the UNCG homepage (click ‘Blackboard’, then the option for Canvas).

TECHNOLOGY AND HISTORY 221

1. Email: I prefer to communicate by email (rebarton@uncg.edu). Please be advised, however, that I generally do not check email at night. I will try to respond to all email within 24 hours. If you haven’t had a response by then, try again. On the flip side, I can communicate with you only by your UNCG email account (that is the email linked to Canvas, for instance); make sure you check your UNCG email regularly.
2. Laptops in the Classroom: we will start the semester allowing laptops to be used in lecture for note-taking purposes only. If I detect that students are using laptops for other purposes, the privilege of using laptops will be removed for all students.
3. Phones: Please turn your phones off before class. If your phone rings during class, you will be counted as absent for that class period. If I detect that you are using your phone to text (or surf) you will also be counted as absent for that day. Subsequent offenses will be treated with increasing severity.