History 391 – Historical Skills and Methods: Evaluating the Twelfth-Century 'Renaissance'

Course Information

History 391-01; Spring 2013; CRN: 10711
Time: TR 12:30-1:45
Room: SOEB 214

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays from 10:00-11:00 and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is required for History Majors, and is a prerequisite for the senior capstone course (His 511). As a result, History 391 must necessarily pursue several distinct goals. The first major goal is to reinforce (at the least) and introduce (at the worst) some of the techniques and methods that historians practice when they devise, research, and write research papers. In other words, the first goal is to introduce or reinforce a set of skills which students can take with them to other upper-level history classes and especially to History 511. Among these skills are the following: 1) producing feasible research questions and topics from the reading of primary and secondary sources; 2) becoming familiar with the main categories of (and attributes of) primary sources pertinent to a topic; 3) becoming familiar with the locations and/or databases in which these sources can be accessed; 4) analyzing primary sources as texts, and not merely as data-mines (i.e., asking who? When? Where? Why?); 5) identifying the arguments of secondary sources and evaluating those arguments; and more.

But we cannot practice these skills in a vacuum, and so the other main goal of the course is to gain some mastery of the rich primary source base from, and the contested historiographical interpretations of, twelfth-century Europe. Although the so-called Long Twelfth Century (i.e., the period from c.1050-1225) has been considered an exceptionally important watershed in the history of the Middle Ages for centuries, it was the publication of Charles Homer Haskins' famous book, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century* (1927), that renewed interest in the period. Responding to the fetishization of "the [Italian] Renaissance" by his contemporaries (that is, to the developments in Italy and elsewhere during the 14th-16th centuries), Haskins attempted to shows two things: 1) that the centuries prior to the Italian Renaissance were not devoid of interest and value, but were central to the development of many political and cultural institutions that would come to play central roles in the rise of Western Europe; 2) the twelfth century, in particular, witnessed a self-conscious explosion of developments worthy of the word 'renaissance'. That is, although he did not deny that important things happened in Italy after 1350, Haskins claimed that the twelfth century was just as important a watershed as the better-known Italian Renaissance. In making his argument, Haskins focused on developments in political institutions, philosophy and education, art, and history-writing itself. Haskins' powerful argument has been of lasting value, as historians of both the Middle Ages and beyond have continually wrestled with the concepts and implications that Haskins raised. [Indeed, a recent non-fiction best-seller and Pulitzer Prize-winning book by Stephen Greenblatt, *The Swerve*, takes issue with Haskins by reprising the old, Italian Renaissance-centric view].

Our purpose is not to prove Haskins right or wrong, but rather to use the continuing debate over this period as a stepping-stone from which to develop and practice the skills listed in the first goal. To this end we will start by reading a detailed recent survey of the period to get a handle on its main contours; while we do this, we will be talking in general about some of the research techniques listed above. From this baseline we turn to extended analysis of types (or categories, or genres) of primary sources; we will perform this analysis by first reading what modern historians have had to say about that type of source (or, perhaps, about how that type of source can be used) and then by turning to some examples of the relevant genre of primary source. With the former, we will be interested in isolating and evaluating the arguments raised by the modern historians; armed with these arguments, our investigation of the latter (the sources themselves) will try to establish the core features of that genre as well as the uses to which the genre can be put.

Required Books

1. John Cotts, *Europe's Long Twelfth Century: Order, Anxiety and Adaptation, 1095-1229* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012). [ISBN: 9780230237858]

2. Thomas F.X. Noble and John Van Engen, eds., *European Transformations: the Long Twelfth Century* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2012). [ISBN: 978-0268036102]

3. William K. Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*, 4th ed. (Oxford, 2012). [ISBN: 9780199830046]

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods.

2. Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view.

3. Conduct preliminary, but original, research by investigating and interpreting primary and secondary sources.

4. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing.

5. Locate and manipulate research tools – bibliographies, source databases, source collections, etc. – appropriate to the development of a research topic.

Teaching Methods and Assignments

A. Teaching Methods

The success of the course is predicated on a collaborative, interactive environment. This means I will not normally offer lectures on the material. Rather, our purpose is to critically investigate and question all the readings that we encounter, both in terms of the <u>content</u> of those readings (e.g., a historian's argument, or simply 'what was going on' in a primary source) and in terms of meta-analysis of historical methods. In short, you should come to class having completed the reading and ready to discuss both content and how historians might use that content to construct a research question or research paper. If you assiduously create your nightly list of possible topics derived from each night's reading, then you ought to have a jumping-off point for discussion. When we read secondary sources, you should also come prepared to discuss the author's argument and its success. When we read primary sources, you should have thought a bit about the nature of that category of source, as well as having considered any questions about content.

B. Assignments

Participation (10%) (Learning Goals 1, 2, 4)

This is not a lecture class. Students are expected to take part in the discussion of readings and of skills and methods. Students who remain silent or offer only an occasional interjection every couple of days will earn a C for participation. Regular participation (one or more comments per day, of an often useful variety) earns a B. An A for participation is the product of frequent participation of an imaginative and/or useful nature.

Newspaper Assignment (10%) (Due January 29) (Learning Goal 1, 5)

Students will use newspaper databases to locate some article of relevance to twelfth-century Europe. Once having read the article, students will write a 1-2 page essay analyzing the perspective of the article with regard to the Middle Ages. That is, one could analyze the use of 'medieval' as an adjective in a piece about something non-medieval. One could also find an article which discusses some artifact, event or concept from the Middle Ages; in this case, the essay could evaluate how the article treats the Middle Ages in any number of ways.

Exercises identifying Possible Research Topics (10%) (nightly HW; collected randomly 3 times during the semester) (Learning Goals 1, 2)

Students are required to produce a list of 2-4 research questions from each night's reading. This means that as you do the reading, you should be thinking analytically about the material. If the readings are secondary sources, you might consider questions or issues either that were not addressed by the author, or that seem to be open to controversy. If the readings are primary sources, you should try to devise research questions based either on the content of specific sources or on the genre of source itself. As we will discuss in class, research questions need to be specific and analytical; they also need to be feasible, that is, answerable in the form of a twenty-page research paper; they also need to be feasible in the sense that good sources are likely to be available to answer the question. Research questions should **NOT**: 1) require simple factual answers (e.g., "When was the Battle of Hastings fought?" is a bad research question because it can be answered in any textbook); 2) be exceedingly broad (e.g., "Why did the crusades take place?"); 3) require book length answers (e.g., "How did twelfth-century philosophy differ from what came before?"); or 4) require sources that either never existed or that are inaccessible to English-reading students (e.g., "At what age did peasants marry? Why?" [sources that might exist to answer this question are likely to be in Latin], or "What did William the Conqueror think about pets?" [early medieval kings didn't write personal memoirs; moreover, treatises on pets are unknown to the Middle Ages]).

All of this sounds difficult, but the point of doing it daily is to get practice in thinking about potential topics. Each day in class I will ask three or four students to read out their questions, and we will all discuss the feasibility and value of those questions. I will collect the questions of those whom I ask to read them in class, and will offer some commentary on them. When I collect questions, they will be graded on the following scale: 1) excellent; 2) good; 3) fair; 4) zero (if a student doesn't have them). You can expect your questions to be collected at least twice, and probably three times during the semester.

Primary Source Analysis (20%) (Due Dates vary; see attached sheet; all due-dates between February 7 and April 4) (learning Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Each student will locate a primary source and fill out the Primary Source Analysis sheet for that source. Some regulations apply! I have divided the class into eight groups of four; due-dates for this assignment will be rolling, and dependent on group membership. Each student works alone on this project; your 'group' designation is only relevant for the project's due-date. See attached sheet for due-dates for each group.

Rule #1: you must choose a source which comes from any of the categories studied in class prior to the due-date of your group. That is, if you are in group A, you must do the primary source analysis on narrative sources (covered in class the week of 5-7 February). If you are in Group E, however, you can choose a primary source from any of the categories studied up to and including legal sources (i.e., any of the weeks between 5-7 February and 5-7 March). Clearly those in Group H will have more choice than those in Group A; I'm sorry about this, but the situation is reversed for the Secondary Source Analysis, so I have tried to equalize the burden somewhat.

Rule #2: you must choose a source that we haven't read in class.

Rule #3: the source must come from the Long Twelfth Century (ca1050-1225).

Rule #4: you must locate an appropriate full-text primary source using the Library (preferably) or the internet. By 'full-text' I mean a serious edition of that source; what I do not want is a snippet of a source included in a random web-site or in a course reader (e..g, Amt). You are welcome to consult with me to ensure that you've found a good 'full-text' version of your source. [Some latitude is possible here; for instance, the Geary reader which I use in HIS 221 prints some full texts]. For certain types of documents, of course, 'full texts' may mean collections of similar documents; this is the case with, say, letters. The 'full text' for a letter of Thomas Becket is the Duggan edition of the Becket Correspondence.

Rule #5: how much you read of the source is up to you; you need to read enough of it (or enough examples of short documents, like letters) to get a sense of the nature of that type of source and of the uses to which it can be put. Don't imagine that you can simply read the editor's introduction and answer the sheet with sufficient care.

Secondary Source Analysis (20%) (Due Dates vary; see attached sheet; all due-dates between February 7 and April 4) (Learning Goals 1, 2, 3, 4, 5)

Each student will locate an article-length piece of modern scholarship, read it, and complete the Secondary Source Analysis Sheet based on his/her reading of that article. The date on which the analysis is due depends on the group to which I have assigned you. Note: each student should choose a separate article; your 'group' designation only affects the due-date for the analysis. Regulations are as follows:

Rule #1: You must locate an article related to any of the subjects studied prior to your due-date. Students in Group E have less choice than those in Group D. Sorry about that!;

Rule #2: you should use relevant bibliographies and databases (e.g. Internet Medieval Sourcebook or ITER) to locate the article;

Rule #3: the article must be at least 15 pages long, and cannot be a book review;

Rule #4: articles must be scholarly, that is, they must have been published in recognized, peer-reviewed venues. This means either a journal (e.g., *Speculum,* or English Historical Review, or Journal of Medieval History, or any of dozens more) or a book of essays published by an academic press. It does not mean Wikipedia, or some enthusiast's diatribe on the web. Of course, many academic articles may be located on the web these days, but be sure that it was initially published by a reputable scholarly enterprise;

Rule #5: your article must have been published after 1970. Nothing from 1903 or 1890, please!

Rule #6: make sure your article is primarily written from a historical perspective, and about the Middle Ages. Sometimes students find articles that adopt more of a literary analysis than a historical one; try to avoid this. I've also seen modern 'thought pieces' by philosophers or pundits which make some reference to the Middle Ages; this is also inappropriate.

Final Project (30%): (due-date: Friday, 3 May) (Learning Goals 2, 3, 4, 5)

For the final project, each student will perform preliminary research on a topic of interest to him or her. The topic might emerge from one of the nightly exercises in identifying possible topics (q.v.) or might be something completely new. The format of the project is as follows: 1) a 4-6 page analysis of the problem or question to be investigated, the sources to be used, and the rationale for doing the project; 2) an annotated bibliography of both primary and secondary sources to be used in the project. The bibliography should have at least 3 primary sources and at least 5 secondary sources. Annotations should be two sentences long and should explain the utility of the source for the intended project.

Grade Breakdown

Participation	10%
Newspaper Analysis	10%
Identifying Possible Topics	10%
Primary Source Analysis	20%
Secondary Source Analysis	20%
Final Project	30%

Grading Scale

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

Schedule of Readings and Classes

1. January 15: Course Intro

2. January 17: History, Historiography and Historians
   Reading:
           Cotts, pp. 1-59 (intro, 1-13, politics, 14-59)
           Storey, 1-3, 5, 9-10

3. January 22: Archives, Databases, Bibliographies
   Reading:
           Storey, 28-30
           Cotts, 59-72, 80-106 (politics 59-72, society, 80-106)

4. January 24: Lessons from the Past: Remembering and Interpreting the Middle Ages
   Reading:
           Storey, 11-28
           Cotts, 107-150 (spirituality)

5. January 29: Source Collections
   Reading:
           Storey, 31-38
           Cotts, 151-201 (intellectual syntheses, crusading)
   Due: Newspaper Analysis

6. January 31: a Renaissance in the Twelfth Century?
   Reading:
           Storey, 59-63, 69-74
           John Gillingham, "A Historian of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance and the
               Transformation of English Society, 1066-ca.1200," in Noble and Van
               Engen, 45-74

7. February 5: Narratives Sources. Part I: Debating the Reign of King Stephen
   Reading:
           Storey, 93-98
           Blackboard: G.J. White, "The Myth of the Anarchy," *Anglo-Norman Studies* 22
               (2000), 323-337
           Blackboard: Hugh Thomas, "Violent Disorder in King Stephen's England: A
               Maximum Argument," in *King Stephen's Reign, 1135-1154*, ed. Paul
               Dalton and Graeme J. White (Boydell, 2008), 139-170.

8. February 7: Narrative Sources: Part II: chronicles of the reign of Stephen
   Reading:
           Blackboard: *Gesta Stephani* ("the Deeds of [King] Stephen"), book 1, caps. 1-7,

12-21, 39-41, and 48-68.

Blackboard: Henry of Huntingdon, *History of the English People*, book IV

Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group A

Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group E

9. February 12: Administrative Records: the 12th Century as a New Beginning

Reading:

Blackboard: M.T. Clanchy, "Introduction," in Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307*, 3rd edition (Blackwell, 2013), 1-20

Blackboard: Nicholas Vincent, "Why 1199? Bureaucracy and Enrolment Under John and his Contemporaries," in *English Government in theThirteenth-Century*, ed. A. Jobson (Boydell, 2004), 17-48.

10. February 14: Administrative Documents: A Sampling

Reading:

Blackboard: Writs found in Glanville

Blackboard: Pipe Roll for 33 Henry II (1187), selections for Worcester

Blackboard: Fine Rolls, 1224-5

Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group B

Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group F

11. February 19: The Rise of the Papacy

Reading:

Hannah Vollrath, "Sutri 1046 – Canossa 1077 – Rome 1111: Problems of Communication and Perception of Neighbors," in Noble and Van Engen, 132-170.

Blackboard: Sir Richard Southern, "The Papacy. II. The age of Growth, 1050-1300," in Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (Penguin, 1970), 100-133.

12. February 21: Papal Documents

Reading:

Blackboard: the Canons of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215)

Blackboard: Church Courts in Action: Canterbury, c.1200 (40 pp)

Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group C

Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group G

13. February 26: Learning and Letters

Reading:

Blackboard: Giles Constable, "Medieval Letters and the Letter Collection of Peter the Venerable," in Constable, ed., *The Letters of Peter the Venerable*, v. 2 (Cambridge, MA, 1967), 1-44.

14. February 28: Twelfth-Century Letters

Reading:

> Blackboard: Letters from the Becket Correspondence, TBA
> Blackboard: Letters 2-3 from the Correspondence of Abelard and Heloise

Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group D
Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group H

15. March 5: Legal Change in the Twelfth Century

Reading:

> Anders Winroth, "The Legal Revolution of the Twelfth Century," in Noble and Van
> Engen, 338-353
> Blackboard: Susan Reynolds, "Legal Change, 1140-1300" in Reynolds,
> *Kingdoms and Communities in Western Europe, 900-1300*, 2nd edition
> (Oxford, 1997), 39-66

16. March 7: Laws and Court Cases

Reading:

> Blackboard: Assize of Clarendon, Assize of Forest in Amt, ed., 134-139
> Blackboard: Glanvill, excerpt, in Amt, ed., 140-149
> Blackboard: Some Difficulties Obtaining Justice: the Case of Stephen of Marsay
> and Hamelin d'Anthenaise, ca. 1165
> Online: Cases Illustrating the Judicial Duel, 1064-1155
> (http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/12Cduels.asp)
> Blackboard: the End of a War between a Lord and a Vassal, 1199

Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group E
Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group A

SPRING BREAK: March 9-17

17. March 19: The Origins of Chivalry

Reading:

> Dominique Barthélemy, "Chivalric One-Upmanship in France, ca. 1100," in Noble
> and Van Engen, 75-92
> Blackboard: David Crouch, "From preudhommie to chevalerie," in Crouch, The
> Birth of Nobility (Pearson-Longman, 2005), 29-86.

18. March 21: Noble Self-Depiction in the 12th Century

Reading:

> Blackboard: from *The History of William Marshal* (excerpt from Amt)
> Blackboard: from *The History of William Marshal* (for the years 1216-19)
> Online: Bertran de Born, poems
> (http://usna.edu/Users/history/abels/hh315/Bertrand_de_Born.htm)

Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group F
Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group B

19. March 26: New Attitudes in Thought
        Reading:
                C. Stephen Jaeger, "John of Salisbury, a Philosopher of the Long Eleventh
                    Century" in Noble and Van Engen, 499-520
                John Marenbon, "Philosophy and Theology," in Noble and Van Engen, 403-425

20. March 28: The Rebirth of the Treatise: *Policraticus*
        Reading:
                Selections from John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, ed. C. Nederman
                    - on princes and tyrants, in Nederman, pp. 27-35, 190-201, 206-210
                    - the body politic metaphor, in Nederman, pp. 65-68
                    - on ambition, and the hypocritical religious who conceal ambition,
                        in Nederman, pp. 162-175
        Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group G
        Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group C

21. April 2: Material Evidence
        Reading:
                Storey, 68-69
                Journal Finder: E. Jane Chance, "Saracen Silk and the Virgin's *Chemise*: Cultural
                    Crossings in Cloth," *Speculum* 82 (2006): 365-397.

22. April 4: Material Evidence, part II
        Reading:
                Blackboard: *The Archaeology of Medieval Europe. Vol. 2: Twelfth to Sixteenth
                    Centuries*, ed. Martin Carver and Jan Klapste (Aarhus, 2011), chapter 9
                    (Towns), pp. 370-407
                Blackboard: *The Archaeology of Medieval Europe. Vol. 1: Eighth to Twelfth
                    Centuries AD*, ed. James Graham-Campbell with Magdalena Valor
                    (Aarhus, 2007), Chapter 15 (Life, Death and Memory), pp. 420-446.
        Due: Primary Source Analysis for Group H
        Due: Secondary Source Analysis for Group D

23. April 9: Instructor away

24: April 11: Instructor away

25. April 16: Literary Evidence
        Reading:
                Blackboard: *Raoul of Cambrai*

26. April 18: Social History and the Evidence of Those Who Worked

Reading:
   Paul Freedman, "Peasants, the Seigneurial Regime, and Serfdom in the
    Eleventh to Thirteenth Centuries," in Noble and Van Engen, 259-278
   Blackboard: documents on peasant manumission

27. April 23: A Persecuting Society?
  Reading:
    Blackboard: selections from R.I. Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, TBA
    Blackboard: Thomas of Monmouth on William of Norwich

28. April 25: Europeanization: the Bartlett Thesis
  Reading:
    Bartlett, *The Making of Europe*, pp. 1-3, 269-314

Tuesday, 30 April: No class, University follows Friday schedule

Wednesday, 1 May: Reading Day

Friday, 3 May, at 3:30 PM: **DUE: Final Project**

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/.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is expected at all class meetings. Missing more than 3 class meetings will result in a one-point deduction from the final grade 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.

BLACKBOARD SITE

All materials for the course (except for the required books) will be posted on the Blackboard site for the course. This is particularly important for primary sources, for announcements and for E-Reserves. It is a good idea to check the Blackboard site regularly. You can get to our Blackboard here: https://blackboard.uncg.edu/webapps/portal/frameset.jsp.

TECHNOLOGY

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 Blackboard, for instance); make sure you check your UNCG email regularly.

2. Laptops in the Classroom: Laptops are okay if used for note-taking. If I detect that you are using your laptop for other purposes, you will be banned from using it again for the rest of the semester.

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.