

# Medieval Studies

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Department Website: <http://medieval.uchicago.edu>

## Program of Study

The undergraduate program in medieval studies offers an interdisciplinary major that allows students to explore the history, philosophy, theology, and cultural production of the Middle Ages in an integrated and nuanced fashion, through engagement with a diverse array of textual and material artifacts.

## Program Requirements

Students interested in majoring in medieval studies must consult the program director as early as possible in order to design a program of study that meets the student's intellectual interests and goals. Twelve courses are required, including at least two courses in history; two courses in language or literature; two courses in art, archeology, architecture, or music; two courses in philosophy or theology; one course in methods and materials; and at least two electives. Students should determine these courses in consultation with the program coordinator.

The program also requires all students to participate in a one-quarter reading and research course, usually in Autumn or Winter Quarter of their fourth year. This course is typically conducted as an independent study with the student's BA paper advisor. The program requires completion of a BA paper of around 25 pages to be submitted by the sixth week of the quarter in which the student is graduating. All papers require a faculty director and a second reader.

## Summary of Requirements

Two courses in history	200
Two courses in medieval language or literature *	200
Two courses in art, archeology, architecture, or music	200
Two courses in philosophy or theology	200
Two electives	200
One course in methods and materials **	100
One reading and research course	100
BA paper	000
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>1200</b>

\* Medieval language may include such courses as Old French, Old English, Occitan, or Medieval Latin. Students may also enroll in literature courses taught in the target language or in translation. Students who think they may wish to apply to graduate school in a field related to medieval studies are strongly advised to acquire reading competence in at least one medieval language.

\*\* Students may take courses such as paleography, codicology, manuscript studies, or epigraphy, that will allow them to engage directly with medieval source materials and objects. Alternatively, students may enroll in a course like literary theory, aesthetics, or historiography that will help them develop their methodological orientation.

## Grading

All courses must be taken for a quality grade.

## Honors

Consideration for honors is individually arranged with the program coordinator. For candidacy, a student must have completed a BA paper of the highest quality, and have a GPA of at least 3.0 overall and at least 3.5 within the major.

## Minor Program in Medieval Studies

The undergraduate program in medieval studies offers an interdisciplinary minor that allows students to explore the history, philosophy, theology, and cultural production of the Middle Ages in an integrated and nuanced fashion, through engagement with a diverse array of textual and material artifacts.

Students interested in the minor in medieval studies should consult the program director as early as possible in order to design a program of study that meets the student's intellectual interests and goals. The minor requires six courses chosen from the College Catalog or the program website ([medieval.uchicago.edu/baCourses.shtml](http://medieval.uchicago.edu/baCourses.shtml)), divided among subject areas as follows:

One course in history	100
One course in medieval language or literature *	100
One course in art, archeology, architecture, or music	100
One course in philosophy or theology	100
Two electives	200
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>600</b>

- \* Medieval language may include such courses as Old French, Old English, Occitan, or Medieval Latin. Students may also enroll in literature courses taught in the target language or in translation. Students who think they may wish to apply to graduate school in a field related to medieval studies are strongly advised to acquire reading competence in at least one medieval language.

Students choose courses in consultation with the program director. Students must complete an approval form for the minor program (available on the program website, at [medieval.uchicago.edu/minor\\_consent\\_form.pdf](http://medieval.uchicago.edu/minor_consent_form.pdf)), which requires the signature of the director of the undergraduate program in medieval studies. Students must submit a copy of the signed approval form to their College adviser by the deadline on the form.

Courses in the minor (1) may not be double counted with the student's major(s) or with other minors and (2) may not be counted toward general education requirements. Courses in the minor must be taken for a quality grade, and more than half of the requirements for the minor must be met by registering for courses bearing University of Chicago course numbers.

### Medieval Studies Courses

Students completing a major or minor in medieval studies may take courses from across the University. Course offerings may include those listed below. For an updated listing of courses being offered in a given quarter please consult [medieval.uchicago.edu/baCourses.shtml](http://medieval.uchicago.edu/baCourses.shtml).

#### **ARTH 16709. Islamic Art & Architecture, 1100-1500. 100 Units.**

This course surveys the art and architecture of the Islamic world from 1100-1500. In that period, political fragmentation into multiple principalities challenged a deeply rooted ideology of unity of the Islamic world. The courts of the various principalities competed not only in politics, but also in the patronage of architectural projects and of arts such as textiles, ceramics, woodwork, and the arts of the book. While focusing on the central Islamic lands, we will consider regional traditions from Spain to India and the importance for the arts of contacts with China and the West. This course is part of the College Course Cluster program: Urban Design.

Instructor(s): P. Berlekamp Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in the arts.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 16709, NEAA 10630

#### **FREN 21700. Le Roman De La Rose. 100 Units.**

The mid-thirteenth-century Roman de la Rose was arguably the single most influential vernacular text of the (French) Middle Ages. A sprawling, encyclopedic summa composed by two separate authors writing some forty years apart, whether taken as a source of inspiration or an object of condemnation, the Roman de la Rose became an obligatory point of reference for generations of authors. Over the course of the quarter, we will read the conjoined text, each student focusing their reading through a critical optic of their choice (e.g., gender studies, animal studies, ethics and philosophy, reception studies, manuscript studies, etc.). Students will select and read ancillary texts to enrich their understanding of the Rose, and will collaborate with one another to chart a rich and diverse set of interpretive paths through this complex work.

Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 27300, FNDL 21700, FREN 31700

#### **FREN 23217. Merveilleux et vraisemblable du moyen âge au XVIIe siècle. 100 Units.**

What if I told you that the real was imaginary and the imaginary was real? This course will explore the concepts of the marvelous, the imaginary, and the real through a selection of French literature from the Middle Ages to the 17th century. The Middle Ages are often perceived as a rigid feudal society. Yet, fairies abound in stories, people shape-shift, and objects magically transform under our eyes. In the 16th century truth appears to harden through advances in science, mathematics, and art. But simultaneously religious schisms, the discovery of the New World, and political anarchy shake the notion of the world's stable limits to the core. The 17th century is known for Descartes' rationalism and classical regularity. But even here there is the unexpected, the surprising *je ne sais quoi* and overwhelming ineffable. Through the literature of each era, we will see how reality often mixes with the marvelous and everything is not always as it seems.

Instructor(s): E. Van Dyke Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): FREN 20500

Note(s): Taught in French.

#### **HIST 22407. Medieval England. 100 Units.**

How merry was "Olde England"? This course is intended as an introduction to the history of England from the withdrawal of the Roman legions in the early fifth century to the defeat of Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field in AD 1485. Sources will include chronicles, biographies, laws, charters, spiritual and political treatises, romances, and parodies. Themes will include the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons to Christianity; the Viking and Norman invasions; the development of the monarchy and parliament; monastic, peasant, and town life; the role of literacy and education in the development of a peculiarly "English" society; and the place of devotion, art, and architecture in medieval English culture. Students will have the opportunity to do a research paper or craft a project of their choice based on the themes of the course.

Instructor(s): R. Fulton Brown Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 32407

**ITAL 23900. Marsilio Ficino's "On Love" 100 Units.**

This course is first of all a close reading of Marsilio Ficino's seminal book *On Love* (first Latin edition *De amore* 1484; Ficino's own Italian translation 1544). Ficino's philosophical masterpiece is the foundation of the Renaissance view of love from a Neo-Platonic perspective. It is impossible to overemphasize its influence on European culture. *On Love* is not just a radically new interpretation of Plato's Symposium. It is the book through which sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe read the love experience. Our course will analyze its multiple classical sources and its spiritual connotations. During our close reading of Ficino's text, we will show how European writers and philosophers appropriated specific parts of this Renaissance masterpiece. In particular, we will read extensive excerpts from some important love treatises, such as Castiglione's *The Courtier* (*Il cortigiano*), Leone Ebreo's *Dialogues on Love*, Tullia d'Aragona's *On the Infinity of Love*, but also selections from a variety of European poets, such as Michelangelo's *canzoniere*, Maurice Scève's *Délie*, and Fray Luis de León's *Poesía*.

Instructor(s): A. Maggi Terms Offered: Autumn

Note(s): Course taught in English.

Equivalent Course(s): REMS 33900, CMLT 36701, FNLD 21103, ITAL 33900, CMLT 26701

**ITAL 26002. Philosophical Petrarchism. 100 Units.**

This course is a close reading of Petrarch's Latin corpus. Readings include the Coronation Oration, *The Secret*, and selections from *Remedies for Fortune Fair and Foul*, *On Illustrious Men*, *On Religious Leisure*, and *The Life of Solitude*. Special attention is devoted to Petrarch's letter collections (*Letters on Familiar Matters*, *Letters of Old Age*, *Book without a Name*, etc.) and his invectives. The aim of the course is to familiarize the student with the new and complete Petrarch that emerged in 2004 on the occasion of the 700th anniversary of his birth. Discussion will focus on Petrarch's self-consciousness as the "father of humanism," his relationship to Dante, autobiographism, dialogical inquiry, anti-scholasticism, patriotism, and Petrarch's "civic" reception in the Quattrocento as well as on a comparative evaluation of the nineteenth-century Petrarchs of Alfred Mézières, Georg Voigt, and Francesco De Sanctis.

Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 36002, FNLD 25802

**ITAL 26401. Torquato Tasso. 100 Units.**

This course investigates the entire corpus of Torquato Tasso, the major Italian poet of the second half of the sixteenth century. We read in detail the *Gerusalemme Liberata* and *Aminta*, his two most famous works, in the context of their specific literary genre. We then spend some time examining the intricacies of his vast collection of lyric poetry, including passages from his poem "Il mondo creato." We also consider some of his dialogues in prose that address essential issues of Renaissance culture, such as the theories of love, emblematic expression, and the meaning of friendship.

Equivalent Course(s): FNLD 26401, ITAL 36401

**NEAA 20522. Archaeology of Islamic Syria-Palestine. 100 Units.**

This course is an exploration of the cultural patterns in the Levant from the late Byzantine period down to modern times, a span of some 1500 years. While the subject matter is archaeological sites of this period in Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Israel, the focus is on the role of medieval archaeology in amplifying the history of economic and social systems. It is this connective quality of Islamic archaeology that contributes to an understanding of the earlier history and archaeology of this region.

Instructor(s): D. Whitcomb Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): Introductory course in archaeology

Equivalent Course(s): NEAA 30522

**NEHC 20501-20502-20503. Islamic History and Society I-II-III.**

This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. This sequence surveys the main trends in the political history of the Islamic world, with some attention to economic, social, and intellectual history. Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required.

**NEHC 20501. Islamic History and Society I: The Rise of Islam and the Caliphate. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 600 to 1100, including the rise and spread of Islam, the Islamic empire under the Umayyad and Abbasid caliphs, and the emergence of regional Islamic states from Afghanistan and eastern Iran to North Africa and Spain.

Instructor(s): Orit Bashkin Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 35704, HIST 25704, NEHC 30501, CMES 30501, RLST 20501, ISLM 30500

**NEHC 20502. Islamic History and Society II: The Middle Period. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 1100 to 1750, including the arrival of the Steppe Peoples (Turks and Mongols), the Mongol successor states, and the Mamluks of Egypt and Syria. We also study the foundation of the great Islamic regional empires of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Moghuls.

Instructor(s): J. Woods Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Not open to first-year students

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 30600, HIST 35804, CMES 30502, NEHC 30502, HIST 25804

**NEHC 20503. Islamic History and Society III: The Modern Middle East. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 1750 to the present, focusing on Western military, economic, and ideological encroachment; the impact of such ideas as nationalism and liberalism; efforts at reform in the Islamic states; the emergence of the "modern" Middle East after World War I; the struggle for liberation from Western colonial and imperial control; the Middle Eastern states in the cold war era; and local and regional conflicts.

Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Not open to first-year students

Note(s): This course does not apply to the medieval studies major or minor.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30503, HIST 35904, HIST 25904

**NEHC 20601-20602-20603. Islamic Thought and Literature I-II-III.**

This sequence explores the thought and literature of the Islamic world from the coming of Islam in the seventh century C.E. through the development and spread of its civilization in the medieval period and into the modern world. Including historical framework to establish chronology and geography, the course focuses on key aspects of Islamic intellectual history: scripture, law, theology, philosophy, literature, mysticism, political thought, historical writing, and archaeology. In addition to lectures and secondary background readings, students read and discuss samples of key primary texts, with a view to exploring Islamic civilization in the direct voices of the people who participated in creating it. All readings are in English translation. No prior background in the subject is required. This course sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies. Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required.

**NEHC 20601. Islamic Thought and Literature I. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 600 to 950, concentrating on the career of the Prophet Muhammad; Qur'an and Hadith; the Caliphate; the development of Islamic legal, theological, philosophical, and mystical discourses; sectarian movements; and Arabic literature.

Instructor(s): T. Qutbuddin Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): CMES 30601, HIST 35610, NEHC 30601, SOSC 22000, ISLM 30601, HIST 25610, RLST 20401

**NEHC 20602. Islamic Thought and Literature II. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 950 to 1700, surveying works of literature, theology, philosophy, sufism, politics, history, etc., written in Arabic, Persian and Turkish, as well as the art, architecture and music of the Islamicate traditions. Through primary texts, secondary sources and lectures, we will trace the cultural, social, religious, political and institutional evolution through the period of the Fatimids, the Crusades, the Mongol invasions, and the "gunpowder empires" (Ottomans, Safavids, Mughals).

Instructor(s): A. El Shamsy Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required. This sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 30602, SOSC 22100, HIST 35615, CMES 30602, NEHC 30602, HIST 25615, RLST 20402

**NEHC 20603. Islamic Thought and Literature III. 100 Units.**

This course covers the period from ca. 1700 to the present, exploring works of Arab intellectuals who interpreted various aspects of Islamic philosophy, political theory, and law in the modern age. We look at diverse interpretations concerning the role of religion in a modern society, at secularized and historicized approaches to religion, and at the critique of both religious establishments and nation-states as articulated by Arab intellectuals. Generally, we discuss secondary literature first and the primary sources later.

Instructor(s): A. El Shamsy Terms Offered: Spring

Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22200, ISLM 30603, RLST 20403, NEHC 30603, HIST 35616, HIST 25616

**NEHC 20840. Radical Islamic Pieties: 1200 to 1600. 100 Units.**

Some knowledge of primary languages (i.e., Arabic, French, German, Greek, Latin, Persian, Spanish, Turkish) helpful. This course examines responses to the Mongol destruction of the Abbasid caliphate in 1258 and the background to formation of regional Muslim empires. Topics include the opening of confessional boundaries; Ibn Arabi, Ibn Taymiyya, and Ibn Khaldun; the development of alternative spiritualities, mysticism, and messianism in the fifteenth century; and transconfessionalism, antinomianism, and the articulation of sacral sovereignties in the sixteenth century. All work in English. This course is offered in alternate years.

Instructor(s): C. Fleischer Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 20840, HIST 35901, NEHC 30840, HIST 25901

**SPAN 21703. Introducción a las literaturas hispánicas: textos españoles clásicos. 100 Units.**

This course involves careful reading and discussion of significant works from the Spanish Middle Ages, Renaissance, and the Golden Age, including Juan Manuel's *Conde Lucanor*, Jorge Manrique's *Coplas*, the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes*, and the theater of Calderón.

Instructor(s): F. de Armas Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): SPAN 20300 or consent of instructor





### Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

Times was used instead of Trajan.

Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.