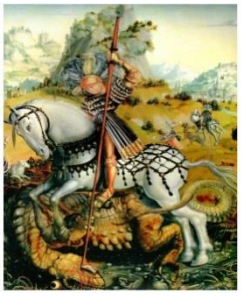
PURDUE UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

Spring 2025

HIST 103
INTRODUCTION TO THE MEDIEVAL WORLD

Location: MATH 175
Meeting Days: M-W-F 3:20 pm – 4:20 pm



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https://purdue-edu.zoom.us/j/4382740154?pwd=ZkU0UXI0cHhMSlVHOEtQTkFzT2NtUT09

Meeting ID: 438 274 0154
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SCHM 419

Course Description

This course is an overview of medieval history from the late Roman Empire to the birth of Renaissance Europe, encompassing the millennium from about 300 AD to 1500 AD. The course will explore political, religious, and social changes as well as economic, technological, and cultural developments.

By the end of the course, students will gain a sophisticated understanding of the large historical processes that took place during the period and identify those that have been formative in the development of European Civilization. As we explore the themes of the course, students will also develop an awareness of the complexity of human experience of the men and women who inhabited the medieval world.

Required Texts:

Barbara Rosenwein, *A Short History of the Middle Ages, Volume II: From c.900 to c.1500* 6th edition (University of Toronto, 2023).
Patrick Geary, *Readings in Medieval History*, 5th edition (University of Toronto, 2015).

Learning Outcomes

A. identify and assess the large historical processes that transformed the European world from 300 AD to 1500 AD.
    1. Explain the geopolitical shift in the Mediterranean world after the dissolution of the Roman Empire in the West.
    2. Identify the three main civilizations that emerged by c. 700 A.D. and their political, cultural, and social characteristics.
    3. Identify the "Nations" that populated Western Europe from 500 A.D. to 900 A.D. and their political, cultural, and social characteristics.
    4. Articulate the causes and nature of the transformations that swept Europe after the 11th century and that culminated with the Renaissance in the 15th century.
B. describe certain historical events of the period that had been formative to the development of Western Europe.
    1. Understand the causes and consequences of the first Crusade
    2. Identify the positive and negative impact of the Black Plague.
    3. Contextualize the so-called "Commercial Revolution."
    4. identify at least three consequences of the rise of universities.
C. become familiar with the techniques and skills historians utilize to interpret the past.
    1. Understand change over time (a major tenet of the discipline) as it applies to European civilization from 300 A.D. to 1500 A.D.
    2. Understand the difference between primary, secondary, and tertiary sources

Assignments and Evaluation:

Assignments for this course provide students the opportunity to build, improve, and expand their analytical skills and historical knowledge. Assessment, therefore, has been designed to evaluate content knowledge, critical writing ability, and engagement with the material as follows:

1. **A Midterm and a Final—essay format.** You will be given the exam questions one week in advance.

   NOTE: I understand that there might be instances in which students will be unable to take the exam during the assigned date (see attendance policy below) either due to illness, academic, or family emergencies. If that is the case, you have ten days to make up the Exams. It is your responsibility to request a date for retaking it. Only justified absences will be considered.

2. **Evidence-based writing assignments (EBWA); two paragraphs or more.** Over the course of the semester, you will engage with critical analysis of the material; this could

be answering a question I will pose or analyze a primary source. This will prepare you for the exams and will help you become familiar with the methodology used by historians. The purpose is to utilize "evidence" to understand the historical context that you are getting from the class lectures and the textbook.

I will post a prompt in the form of a question, or a statement and you will answer utilizing the "evidence" in the source. The Prompt will be posted a few days before the assignment is due. This is a short writing assignment that will prepare you for the exams, help you think through the material, and does not entail research. Only the material assigned for the course is allowed.

3. **Participation/Discussion Forums (DF):** Each week, as we move through the material for the class, you will engage with a primary source and your classmates' responses.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION	Points	Due Dates
Exam: Midterm	**20**	**February 28**
Exam: Final	**30**	**TBA**
Discussion Forums **8 @ 4 points each**	**32**	**January 17, 24** **February 7** **March 7, 28** **April 4, 18, 25**
Evidence-based writing assignments, **4 @ 6 points each.**	**24**	**January 31** **February 14** **March 14** **April 11**
Final Grade Total	**106**	

WARNING: Even if you have the numerical grade to pass the course; missing a major assignment is an automatic failure.

Grading Scale—I have a policy of NOT rounding up grades. If you get 89.7, for example, you will earn a B+. To get the A- your total number of points would have had to add up to 90 and above.

100-98 = A+ 97-93 = A 92-90 = A- 89-88 = B+ 87-83 = B 82-80 = B-
79-78 = C+ 77-73 = C 72-70 = C- 69-68 = D+ 67-63 = D 62-60 = D-
59-0 = F

How to do well in class

Learning is a complex and gradual development. Historical processes are complex phenomena that cannot be comprehended by a simple date or event. The best way to approach the material is to engage in active learning techniques. Note taking is the best way to consolidate knowledge and keeping up with reading assignments as well. Working through the material progressively is the best way to learn.

How to communicate with your professor and TA (and this applies to all your professors, so you may want to pay attention and evaluate yourself):

Your ability to function in whatever professional world you will enter upon graduation has to do with communication. What better way to start learning than with your professors and instructors. I expect the use of **proper email etiquette and proper titles** when emailing myself or the TAs. When addressing me, use Dr. or Professor follow by my last name. Your email should begin with a salutation such as "Dear Professor Mitchell" or "Dear Ms. Fish" or "Dear Mr. Huber." A "Hello Dr. Mitchell" is acceptable. A hi without anything else is not. End with a proper closing, such as "Sincerely," or "Yours." Include your full name and do not give any personal information in your email such as your student number. Use an identifiable subject in your email: i.e. HIST 103, question about the exam.

Attendance and Make-Up Work Policy

We will take attendance, which is mandatory, and will excuse absences according to Purdue's policies https://catalog.purdue.edu/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=21832#classes . Attendance will not be part of your grade numerically, but will be essential to do well in this class.

Late work and Extensions Policy: Extensions will be granted when circumstances outside your control prevent you from submitting an assignment. You should talk to me if that is the case, hopefully in advance (although I understand that is not always possible). Late work without any sort of communication will be penalized or, in some cases, will not be accepted. If you miss a major assignment due to illness or an emergency, it is your responsibility to contact us and make alternative plans to complete the work.

Even if you have a numerical grade to pass the class, you must complete all major assignments. Missing a midterm or the final, for example, is an automatic failure. Missing more than two EBWA is also an automatic failure. Get in touch with me if your semester has been disrupted due to circumstances outside your control.

CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS AND LAST-MINUTE COMMUNICATIONS (IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES) WILL BE DONE THROUGH BRIGHSTPACE. ENABLE NOTIFICATIONS.

Please, make sure you check the course website or allow notifications sent to you. This is the medium I will use to communicate with the class should some unforeseen circumstance comes up.

Academic Integrity:

I take Academic Integrity very seriously and will not hesitate to refer students to the Deans of Students Office if necessary.

Purdue Honor Pledge: "As a boilermaker pursuing academic excellence, I pledge to be honest and true in all that I do. Accountable together—we are Purdue."

Plagiarism or any sort of cheating will result in a failing grade for the entire course. Cheating can take many forms, including, but not limited to, passing someone else's work for one's own, copying from another student's work during an exam, or using unauthorized material. Use of ChatGPG **is considered a form of plagiarism in this class. Another important consideration:** ONLY MATERIAL FROM THIS COURSE SHOULD BE CONSULTED FOR YOUR ASSIGNMENTS.

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information that is submitted provides the greatest opportunity for the university to investigate the concern."

Diversity & Inclusion

Purdue University is committed to maintaining a community which recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among its members; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. In pursuit of its goal of academic excellence, the University seeks to develop and nurture diversity. The University believes that diversity among its many members strengthens the institution, stimulates creativity, promotes the exchange of ideas, and enriches campus life. Purdue's nondiscrimination policy can be found at: http://www.purdue.edu/purdue/ea_eou_statement.html.

Disclaimer:

In the event of a major emergency, the requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted on Blackboard once the course resumes or can be obtained by contacting the professor via email.

Course Schedule:

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF THIS SCHEDULE WITH YOU AND REFER TO IT ON A REGULAR BASIS.

Date	**Lecture and Discussion Topics**	**Readings**	**Assignments' Due Dates and Weekly Responsibilities**
THE MEDITERRANEAN WORLD: FROM ANTIQUITY TO THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES (200s to 500s AD)			
January 13-15-17	Content and Expectations	Syllabus	

	The Mediterranean World during the Roman Republic and Roman Empire	Brightspace: Start reviewing material in the "Decline and Dissolution of the Western Roman Empire" Tab in Content Area. OPTIONAL READING: Geary, "Augustine of Hippo, City of God"	
January 17			DF1—1st post due by the end of the class Responses to classmates by following Tuesday
January 20 MLK NO CLASS			
January 22-24	The Roman Empire under Emperors Diocletian and Constantine	Brightspace: Review material in the "Decline and Dissolution of the Roman Empire" Tab. READING: Geary, "St. Perpetua, The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas"	
January 24			DF2—1st post due by the end of the class. Responses by following Monday.
January 27-29-31	Early Medieval Society in Western Europe	Brightspace: Review material in the "Decline and Dissolution of the Roman Empire" Tab. READING: Geary, "Jordanes, History of the Goths" AND "Tacitus Germania"	

January 31			EBWA #1 Western Europe after the dissolution of the Roman Empire
EUROPE AFTER ROME: THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES, 600-1000 AD			
February 3-5-7	Islam, Byzantium, and Europe	Brightspace: Start reading material in the "Europe after Rome" tab READING: Geary, "The Tomb of Childeric, Father of Clovis" AND "Salic Law" AND "Saint Benedict, Rule for Monasteries" OPTIONAL: "King Alfred"	
February 7			DF3--1st post due by the end of the class. Responses by following Monday
February 10-12-14	Charlemagne, the Carolingians, and the Carolingian Renaissance	Brightspace: Reading material in the "Europe after Rome" tab READING: Geary, "Einhard, The Life of Charlemagne" AND "Selected Capitularies"	
February 14			EBWA #2 Carolingian Renaissance
February 17-19	Viking, Magyar, and Muslim Invasions	Brightspace: Reading material in the "Europe after Rome" tab	

		READING: Rosenwein: Chapter 4: Political Communities Reordered (c. 900-c.1050) Geary, "Dhuoda's Handbook for her Son (Liber Manualis"	
February 21	**NO CLASS**	**Finish reading Rosenwein chapter**	
February 24-26	Europe after Rome and Review for the exam		
February 28			**Midterm Exam—Bring Blue Books**
THE TRANSFORMATION OF EUROPE: FROM THE FLOURISHING MIDDLE AGES TO THE FIRST GLOBAL AGE			
March 3-5-7	New Technologies, Climate Change, and Demographic Improvements	Brightspace: Reading material in "The Transformation of Europe" tab. READINGS: Rosenwein, Chapter 5 Highlights AND "Economic Networks in Europe and Beyond" Geary, "Cluniac Charters"	
March 7			DF4--1st post due by the end of the class. Responses by following Monday
March 10-12-14	Political Transformations and the First Crusade	Brightspace: Continue with "The Transformation of Europe" READING: Rosenwein, chapter 5: "The Formation of Towns and Cities" AND "Urban Arrangements" AND	

		"Church Reform and Its Aftermath" to the end of the chapter Geary:	
March 14			**EBWA #3 Crusades**
March 17-19-21	**SPRING BREAK**		
March 24-26-28	The Reconquista in Iberia, Political Reordering in Europe, and other Crusades	Brightspace: Continue with "The Transformation of Europe" READING: Rosenwein, READ ONLY THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS: Chapter 6: "The Maghreb and West Africa" AND "European Ambitions and their Limits" AND "New Crusades, North and South"	
March 28			DF5--1st post due by the end of the class. Responses by following Monday
March 31-April 2-4	The Church and the Universities	Brightspace: Continue with "The Transformation of Europe" READING: READ ONLY THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS from Rosenwein, Chapter 6: "The Church in the World" AND "Taxes, Inventories, and Other Mechanisms of Control"	

		Geary, “The Rule of Saint Francis of Assisi” and “Clare of Assisi Testament”	
April 4			DF6: 1st post due by the end of the class. Responses by following Monday
Week of April 7-9 -11	The Black Death and other Crises	Brightspace: Continue with “The Transformation of Europe” READING, , READ ONLY THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS from Rosenwein: Chapter 7, “New Inter-City Conflicts” and “Xenophobia” Chapter 8: From “The Black Death” to “The Great Western Schism” Geary, “The Black Death”	
April 11			**EBWA #4 The Black Death**
April 14-16 -18	European Renaissances and the Renaissance with Capital R.	Brightspace: Continue with “The Transformation of Europe” READING: Rosenwein, Chapter 6: READ ONLY THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS from Rosenwein: Chapter 6: “The Culture of the Courts” AND “Urban Guilds Incorporated” AND “Gothic Art and	

		Architecture" AND "Material Culture: The Making of an Illuminated Manuscript" Chapter 7, "The Elasticity and Rigidity of Europe" and its subsections. Chapter 8, "Renaissance Italy" AND "The Northern Renaissance." Geary, "Magna Carta" AND "Las Siete Partidas" AND one of the following two: "Florence: Catasto of 1427" OR "Gregorio Dati, Diary"	
April 18			DF7: 1st post due by the end of the class. Responses by following Monday
April 21-23-25	New Routes, Exploration, and Political Developments	Brightspace: Continue with "The Transformation of Europe" READING, READ ONLY THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS from Rosenwein, Chapter 7, "Winners and Losers in the Profit Economy" AND "New Money" AND "Strengthened Monarchs and Their Adaptations" to the "Road to Avignon"	

		Chapter 8: "The Hundred Years' War (1337-1453" AND "King and Princes, Knights and Citizens" AND "Discontent in Town and Countryside" AND "New Horizons" to the end of the chapter Geary, "The Trial of Joan of Arc"	
April 25			DF8: 1st post due by the end of the class. Responses by following Monday
April 28-30	Review for Final Exam		Bring your questions after reading the prompts.
May 2			
Finals Week—May 2-7. Final Exam time and day, TBA Bring Blue Books			