

HISTORY 709: The Impact of the Norman Conquest of England (1066-1215)



Course Information:

History 709-02 (CRN 16169). Spring 2017. Time: Thursday, 3:30-6:20 PM. Room: 2106 MHRA

Instructor Information:

Dr. Richard Barton. Office: 2115 MHRA Bldg. Office phone: 334-3998. Mailbox: 2118A MHRA
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Office Hours:

Tuesdays 11-12, Thursdays 1-2, and by appointment

Course Description:

The primary goal of this course is the production of a research paper (25-30 pages) on some aspect of English history in the period following the Norman Conquest of 1066. Early assignments are designed to develop research skills; these assignments will be tailored towards the research interests of the students who take the class, and should help to provide both the background and the skills necessary for producing a research paper. No prior knowledge of medieval history is required for this course.

The conquest of England by Duke William of Normandy in 1066 was a significant watershed moment for the history of Medieval England. William's dramatic victory earned him a new nickname ("the Conqueror") and ushered in changes in almost every aspect of English (and Norman) society, including government, law and administration, social organization, religious administration and practice, language and culture, and social roles (e.g. gender categories). In short, the changes wrought by the conqueror and his heirs provide fertile ground for research projects in any number of fields.

To accomplish the not insubstantial feat of researching and writing a 25+-page research paper, you will need to jump right into your research. Those accustomed to churning out a decent 5-10 page paper the night before it's due (as I did that plenty of times) will be in for a shock if they believe that a (good!) research paper can be produced in a similar way. You will need to begin your independent research almost immediately, and will need to spend significant time in the library (not just at your laptop) locating, reading, and annotating sources.

Important Note on Conducting Research on Medieval Topics

The field content of a research seminar carries important implications for the types of research that are feasible for that period. As we will repeatedly remind ourselves, before 1200 medieval Europeans wrote almost entirely in Latin (with a few super interesting exceptions beginning in the 12th century - but these exceptions were in Old French). As it is NOT a requirement of this course that you be able to read Latin (or Old French), we are already limited in the types of questions we can ask of the past by the simple fact of what sources have or have not been translated into modern English. A second important factor to keep in mind is that medieval Europeans were not necessarily concerned with the same kinds of questions that we might be; the primary sources they produced (in Latin!) reflected what they found important about their society and/or what they wished to record for pragmatic reasons. What I'm saying is that the nature of the primary sources available to us limits in meaningful ways the types of research we can perform. We will find that narrative sources, of the sort that historians of other periods of history might find to be of secondary interest (because they are 'subjective'), are essential sources for medieval history. I'm referring to chronicles, annals, histories, saints' lives, vernacular histories, and so forth. An important task for us, therefore, will be to become familiar with the genres of sources available to us, and to consider what kinds of research questions might be successfully asked of those sources. Ultimately, like all historians, we must be guided by the sources that are available to us. I can tell you know that, unfortunately, it is extremely difficult for a modern student without Latin to study the same kinds of questions that one might ask of 19th-century Britain or 20th-century America. For instance, sufficient sources (in translation) concerning the 'daily lives' of ordinary English people are lacking. As noted above, medievalists compensate for this simple evidentiary fact by asking different questions about their sources. This doesn't mean that all papers must be on kings or wars (common but misguided stereotypes about the Middle Ages). Medievalists, for instance, were among the first modern historians to study gender, and did so in theoretically advanced ways. Medievalists have also been increasingly prominent in discussions of religious identity and difference (although England was more uniform than other parts of the continent). Medievalists are often interested in theory, and in applying theoretical insights to particular sources: for instance, we have applied theoretical insights gleaned from gender, identity, emotion, class, race (when possible), violence, power, and so forth to the study of the medieval past. We also often apply those insights to a single narrative primary source,

by subjecting it to a rigorous critical analysis within its socio-historical context. So, excellent historical research on, say, the meaning of anger in Orderic Vitalis, or on William of Malmesbury's conception(s) of kingship, is both common and desirable. The bottom line is that, as I said above, we need to be sensitive to the sources that are available to us.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. Identify (and modify, if necessary) a viable research topic
2. Locate appropriate primary sources and analyze them within their context
3. Locate and evaluate the utility of secondary sources pertinent to the research topic
4. Contextualize a research topic within existing historiographical debates
5. Develop and maintain an original argument.
6. Communicate the results of research both orally and in writing.

REQUIRED BOOKS (available for sale in the UNCG bookstore):

There are only two required books for this class.

1. Robert Bartlett, *England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000). ISBN: 0-199251010.
2. Henry of Huntingdon, *History of the English People, 1000-1154*, trans. Diana Greenway (Oxford, 2002). ISBN: 0192840754

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Participation	15%
Research Exercises 1-5	25%
Research Exercise 6	10%
Research Paper	50%

Attendance and Participation (SLOs 1, 5, 6)

Attendance in class is mandatory. Regular participation in class meetings is expected, as is thoughtful interaction in individual meetings with instructors. Discussion of collective readings is expected. A part of the participation grade is also derived from presentations made to class, whether individually or in your small group.

Research Exercises

These short assignments are designed to assist you in the research process, both by representing the components of research and by ensuring that you are making regular process along the way.

Research Exercise #1: Project Description (SLO 1)

The first step in research is in some ways the hardest; it is the identification of a viable research topic. A good research topic is one that is analytical, feasible with regard to primary sources, and original to some degree. The first exercise asks students to propose a general topic, as well as a specific analytical question to be asked of that topic. It also asks you to write a short paragraph explaining both your choice of topic and the value of the question you have proposed.

Research Exercise #2: Historiography Paper with Prelim. Bibliography (SLOs 1, 3, 4)

Historical research must always take into account the work of previous scholars who have studied a topic. Particularly with well-studied fields, this means discovering an ‘angle’ or argument that has not already been ‘done to death.’ This exercise asks students to assemble a preliminary bibliography of modern scholarship on their proposed topic and then assess the main perspectives and trajectories of that scholarship. The essay should not be serial (author x, then author y, then author z) but rather should take a broad view (while still referencing individual historians).

Research Exercise #3: Research Proposal (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)

This exercise asks students to model what actual historians do all the time when they are seeking grant funding or a publishing contract: that is, convince the reviewer (me!) that they have an interesting, exciting topic that is worth the time to investigate further. The proposal should accomplish the following: 1) it should identify your specific argument within the broader topic you’ve chosen; 2) it should justify that argument with respect to the other modern scholarship by explaining how your argument intersects with that scholarship; 3) it should convince the reader that a sufficiency of quality primary sources exist (and can be named and briefly discussed) to allow the argument to be made. You should also attach your working bibliography.

Research Exercise #4: Primary Source Analysis (SLO 1, 2)

By this point in the semester you should be deep inside your research. For this exercise you will choose a specific primary source (or specific excerpt from one if you are using longer sources) and write 1-2 pages explaining in detail how this example will help support your argument. You should attach a photocopy of the relevant passage/excerpt/document with your analysis.

Research Exercise #5: Outline of paper and draft first paragraph (SLOs 1, 4, 5)

For this exercise you should present a full outline of how you expect to make your argument; you should have bullets and sections that clearly indicate how the argument will progress. Along with the outline, attach a first draft of your introduction, in which you present your argument and explain how the paper will proceed.

Research Exercise #6: Peer Review of Another Paper ((SLO 5)

All students will carefully read and minutely critique (grammar as well as structure and concepts) the polished first drafts of 1-3 other students. You should mark up a hard copy of the paper (which you will deliver to the reviewee) and summarize your

advice/suggestions in a 1-2 page paper that you provide both to the reviewee and to me.

The Research Paper (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6)

The goal of the course is the production of a well-written paper 25-30 pages in length. A polished first draft is due first; this will receive both peer review and review from the instructor. The final paper will then be revised based on the comments of reviewers.

UNIT I: Getting Our Bearings in the Anglo-Norman and Angevin Worlds

Week 1:	January 19	<p>England after 1066</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Robert Bartlett, <i>England Under the Norman and Angevin Kings, 1075-1225</i>, Chapters 1 and 3</p> <p>Optional: For those looking for a simple narrative of ‘the events’ of this period, you could do worse than consult something like C. Warren Hollister and R. Stacey, <i>The Making of England to 1399</i>, 8th edition (Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 115-256.</p>
Week 2	January 26	<p>Individual Meetings</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Before the meeting, you should have read a chapter of Bartlett that corresponds to your interests, and should have thought a bit about the kinds of research you’d like to perform</p>
Week 3	February 2	<p>Aristocratic Life</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Bartlett, Chapters 4 and 11, plus one other from among chaps. 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, or 12</p> <p>In Class: Presentations on Primary Source Genres/Collections</p>
	February 6	<p>Due: Research Exercise #1 (project description). Upload to Canvas by 5 PM</p>
Week 4	February 9	<p>Religion and Society</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Bartlett, chapters 8 and 9, plus one more that you haven’t read yet from among chaps. 2, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, or 12</p> <p>In Class: Presentations on Primary Source Genres/Collections</p>

Week 5	February 16	Getting a Grip on Primary Sources
		<u>Reading:</u> Henry of Huntingdon, pp. vi-xxxvi and 3-120. (Canvas): Bjorn Weiler, "William of Malmesbury on Kingship," <i>History</i> 90 (2005), 3-22.
	February 20	Due: Research Exercise #2 (Historiography Essay). Upload to Canvas by 9 AM

Unit II: Conceptualizing, Researching, and Writing

Week 6	February 23	Individual Meetings
	February 27	Due: Research Exercise #3 (Research Proposal). Upload to Canvas by 9AM
Week 7	March 2	Discussion of Research Proposals (in class)
	March 6	Due: Research Exercise #4 (Primary Source Analysis). Upload to Canvas by 9 AM
Week 8	March 9	Individual Meetings
Week 9	March 16	No Class! Spring Break
Week 10	March 23	Progress Reports in Class
	March 27	Due: Research Exercise #5 Due (Outline and Thesis Paragraph). Upload to Canvas by 9 AM
Week 11	March 30	Individual Meetings
Week 12	April 6	Optional: Individual Meetings. Must let Barton know by 4 April
Week 13	April 13	Poster Presentations in Class
Week 14	April 20	No Class Meeting
		Due: Complete, Polished First Drafts (with notes and bibliography). Hard copies to be delivered to Barton and peer reviewers by 5 PM.

Week 15	April 27	Discussion of Rough Drafts; Course Wrap-Up
		Due: Research Assignment #6: Peer-Reviews (bring 2 copies of peer-review to class)
Week 16	May 4	No Class.
		Due: Final Revised Drafts to my office by 5 PM

THE 'LEGAL' STUFF

1. In case later consultation should prove necessary, students are asked to keep copies of all graded assignments until at least the end of the semester.
2. All course requirements must be completed to receive a grade for the class. This means that you will fail the course if you don't, for instance, write the first paper.
3. Regarding 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 substantially penalized. Contact may be made by phone, email, or a note left in my mailbox in the History Department (219 McIver). And while I provide my home phone number at the top of the syllabus, I will be annoyed if you call me at home after 9 PM.
3. PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is a type of cheating, and occurs when a person passes off (whether intentionally or un-intentionally) someone else's words or ideas as their own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense, which, in its most overt forms, can result in formal disciplinary action by the university.

This is a notoriously thorny area for students. Many students unintentionally commit plagiarism by 'borrowing' ideas, interpretations, and/or actual words from other authors. Make sure that your words are your own, and that your interpretations are also your own. If you find yourself using someone else's words or ideas, make sure you have given him/her credit by using a footnote, endnote, or parenthetical citation. When writing exams or papers, keep in mind the following points:

1. DO discuss sources, interpretations, and anything else with your peers and friends.
2. DO feel free to make use of interpretations presented in class.
3. DO NOT pass off someone else's words or ideas as your own. To do so is to commit the academic crime of plagiarism, a serious offense that can lead to a variety of punishments including failing the course. If you copy the exact words of another author into your paper, they must appear within quotation marks and you must provide a citation to the source from which you took the quotation. Likewise, if you simply rearrange the words but keep the main point and/or interpretation from another text, you also must provide a citation indicating the source of the point/interpretation. Note: my comments in class do not need to be cited.