

**Medieval Europe**  
Christian Raffensperger  
History 111H – 1W  
Fall Semester 2009  
MWF 12:40–1:40 P.M.  
Hollenbeck 318

The origins of medieval Europe are grounded in the world of Late Antiquity. This class begins with the last of the Western Roman Emperors by surveying the “barbarian” kingdoms that had been created in the fourth and fifth centuries. Essential to understanding Europe is the relationship between East and West. Starting with a dominant Byzantium in the early part of our course, we’ll examine ups and downs in the East/West relationship in the ninth and early twelfth centuries and their antagonistic relationship after 1204 and the sack of Constantinople. Essential to this story are the lives of women and religious minorities, such as Jews, Muslims, and pagans. Those stories will be woven in with the traditional highlights of the Middle Ages, such as Charlemagne’s ascension as Holy Roman Emperor, the Viking raids throughout Europe, the rise of the Normans and the conquest of England, the reform papacy and the Crusades, and the beginning of the Renaissance. Medieval Europe changed drastically over the thousand years studied in this course, and we will attempt to both understand the events and processes that contributed to that change as well as the shape of Europe at the end of our period.

*Writing Intensive – No Prerequisites*

Professor: Christian Raffensperger  
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Supplemental Instructor: Joseph Nixon  
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**Assignments and Deadlines**

The format for this class is largely lecture, and thus attendance is a main requirement of the course (see Attendance Policy below), as is participation when we have discussion. Discussion will often be centered around the readings, especially the primary sources, and it is vital that you keep up with them.

There will be three exams which will divide up the material of the course. These exams will not be cumulative, with the exception of one overarching essay question on the final exam. That question will expect you to demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge of what has been covered over the course of the semester.

You will have a series of regular writing assignments on the additional readings. Each week we will have an additional source for you to read that will be related to the week’s lecture and reading in Hollister. That material will be included in discussion and

for quizzes and exams, in addition you are required to write a two page analysis of those sources eight times during the course of the semester. When you write the analysis is up to you, though I encourage you not to leave them all until the last eight weeks. The goal of the analysis is to understand who wrote it, why they wrote, what does it say, and how does it correspond with the rest of the information we learned in class and in the other readings.

There will also be a number of quizzes spread out (unannounced) over the course of the semester. These quizzes will be on both lecture and reading, and will require you to keep current with both. Focus in particular on the maps in the book, as there will often be a map component to these quizzes.

The final assignment will be a short research paper of five-seven pages. You will need to formulate a topic based in one of three areas that will be a focus of this class; Conversion, Succession, Interfaith Relations. The first step in this process will be to write up a one paragraph topic statement/summary that will be submitted to me approximately two weeks in advance of the paper's due date. This topic will also have a short bibliography of two primary and one secondary sources, that you will be using. This is part of your grade for the project and must be completed on time. The final paper will be handed in the last week of class and must use three primary and three secondary sources. Those sources must be footnoted in appropriate Chicago Manual of Style footnotes. Please see me or the Writing Center for assistance if you are unsure of how to do this.

If you have any questions about any of these assignments, please come see me during my office hours or make an appointment. Finally, this syllabus is subject to change by the instructor, if changed, the students will be informed with sufficient notice to complete assignments.

The grades will be weighted as follows:

- Attendance: 5%
- Participation: 5%
- Exam 1: 13%
- Exam 2: 13%
- Source Analysis Papers: 24%
- Quizzes: 15%
- Research Paper: 10%
- Final Exam: 15%

### **Required Books**

C. Warren Hollister. *Medieval Europe: A Short History*. (hereafter Hollister)  
(All additional readings will be on Moodle)

### **Schedule of Meetings and Assignments**

*Week 1 (August 24, 26, 28): The Fall of the Roman Empire in the West*  
(Hollister chaps. 2, 3; Conversion of Clovis; Conversion of England)

Introduction to the course; The last Roman emperors; The Franks and the "barbarian" kingdoms; The Christianization of Anglo-Saxon England

*Week 2 (August 31, September 2, 4): Byzantium, Islam, and Western Europe*

(Hollister chap. 4, pp. 97–103; Procopius' Secret History; Battle of Tours)  
Byzantium; The Birth of Islam; The Islamic Empires; The Fall of the Merovingians and  
the Rise of a New European Order

*Week 3 (September 7, 9, 11): Charlemagne and Carolingian Europe*

(Hollister chap. 5, 119–24, 128–47; Life of Charlemagne – Einhard; On the Division of  
the Empire)

Charles the Great; Charlemagne's Coronation; The end of Anglo-Saxon England;  
Fragmentation of the Carolingian Empire

*Week 4 (September 14, 16, 18): Vikings!*

(Hollister 121–28; Haywood 1; Ravages of the Northmen in Frankland; The Martyrdom  
of St. Edmund)

Viking raids throughout Europe; Establishment of Viking kingdoms; Responses to the  
Vikings; Vikings move west

*Week 5 (September 21, 23, 25): Viking States and Sagas (Exam 1 on 9/25)*

(Haywood 2; The Vinland Sagas)

Viking States in Europe – Iceland, Greenland, Rus', and elsewhere; The Discovery and  
Settlement of Iceland and Greenland; Sagas as sources and evidence

*Week 6 (September 28, 30, October 2): Creation of, and Conversion in, the Slavic World  
(Russian Primary Chronicle 1; Christianization of Bulgaria; Medieval Russia 1; Russian  
Primary Chronicle 2)*

The Creation of Rus'; The Problems and Perils of Conversion – the Case of Bulgaria;  
The Conversion of Rus'

*Week 7 (October 5, 7, 9): The Slavs as European Actors*

(Russian Primary Chronicle 3; Deeds of the Princes of the Poles 3; "Reexamining Rus'"  
1; Cambridge History of Poland 2; Ottonian Germany – Thietmar of Merseburg)

Interactions in Medieval Europe; Analysis of Sources – What can primary sources tell  
us?; The Travels of Iziaslav

*Week 8 (October 12, 14, 16): Investiture Controversy; Byzantium and the Normans*

(Hollister chap. 9; Alexiad of Anna Comnena on the Norman Wars; Letters of Gregory  
VII)

Ottonians and Salians; Investiture Controversy; The reform papacy; Declining  
Byzantium; Rise of the Normans

*Week 9 (October 21, 23 – No Class 10/19): The Crusades*

(Hollister chap. 9; The Alexiad of Anna Comnena 333–68; "Popular Attitudes toward  
Islam in Medieval Europe" in *Western Views of Islam in Medieval and Early  
Modern Europe*; Bernard of Clairvaux)

The First Crusade(s); Crusading orders; Cultural interaction at its height: Byzantium and  
the West; The Baltic Crusades; The Fourth Crusade

*Week 10 (October 26, 28, 30): Even More Crusades*  
(Northern Crusades 2 and 3; Joseph O’Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 1–22; Reilly, *The Medieval Spains*)

More Baltic Crusades; Muslim Iberia; Crusading within Europe; Intercultural relations within the Iberian peninsula

*Week 11 (November 2, 4, 6): The Church in the High Middle Ages (Exam 2 on 11/6)*

(Hollister chaps. 8, 10; Lives of St. Francis; Legend of St. Dominic)

Mendicant Orders; The War on Heresy

*Week 12 (November 9, 11, 16 – No Class 11/13): The Evolution of States*

(Hollister chap. 11; Magna Carta; St. Louis’ Advice to his son)

Magna Carta; Consolidation of Scandinavia; Rise of England and France; Shift from personal rule to bureaucracy

*Week 13 (November 18, 20, 23): Mongol Invasions (Paper Topics Due 11/23)*

(Peter Jackson, “The Mongols and Europe”; Donald M. Nicol, *The Last Centuries of Byzantium*, 251–95; William of Rubrick on the Mongols)

The Mongol invasion; The Devastation of Central Europe; Dealing with the Mongols; The Creation of the Mongol World Empire

*Week 14 (November 30, December 2, 4): The Evolution of Western Thought*

(Hollister chaps. 12, 15; Statute and Rules for the University of Paris; Aquinas on Law; Aquinas on the Existence of God)

Monte Cassino, Byzantium, and the West; Arabic and Greek preservation of the classics; Copyists at work in Constantinople; Role of the monasteries

*Week 15 (December 7, 9, 11): Renaissance States (Research Paper due 12/7)*

(Hollister chaps. 13, 14; Black Death and the Jews; Decameron – Boccaccio; On the Hundred Years War – Froissart)

England, France and the Hundred Years’ War; The Ottoman Empire; Italy in the early Renaissance; The new Spain(s); The Black Death

***Final Exam—Thursday, December 17, 3:30 – 6:30 P.M.***

**For More Information:**

Because of the enormous amount of materials available on medieval European history on the Internet, the bibliography provided here is a nontraditional one that lists a variety of Web sites you can visit. Each Web site has links to hundreds of specialty sources and even full online books.

Eurodocs: Primary Historical Sources from Western Europe <<http://library.byu.edu/~rdh/eurodocs/>>.

Internet Medieval Sourcebook <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook.html>>. (The best place to find primary sources in translation online.)

Medieval Studies <<http://www-sul.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/medieval/medieval.html>>.

ORB: The Online Reference Site for Medieval Studies <<http://www.the-orb.net/>>.

(Excellent site that has full books online, as well as specialized bibliographies for many topics. Look here for bibliography research for your papers.)

The Labyrinth: Resources for Medieval Studies <<http://www.georgetown.edu/labyrinth/>>.

### **Missed Examinations, Papers, and Class Sessions**

A good rule of thumb is do not miss anything. However, if you are ill or have a conflict and cannot make a class, notify me in advance or as soon after the class as is possible. *Do not miss examinations!* If you have a conflict, notify me a minimum of one week in advance and we can schedule an exam as close to the normal time as possible. If you miss an examination for reasons that are not discussed with me ahead of time or are not catastrophic you will receive a zero, which is much worse than an F in your overall grade. Late papers are accepted, but the grade will drop one full grade when turned in after class the day it is due. For each additional day thereafter (weekend day or weekday) that it is late, it will drop a fraction of a grade, for example—an A paper handed in after class will be a B paper, handed in the next day will be a B- paper, the next day a C+ paper.

### **Attendance Policy**

As part of your grade for this class, and to get the most out of the class, you are required to attend on a regular basis. Attendance in this class is worth 5% of your grade, and attendance will be taken on a regular basis. If you are going to miss class, let me know in advance. If you accumulate 5 absences over the course of the semester, you will receive a grade of F for your attendance. If you miss 10 or more classes over the course of the semester you will receive a grade of zero for your attendance, much worse than an F when calculating your final grade. You are solely responsible for signing the attendance sheet, or notifying me of your absence, as proof of your presence in class.

### **Supplemental Instruction**

For this class, we will have supplemental instructions provided by Joseph Nixon. He will hold regular study and review sessions which will help you keep current with your course work, as well as advising you on study strategies for the class. These sessions are voluntary, but are designed to help you succeed in the course.

### **Special Needs**

Wittenberg University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities. In keeping with this policy, if you are eligible for course accommodation due to a disability, please provide me with your self-identification letter from the academic services office, 208 Recitation Hall, during the first few weeks of the semester so that we may discuss appropriate arrangements.

If you have significant responsibilities outside of class that will impact your performance, e.g., an infant or young child, care for an aging parent, or a job that requires

you to be on-call, please speak to the instructor as soon as possible, and we can discuss arrangements to make your classroom experience the same as everyone else's.

### **Weather-Related Concerns**

Whenever weather becomes a problem, I shall do my best to adhere to the university guidelines. If the university cancels classes, there will be no class. If the university has not cancelled class, but I am unable or unwilling to risk traveling, I will do my best to post a notice to this effect on Moodle as early as possible. I will do my best not to cancel class if at all possible.

If there is an exam scheduled or a deadline for a written assignment on a day when class is cancelled, you may assume that the exam or assignment will be due on the following class session.

### **Academic Honesty**

Students in this course are expected to uphold the standards of Wittenberg's Code of Academic Integrity. At its most basic level, this means that you will not turn in someone else's writing as your own, quote from a source without proper acknowledgment, or provide a classmate with inappropriate help. You will be asked to submit papers and exams with the following statement followed by your signature: "I affirm that my work upholds the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity at Wittenberg, and that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance." Sanctions for violating these rules range from receiving no credit for a particular assignment to failing the course for a significant act of academic dishonesty. If you are in doubt about any of these rules, please talk to me before submitting your work.