

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

Medieval Studies 1022

M.J. Toswell
Mondays 5:30-8:30

2019-2020

Academic Calendar Description

This foundation course will over the year introduce civilization and thought in Europe and the Mediterranean between 400 and 1500, with emphasis on the medieval roots of many modern institutions and attitudes, including philosophy, technology, law, governance, courtly love and attitudes to women, warfare, art and archaeology, Christianity and Islam, literature, music and coinage.

Antirequisite(s): Medieval Studies 1025F/G, 1026F/G, Medieval Studies 1020E
3 hours, 1.0 course



Course Description

This course introduces the Middle Ages, looking at the major developments of technology and ideas, of religion and the development of countries and nations. We will look at Charlemagne and Alfred, Eleanor of Aquitaine and Abbess Hild of Whitby, Bernard of Clairvaux and Pope Sylvester II at the turn of the first millennium. However, this year we will also focus on medieval bodies, looking at the parts of the human body and what information available in the Middle Ages tells us about the health and welfare of the human body. We

will consider the five senses, medicine, sex and sexuality, life and death, reliquaries and resurrections, in an effort to determine what ordinary and extraordinary people in the medieval world knew and believed about the human body and its functions.

The detailed syllabus will offer a set of websites for most classes, as well as an introductory paragraph or two situating the topic of the day. You should go through all of the websites and readings before the class, thinking about the material presented, taking notes as necessary, and engaging closely with the material. Classes will largely be run as discussions, not lectures, after a preliminary mini-lecture. This means that your engagement with the material, and your willingness to discuss it in class, will be a significant feature of the course. You will not be sufficiently engaged with the course if you just come to class and take notes from the class discussion, or check the course website for the class reviews which the teaching team will provide. At the same time, you should use your discretion; some of the websites are very full and detailed, with more detail than is necessary for you at this level. Others are quite short clips, and still others are extended but user-friendly videos. Some effort has been made to provide different kinds of material each week, to appeal to different learning preferences.

Required Textbooks

Connie Willis, *Doomsday Book* (New York: Spectra, 1992).

Jack Hartnell, *Medieval Bodies: Life, Death and Art in the Middle Ages* (London: Wellcome Collection, 2019).

Vinland Sagas. Tr. Keneva Kunz, Ed. Gísli Sigurðsson (London: Penguin, 2008).

Course Evaluation

The final grade will be calculated as follows:

Mid-term 1 - October 29 or 31	15%
Mid-term 2 - January 28 or 30	25%
Learning Cell - September	10%
Learning Cell - January	10%
Final Examination	35%
Participation Marks -	5%
Participation bonus marks - up to	3%

The two mid-terms and the final examination will have short-answer and identification questions amounting to about 25% of the total, and short and long essay questions whose value will be about 75% of the total. Sample midterms and final examinations will be posted as study aids.

Learning Cell: More information will be available on the Learning Cell tab in OWL, but the basic principle of a learning cell is that you bring to class and submit to the course website your printed paper at 700-1000 words. In class you will be divided into groups of five to seven students, and you will present your work (not reading it aloud, just presenting the argument) to your colleagues, who will comment on it and help you to improve it. At the end of the learning cell, you will have some in-class time to clean up your comments and put them onto your previously submitted paper, and upload the new and better version. Please don't incorporate the comments; just indicate what good suggestions for changing the paper you find compelling in added notes. You will also have some extra time after class (about an hour) to complete the uploading of your corrected learning cell. The first learning cell will concern the *Vinland Sagas* and the second will address *Medieval Bodies*.

Participation: These marks will be for attendance at the whole class, evidence of having completed the class preparation, and for good contributions to class discussions. Good contributions need not be lengthy or frequent; they should however be respectful of the class environment, engaged with the material, investigative in nature, and relevant to the issue currently under discussion.

Teaching Team

M.J. Toswell, University College 2418

Office Hours: tba

Tutorial Assistant: tba

Course Syllabus

September the *Vinland Sagas*, the medieval in Canada, Vikings and L'Anse aux Meadows

October late antiquity and the beginning of the Middle Ages, the rise of Christianity, the rise of Islam, material culture, Charlemagne

November battles, monasticism and asceticism, worship, education, leisure, work, music, food, Christmas and feasts

January medieval manuscripts and coins; the first millennium, the eleventh century

February the eleventh and twelfth centuries, courtly love and chivalry, the Crusades

March the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: castles and conflicts; the fifteenth century, tournaments, the end of Byzantium, city-states, medieval glory and excess, *Doomsday Book*, medievalism