

# Medieval Institute

## Spring 2011 Course Descriptions

# Undergraduate Courses

As of Nov. 2, 2010

---

### **MI 20001 The World of the Middle Ages**

*MWF 1:55p – 2:45p*

**Noble, Thomas**

*Corequisite: MI 22001*

The Middle Ages have been praised and reviled, romanticized, and fantasized. The spectacular popularity of *Harry Potter*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *Narnia* have brought a revival of interest in and curiosity about the Middle Ages. But what were they like, these ten centuries between Rome and the Renaissance? In this course, we will explore major themes and issues in medieval civilization in an attempt to offer some basic answers to that question. We will have in view three kinds of people: rulers, lovers, and believers. But we will also study carefully those who wrote about those kinds of people. We will constantly ask how can we know about the Middle Ages, and what kinds of things can we know? We will consider major literary texts as both works of art and historical documents. We will explore various kinds of religious literature. We will try to understand the limits, boundaries, and achievements of philosophy and theology. Some lectures will incorporate medieval art so as to add a visual dimension to our explorations. This course will constitute an extended introduction to the dynamic and fascinating world of the Middle Ages.

### **MI 20185 Arthurian Literature**

*TR 12:30p – 1:45p*

**Frese, Dolores**

The large body of history, verse chronicle, heroic narrative, poetic romance, and prose fiction - all gathered under the canopy term "Arthurian Legend" - represents one of the most fascinating and most enduring literary phenomena of western culture. In this class, which will follow a lecture-discussion format, we will read a selection of writings that reflect the textual trace of Arthur from his earliest appearances in mytho-historical chronicles beginning in the sixth century and extending from the earliest medieval poetic and prose fictions featuring Arthur and the members of his court, through the great array of writers, past and present, who have tended these myths and legends with such imaginative care. Our readings, which begin in the Middle Ages, will culminate with the "Arthurian revivals" of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the latter extending to theatrical and film texts ranging from "Camelot" and Eric Rohmer's "Perceval" to Monty Python and Indiana Jones in their post-modern questing for the Holy Grail. In addition to attending ways in which the sheer pleasures-of-the-text have been constructed by these gifted authors, our own "literary quest" will involve questions of historical and social context, gender and genre, the history of reception, modes of literary representation including techniques of symbolic and allegorical figuration, and ways in which the theoretical and/or ideological positions of both writers and their audiences constrain and inspire the works they produce. While pondering how and why this vast body of myth and legend, clustered around the figure of Arthur, has managed to survive and thrive through such remarkably variant shifts of time, place, and

circumstance; and while reflecting thoughtfully on our own investment in - or resistance to - the variety of assigned readings, each student will choose for particular close study an Arthurian hero, heroine, or villain (Lancelot, Gawain, Guinevere, Galahad, Merlin, Modred, etc.), as well as some mytho-historical theme like the Round Table, the Grail Quest, the Sword-in-the-Stone, the Bride Quest, the Giant Combat, the Fatherless Boy, the Childless Queen, etc., as this "character" or "motif" presents some specific problem in interpretation. These "character studies" and thematic clusters will form the basis of two short essays, one due at mid term, one at end term. Specific topics, which will be shaped through individual consultation with the teacher, should, in the course of their critical argument, engage a variety of formal, stylistic, and rhetorical practices that have been employed by writers from the twelfth to the twentieth century as they conform to - and create fresh versions of - the plenitude of literary exemplars that characterize Arthurian Legend. Creative projects - individual or collective - are also welcome and, with the approval of the teacher, may be substituted for one of the essays. These alternative ways of investigating the materials of Arthurian Legend might include original poetic or prose compositions, dramatic presentations, graphic arts, videos, and/or musical performances, vocal or instrumental performances.

**MI 20207 The Good Life in Medieval Islam****Tor, Deborah***MW 8:00a – 9:15a*

One learns a great deal about a society from its definition of what constitutes the good life. This textually-based course will therefore examine the lifestyles of the rich, the famous, and the not-so-famous in the medieval Islamic world, in order to learn about that civilization's mores, material culture, technological sophistication, material wealth, and social customs. Issues that will be covered include the conspicuous consumption of the elite- in feasting; court ceremonial; slaves, eunuchs, and concubines; harems; hunting; extravagant parties; sartorial magnificence; retinues and private armies; jewels and objets d'art; praise poetry; and much more. In the process of exploring these issues, students will discover much about trade and agriculture in the Islamic Middle Ages; the role of women, slaves, eunuchs, and poets; the internal divisions within Muslim society; courtly life and culture; and, finally, the alternative definitions of the good life offered by religious ascetics, mystics, and chivalric brotherhoods.

**MI 20408 The Eastern Church: Theology and History****Avvakumov, Yury***MW 3:00p – 4:15p*

The course provides an overview of the variety of the Eastern rite Churches belonging to different cultural traditions of Eastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean world. The students will be introduced to the theological views and liturgical life of the Eastern rite Christians, i.e., Orthodox, Oriental and Eastern Catholic, and their fascinating history. In the second part of the course we shall explore the Byzantine rite Churches in more detail, and discuss the challenges their theology and history present to the Christian world at large. Special attention will be given to Slavic Christianity and especially Russian and Ukrainian religious history. Reflection on the

diversity of Christian traditions will lead to important insights into theological topics of central importance for today such as theology of culture, ecclesiology, sacramental theology and theology of history.

**MI 20609 Reading & Writing Latin Prose****Krostenko, Brian***MWF 9:35a – 10:25a*

This second-year language course continues the review of grammar begun in CLLA 20003 and introduces students to stylistic analysis through close readings of Latin prose authors such as Cicero and the younger Pliny. A special feature of the course is that students learn to write classical Latin for themselves.

**MI 22001 World of the Middle Ages: Tutorial****tbd***F 1:55p – 2:45p*

Discussion section accompanying MI 20001.

**MI 30204 Castles, Kingdoms, and Cathedrals****Perett, Marcela***MWF 10:40a – 11:30a*

This course is a thematic survey of the high (1000-1300) and late (1300-1500) Middle Ages. The course begins with an introduction to three emblematic developments of the high Middle Ages: cathedral-building, the crusading movement, and the beginnings of the universities. Themes addressed include the nature of high medieval religion, the agricultural and commercial revolutions, and high medieval politics and patronage. Treating the later Middle Ages, the course focuses upon a catastrophic event and an epic poem. The Black Death (and related late-medieval catastrophes) has traditionally been seen as marking a turning point in European history. To what extent is this so? Finally, Dante's *Inferno* will offer a window into key issues of late-medieval religious culture, including papal politics, the role of the laity in religion, late-medieval philosophical thought, heresy, and the Italian city-state as the site of a new Renaissance of learning.

**MI 30234 Early Modern Ireland****Rapple, Rory***TR 11:00a – 12:15p*

This course offers new perspectives on the struggle for mastery in Ireland from 1470 to 1660. Though keeping in mind the traditional view of the "English reconquest" (decades of rebellion, dispossession, and plantation until, in the aftermath of Cromwell, all Ireland was finally subjected to English rule) this course will take a different approach. By investigating a range of primary sources from the period, students will explore the interactions between the three different models of conquest: (1) descendants of the old Norman colonists (e.g., Fitzgeralds and Butlers) seeking to finish the job; (2) Tudor reform (inspired by Renaissance optimism), by which the English attempted to establish rule by means of legal, social, and cultural assimilation; and (3) unabashed exploitation by English private entrepreneurs on the make. The most

important effect of these "contending conquests" was the way they shaped the diverse responses of the native Irish, ranging from accommodation and assimilation to outright rebellion and national war.

**MI 30245 The Medieval Iranian World****Tor, Deborah***MW 11:45a – 1:00p*

The Iranian cultural world, from late antiquity until the 13th century, stretched from what is today Iraq all the way to India, and from the Persian Gulf deep into Central Asia. Although in the seventh century the early Islamic conquests put an end to the Persian Empire and occupied the Iranian world, a new era of Iranian hegemony began in Islamic history with the 'Abbasid Revolution in 750 and the establishment of the new Islamic capital, Baghdad, in the old Persian heartland. This event inaugurated a growing dominance by Iranians, and Persian traditions, in all areas of Islamic civilization- cultural, religious, military, and political- culminating in the establishment of the autonomous Persianate dynasties which ruled the Islamic heartland from the ninth century until invading Turco-Mongol tribes seized political control of the Islamic world in the twelfth century. This course will explore the many ways in which the Persianate world- today's Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia- helped form the Islamic world, focusing on its contributions to political order and ideology; its leading role in the formation and elaboration of Sunnism; its rich cultural productions; and its expansion of the borders of Islam.

**MI 30264 The Viking Age****Handy, Amber***TR 12:30p – 1:45p*

From their violent emergence onto the European scene at the close of the eighth century up to the present day, images of bloody raids, pillaging, and horned helmets have dominated our shared vision of the Vikings. But how accurate is that picture? Some Scandinavians were indeed remarkable, if violent, seafarers whose reach extended from Ireland to Russia, Byzantium, and even the shores of North America. Others were farmers, skilled craftsmen, and savvy politicians and merchants who helped to shape the medieval world with their innovative technology and artistry. In this class we will examine the historical, archaeological, and literary record to generate a more complete picture of these medieval Scandinavians between roughly 750-1100. We will start in their homeland by learning about their society, family life, art, literature, technology, mythology, and conversion to Christianity. We will then follow the Vikings as they explore, trade, and raid their way across wide swaths of the known world, giving special attention to their impact on Ireland and Britain. Throughout the course we will pay close attention to how the Vikings have been understood and represented by their contemporaries and by modern observers and see how closely that matches the historical record

**MI 30283 Heresy & Dissent in Medieval Europe****Perett, Marcela***MW 4:30p – 5:45p*

Burning at the stake was the ultimate punishment for heretics and witches in the European Middle Ages. This course examines the phenomenon of heresy and its repression concentrating on the fascinating but controversial primary sources that are our chief source of knowledge about it. We will explore religious heresy and dissent, both intellectual and popular, reappearing in Western Europe around 1000 AD for the first time since late antiquity. Several key questions will be addressed: how are heresy and orthodoxy defined? and by whom? How was heresy dealt with and what impact, social and ecclesiastical, did it have? Of particular interest is the fragile definition of heresy in the medieval West and the ways in which inquisitors understood and explained their work.

**MI 30301 Ancient & Medieval Philosophy****Fredosso, Alfred***MW 1:30p – 2:45p*

This course will concentrate on major figures and persistent themes. A balance will be sought between scope and depth, the latter ensured by a close reading of selected texts.

**MI 30500 Survey of Spanish Literature I****Juarez-Almendros, Encarnacion***TR 2:00p – 3:15p*

A survey of Spanish literature through 1700. Readings of selected texts in prose, poetry, and theater from the medieval, Renaissance, and baroque periods.

**MI 30500 Survey of Spanish Literature I****Vitulli, Juan***TR 11:00a – 12:15p*

Same description as above.

**MI 30530 Survey of French Literature I****MacKenzie, Louis***MW 11:45a – 1:00p*

Reading of selections and complete works of outstanding French authors from major genres and periods. Students are expected to have already taken ROFR 30310.

**MI 30641 Cicero, Augustine, & Rhetoric****Krostenko, Brian***MW 11:45a – 1:00p*

How did Latin rhetoricians signal their attitude towards their topic? How did those compositional techniques affect them as readers? How do compositional techniques develop over time? The classical rhetorical concept of "types of style" (*genera dicendi*) gives one point of entry into those questions. This class will center around the theory and practice of that idea, considering the relevant sections of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero's *Orator*, Quintilian and Augustine's *de Doctrina Christiana*, as well as Cicero's speeches, including *de lege Manilia*, *pro Rabirio perduellionis reo*, *pro Cluentio* and some of Augustine's sermons.

**MI 30664 Islamic Religious Thought****Mizra, Mahan***MW 11:45a – 1:00p*

This course traces developments in the first few centuries of Islam in theology (*kalam*), law (*shari'a and fiqh*), and mysticism (*tasawwuf or sufism*). Students will gain a solid understanding of diversity within Islam including and beyond the typical distinction between Sunnism and Shi'ism. Beginning with a brief overview of Muhammad and the Qur'an, the course explores the issue of succession, codification of *hadith*, formation of major schools of thought, and development of consensus. Students will receive both a historical survey and read primary texts in translation. Given that most modern Islamic movements view the first few centuries of Islam as a "golden age"- this course provides essential background for students to engage debates that are taking place within contemporary Islam.

**MI 30753 Art into History: Byzantine Art****Barber, Charles***MW 1:30p – 2:45p*

Byzantine art has often been opposed to the traditions of Western naturalism, and as such has been an undervalued or little known adjunct to the story of medieval art. In order to develop a more sophisticated understanding of this material we will examine the art produced in Byzantium in the period from the ninth to the twelfth century, a period marking the high point of Byzantine artistic production and influence. Stress will be placed upon the function of this art within the broader setting of this society. Art theory, the notions of empire and holiness, the burdens of the past, and the realities of contemporary praxis will be brought to bear upon our various analyses of material from all media. How we, as art historians, can write the history of this rich culture will be a central issue of this course.

**MI 40102 History of the English Language****Hall, Thomas***MW 1:30p – 2:45p*

This is a course on the history of the English language from its elusive but largely reconstructible roots in Indo-European to more or less the present, with a heavy bias towards the earlier pre-modern periods. The goals of the course are to acquaint students with the development of English morphology, phonology, syntax, semantics, graphics, and vocabulary, and to explore the cultural and historical contexts of the language's transformation from the Anglo-Saxon period onward. In working toward these goals, we'll spend time rooting around in the dustbins of English etymology, lexicography, onomastics, and dialectology, and we will explore some current problems in usage and idiom. The course is by nature heavily linguistic, which is to say we'll be spending a lot of time talking about language, grammar, and the forces that act upon spoken and written English. Students can expect to achieve a basic understanding of the cultural and linguistic phenomena that have shaped the language we now speak and write; they will become versed in the fundamental methodology and terminology of historical and descriptive linguistics; they will learn to effect a reasonably credible pronunciation of Old, Middle, and

Early Modern English (including something very close to Shakespeare's probable pronunciation); they will discover the true meanings of their own given name and surname; and they will gain experience researching a couple of aspects of the language that interest them. In addition to regular reading and workbook assignments, the course's requirements include two exams, three essays, and responsible attendance.

**MI 40206 Augustine and Cicero****MacCormack, Sabine***MW 3:00p – 4:15p*

Augustine of Hippo is best known and is most intensively studied as the theologian whose *Confessions*, commentaries *On Genesis*, *On the Trinity*, *On Christian teaching*, and *City of God* have shaped Christian thinking for centuries, and do so even now. His engagement with classical Greek and Roman authors has also been studied, but much less so. The purpose of this course is to follow Augustine's lifelong interest in the writings of the Roman orator, statesman and philosopher Cicero. It was Cicero who inspired Augustine's early interest in philosophy, and references to Cicero's ethical enquiries in the *Tusculan Disputations* and elsewhere appear frequently in Augustine's writings. He also thought about Cicero the orator when considering the tasks of Christian writers and preachers. Above all, in the *City of God*, Augustine responded to Cicero's dialogue *On the nature of the gods*, which in turn conditioned his understanding of Roman history and of the content of human history at large.

**MI 40252 Medieval Nobilities****Boulton, D'Arcy Jonathan***TR 2:00p – 3:15p*

This course will introduce students to one of the major areas of historical investigation in Europe since 1945: the evolution and function of the hereditary élites now generally called "nobilities". Although alien to the culture and legal system of the United States, an élite social category of this general type dominated the economic, political, social, and cultural life of every major European people and state throughout and often somewhat beyond the agricultural or pre-industrial era of its history - most commonly to about 1918 - and may be seen as a characteristic feature of polities on the levels of chiefdom and agricultural state throughout the world. Thus some understanding of the phenomenon of nobility and its many variant forms is essential to an understanding of the history not only of Europe, but of the civilized world in general before the twentieth century. The course will begin with an examination of both medieval and modern ideas of "nobility" (which designated at once an inherent condition, a legal status, and a social category), the words employed to express those ideas, the ways in which noble status could be acquired and lost, the attributes that might be used to express it (including heraldic emblems), and the approaches taken to the whole phenomenon by social, political, constitutional, and cultural historians of various schools. It will then examine the history of a few of the numerous different nobilities that developed in the countries of Catholic Europe between 400 and 1500, and finally examine what is currently known about such themes as noble privilege, power, wealth, and influence.

**MI 40300 Early Medieval Philosophy****Gersh, Stephen***TR 12:30p – 1:45p*

A survey of medieval philosophical literature from ca. 400 to ca. 1200 based on original texts. We shall review the most well known authors and works in the first instance: Augustine (*Soliloquies, De Libero Arbitrio, Confessions*), Boethius (*Opuscula Sacra, De Consolatione Philosophiae*, logical works), Eriugena (*Periphyseon*), Anselm of Canterbury (*Monologion, Proslogion*), the "School of Chartres" (*Commentaries on Boethius*). However, considerable emphasis will be placed on major traditions ignored by earlier histories of medieval philosophy: glossing of Plato Latinus, Aristotles Latinus, Macrobius, and Martianus Capella.

**MI 40321 Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*: Construction and Deconstruction***TR 11:00a – 12:15p***Gersh, Stephen**

Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* is perhaps one of the few texts of late antiquity that can truly be said to have equal importance for philosophical and literary studies. Boethius here presented a compelling digest of late ancient philosophy in general and especially of the harmony of Platonism and Aristotelianism. In so doing, he explored a variety of literary genres and topics in both prose and verse. Perhaps most remarkably, he produced a document that is ambiguous enough to have stimulated and to continue to stimulate a variety of creative readings. The aims of this course are threefold: 1) to introduce the work as a philosophical and literary artifact within its historical context and initiate the study of its sources and influences; 2) to test to destruction the limits of the hermeneutic flexibility that it seems to invite; and 3) to examine the epistemological and methodological issues raised by the tension between aims 1 and 2. The course is designed for students both with and without a mastery of Latin. Requirements: one final essay of about twenty pages (chosen by the student in consultation with the instructor) either on Boethius himself or on the repercussions of his thought in later philosophy and literature.

**MI 40498 Religious Life and Religious Perfection****Colberg, Shawn***TR 3:30p – 4:45p*

The scriptural witness of Jesus and his followers constitutes the primary model of Christian life. Indeed, to be a Christian is, in some sense, to be a disciple of Jesus. It is no surprise, then, that the history of Christian doctrine and spirituality focuses on the nature and content of the apostolic life as paradigmatic for human action and growth in Christian perfection. These themes are taken up and enlarged in medieval Christian thought in vital ways. This course, *Medieval Theology and the Apostolic Life*, will explore practical and theological attempts to practice an apostolic life as a mean for Christian perfection in thirteenth-century Christian thought. It will focus on the origin and development of Franciscan and Dominican life as a distinctive, mendicant attempt to undertake the apostolic life. To that end, the course will first consider the early biographies and writings related to the founders of the orders, and it will then turn to the theology of Bonaventure and Thomas Aquinas as mature expositions of the Christian life and its



apostolic dimensions. As it proceeds, the course will also consider other contemporary apostolic movements for the similarities and differences to mendicant movements. Moreover, the course will also engage ways in which mendicant theology further informed Christian piety and art during high and late middle ages. The course will (1) provide an introduction and overview to the development of the mendicant orders in the thirteenth century; (2) present diverse examples of theological arguments and explore the theological development of mendicant theology, including defenses of mendicant life against outside attacks; (3) require students to practice critical interpretation and evaluation of theological texts in oral and written forms; and (4) explore the practical implications of these doctrines in Catholic culture and piety. Students will read, analyze, and discuss primary texts, and they will complete regular writing assignments which examine and evaluate material covered in class as well as a final seminar paper. Surveying medieval treatments of the apostolic life, the course offers students the opportunity to critically compare and evaluate diverse theological viewpoints using skills and vocabulary acquired during the semester.

**MI 40553 Dante II****Moevs, Christian***TR 12:30p – 1:45p*

An in-depth study, over two semesters, of the entire *Comedy*, in its historical, philosophical and literary context, with selected readings from the minor works (e.g., *Vita Nuova*, *Convivio*, *De vulgari eloquentia*). Lectures and discussion in English; the text will be read in the original with facing-page translation. Students may take one semester or both, in either order.

**MI 40632 Medieval Latin Survey****Muller, Hildegund***MW 3:00p – 4:15p*

The aim of this course is to experience a broad spectrum of Medieval Latin texts. Readings representative of a variety of genres (literary and subliterary), eras, and regions will be selected. Students planning to enroll in this course should be completing Introduction to Christian Latin Texts or they must secure the permission of the instructor.

**MI 40809 Archaeology of Religion****Glowacki, Donna***MW 1:30p – 2:45p*

Religion and ritual have been part of humanity since the Upper Paleolithic and possibly earlier. In this class, we will use the archaeological record to explore the deep history, richness, and diversity of religious practice throughout the world. The first issue to grapple with is the extent to which we can learn about religion through material culture and how this perspective adds to our understanding of the role religion plays in the human experience, how religions are organized, and how they change through time. These issues will be explored using examples from the Upper Paleolithic, Egypt, U.S. Southwest, Maya, and the Andes, to name a few, and we will also investigate the origins of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.

**MI 43326 Anselm****Flint, Thomas***TR 2:00p – 3:15p*

An examination of the major philosophical and theological writings of St. Anselm. His *Monologion*, *Proslogion*, and *Cur Deus Homo* will be of central concern, but several lesser known texts will also be read. Topics discussed in these writings include arguments for the existence of God, the divine nature, the Trinity, the Incarnation, freedom (and its compatibility with divine foreknowledge), and truth.

**MI 43333 Augustine's Confessions****O'Callaghan, John***TR 9:30a – 10:45a*

A close reading of Augustine's *Confessions* from a primarily philosophical perspective. It will consider the themes of Faith and Reason, Human Nature, Memory, Understanding and Love, Time and God in Augustine's quest for self understanding and wisdom.

**MI 43346 The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas****Cross, Richard***TR 3:30p – 4:45p*

The course surveys the principal themes of Aquinas's philosophy, focusing on close readings of relevant texts.

**MI 43499 Joint Seminar: Philosophy/Theology: Augustine***MW 3:00p – 4:15p***Heintz, Michael; Fredosso, Alfred**

A close reading and analysis of some of the more important works of Augustine of Hippo (+430), whose influence on subsequent Western intellectual history has had very few rivals. Particular attention will be paid to questions of faith and reason, God and the soul, and the human person in the light of grace.

**MI 43666 Islamic Texts Seminar****Mizra, Mahan***MW 3:00p – 4:15p*

This course offers students the opportunity to read classical Islamic texts in translation, with an optional additional credit for students of Arabic to read them in the original language (MEAR 32305). Topics will vary from semester-to-semester allowing students to take the seminar more than once. Potential topics may be thematic, such as *hadith* ("tradition" or reports about Muhammad's words and deeds), *tafsir* (Qur'anic exegesis), *fiqh* and *shari`a* (jurisprudence and law), *tasawwuf*, *kalam* and *falsafa* (theology, philosophy and mysticism), or focused around a significant figure such as al-Ghazali. In addition to reading texts, we will also engage contemporary scholarly literature on the sources and their analysis.

**MI 50783 Gregorian Chant****Jeffrey, Peter***TR 3:30p – 4:45p*

Vocal Sacred Music I is devoted primarily to Gregorian chant, with some study toward the end of the semester of medieval polyphonic works based on chant. The course will cover matters of liturgy, performance practice, musical forms, notation, and sources. The course is open to upper-class music majors and graduate students in the Master of Sacred Music Program.