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. The major requires twelve courses, chosen from the College Catalog or the Medieval Studies website (https://medievalstudies.uchicago.edu/undergraduate-program/undergraduate-courses/), and distributed as follows: 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 director.

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 Monday of the fifth week of the quarter in which the student is graduating. All papers require a faculty director and a second reader.

SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two courses in history</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two courses in medieval language or literature</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two courses in art, archeology, architecture, or music</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two courses in philosophy or theology</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two electives</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>One course in methods and materials</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>One reading and research course</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>BA paper</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Units</strong></td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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* 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 director. 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 Medieval Studies website (https://medievalstudies.uchicago.edu/undergraduate-program/undergraduate-courses/), divided among subject areas as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One course in history</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One course in medieval language or literature</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Medieval Studies

One course in art, archeology, architecture, or music 100
One course in philosophy or theology 100
Two electives 200
Total Units 600

* 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 the Consent to Complete a Minor Program form (https://humanities-web.s3-us-east-2.amazonaws.com/college-prod/s3fs-public/documents/Consent_Minor_Program.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, students may also consult the Medieval Studies website (https://medievalstudies.uchicago.edu/undergraduate-program/undergraduate-courses/).

MDVL 10030. Introduction to the Qur’an. 100 Units.
The Qur'an's historical setting, thematic and literary features, major biblical figures, and foundational narratives of the Quran. Explorations of medieval exegetical literature on the Quran and its reception in the early (8th-10th century CE) and medieval periods (11th - 15th century CE) will feature heavily in this course. Readings consist primarily of English translations of the Quran alongside a running commentary, as well as secondary articles. Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30030, RLST 11030, ISLM 30030

MDVL 10101. Introduction to African Civilization I. 100 Units.
Part one considers literary, oral, linguistic, and material sources to investigate African societies and states from the early Iron Age through the emergence of the Atlantic World. Case studies include: the empires of Ghana and Mali, the Swahili Coast, Great Zimbabwe, Nok of Nigeria, and medieval Ethiopia. We also consider religious and spiritual transformation, including Islam in Africa, as well as the origins and effects of European contact, and the emergence of the transatlantic trade in enslaved human beings. Students examine these times and places through primary sources (such as cultural artifacts, visual representations, myths, and memoirs) which illuminate African perspectives on these different places and times. Assignments: oral presentations, document analyses, essays, and team projects. Instructor(s): Staff Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 10101, CRES 20701, ANTH 20701, SOSC 20101

MDVL 10105. Introduction to Old Turkic I. 100 Units.
An introductory course in the written language of the Orkhon Inscriptions, dating back to the 5th-8th Century Kök Türk State of Central Eurasia, and of related inscriptions from the Yenisei River area, Mongolia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe. The language of the inscriptions is considered to be the ancestor of the majority of Turkic languages spoken today, and uses a distinctive alphabet sometimes known as the Old Turkic Runiform Alphabet. The course covers a brief historic overview, basic grammar, reading selections from the inscriptions in the original and in translation, and familiarization with the alphabet itself. K. Arik, Autumn.
Instructor(s): K. Arik Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): One year of a Turkic language or the equivalent, and/or consent of the instructor
Equivalent Course(s): TURK 10105

MDVL 12000. Jewish Civilization I: Ancient Beginnings to Medieval Period. 100 Units.
Jewish Civilization is a three-quarter sequence that explores the development of Jewish culture and tradition from its ancient beginnings through its rabbincic and medieval transformations to its modern manifestations. Through investigation of primary texts-biblical, Talmudic, philosophical, mystical, historical, documentary, and literary-students will acquire a broad overview of Jews, Judaism, and Jewishness while reflecting in greater depth on major themes, ideas, and events in Jewish history. The autumn course will deal with antiquity through the Middle Ages. Its readings will include material from the Bible and writings from the second temple, Hellenistic, rabbinc, and medieval periods. All sections of this course will share a common core of readings; individual instructors will supplement with other materials. It is recommended, though not required, that...
students take the three Jewish Civilization courses in sequence. Students who register for the Autumn Quarter course will automatically be pre-registered for the winter segment. In the Spring Quarter students have the option of taking a third unit of Jewish Civilization, a course whose topics will vary (JWSC 1200X).

Instructor(s): Larisa Reznik Terms Offered: Autumn Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 11701, RSTL 22010, NEHC 22010, JWSC 12000

MDVL 12203. Italian Renaissance: Petrarch, Machiavelli, and the Wars of Popes and Kings. 100 Units.
Florence, Rome, and the Italian city-states in the age of plagues and cathedrals, Petrarch and Machiavelli, Medici and Borgia (1250-1600), with a focus on literature, philosophy, primary sources, the revival of antiquity, and the papacy’s entanglement with pan-European politics. We will examine humanism, patronage, politics, corruption, assassination, feuds, art, music, magic, censorship, education, science, heresy, and the roots of the Reformation.
Writing assignments focus on higher level writing skills, with a creative writing component linked to our in-class role-played reenactment of a Renaissance papal election (LARP). First-year students and non-History majors welcome.
Instructor(s): A. Palmer Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Graduate students by consent only; register for the course as HIST 90000 Reading and Research: History.
Note(s): Assignments: short papers, alternative projects.
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 22216, RENS 12203, FNDL 22204, HIST 12203, ITAL 16000, RSTL 22203, SIGN 26034, KNOW 12203

MDVL 12500. Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts of Interpretation. 100 Units.
This course introduces students to the texts that make up the New Testament through close readings of representative examples. Through course lectures and readings, students will gain familiarity with the historical, geographical, social, religious, cultural, and political contexts of New Testament literature and the events they narrate. We will also learn about the central literary genres found within the collection of texts that came to form the canonical New Testament, including “gospels,” “acts,” “letters,” and “apocalypses”), and we will examine how awareness of genre conventions enhances our reading of these works. Students will also learn about the distinctive theological and cultural viewpoints contained within various New Testament texts. As we learn about the history of biblical scholarship, especially the goals and methods of biblical interpretation, we will practice refining our questions. Assignments and discussion will allow students to develop their skills as attuned readers of both ancient texts as well as modern biblical scholarship. PQ: No prior knowledge of biblical literature, the ancient world, or Christianity is expected. The only expectation is commitment to engaged discussion about the challenges of interpretation with classmates holding various viewpoints.
Instructor(s): Erin Walsh Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for RSTL majors/minors.
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 22252, CLAS 32524, FNDL 28202, RSTL 12000, BIBL 32500

MDVL 14200. Introduction to Medieval Art. 100 Units.
This course provides an introduction to art produced during the European Middle Ages. Beginning with the fusion of Christian and Imperial images under the Roman Empire and ending with the introduction of print in the fifteenth century, this course considers works of art across a variety of media (architecture, sculpture, painting, textiles, metalwork, stained glass) and in a range of historical and cultural contexts. We will address the complex social, religious, and political motivations that informed artistic production during the Middle Ages, and we will focus on the question of how images were seen and understood by medieval viewers. The course is organized chronologically and is structured around a set of broad thematic concerns such as the relationship between art and power, changing theorizations of the image, the re-use of the past, the body in art, the relationship of the secular and the sacred, and the role of art in public and private devotion. Readings will include medieval sources in translation and selected works of modern scholarship.
Instructor(s): C. Boxer Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Students must attend first class to confirm enrollment. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 14200
into competing sectarian factions. A novel culture of Christian asceticism coexisted with the consolidation of an aristocratic ruling class notable for its insatiable appetite for gold. The course will address these apparent contradictions while charting the profound transformations of the cultures, societies, economies, and political orders of the Mediterranean from the conversion of Constantine to the rise of Islam.

Instructor(s): R. Payne Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): This course meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 20900, SOSC 27910, HIST 16900

MDVL 20012. Ancient Empires II: The Ottoman Empire. 100 Units.
The Ottomans ruled in Anatolia, the Middle East, South East Europe and North Africa for over six hundred years. The objective of this course is to understand the society and culture of this bygone Empire whose legacy continues, in one way or another, in some twenty-five contemporary successor states from the Balkans to the Arabian Peninsula. The course is designed as an introduction to the Ottoman World with a focus on the cultural history of the Ottoman society. It explores identities and mentalities, customs and rituals, status of minorities, mystical orders and religious establishments, literacy and the use of the public sphere.

Instructor(s): Hakan Karakeke Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Taking these courses in sequence is not required. This course meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 20012, CLCV 25800, HIST 15603, NEHC 20012

MDVL 20124. The Bible Throughout History: From the Dead Sea Scrolls to King James. 100 Units.
While the collection of ancient texts found in modern Bibles appears fixed and is read by many people as a source of edification or theological insight, it has not always been this way. Though absent from most Bibles, there is an entire body of literature commonly known as "rewritten bible": early translations, retellings, or entirely new stories with familiar names and faces that update, retcon, or subvert their "biblical" sources. How might we understand these ancient forms of fan fiction? The class will introduce this corpus (including some of the Dead Sea Scrolls) and its sources, production, and historical contexts. We will confront significant problems in understanding religious texts: how is it that some texts become authoritative while other very similar texts do not? Who gets to retell foundational religious narratives, and within what social or political constraints? What does it mean to relate to sacred texts as artistic prompts or imperfect points of departure? Can a biblical text be rewritten for an entirely different religious tradition? We will consider similar questions for contemporary religious practice, asking: how did rewriting the Bible get started, and has it stopped?

Instructor(s): Doren Snoek Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 29908, CMLT 20124, RLST 20124, JWSC 20924, FNDL 20124

MDVL 20201. Islamicate Civilization I: 600-950. 100 Units.
This course is an introduction to the history and the study of early Islamicate societies, from the rise of Islam in late antiquity to the early Abbasid period (ca. 600-950 CE), considering various religious and social groups. We will look at the same historical arc from multiple perspectives: political events, such as the Muslim conquests and the rise of ruling dynasties, but also other factors that impacted people's lives in the early centuries of Islamic rule—the environment they inhabited and transformed, documents they created, social institutions, and economic activities. What broad developments characterized the early Islamic period? Who brought those changes about? And how are they studied today?

Instructor(s): CECLILIA PALOMBO Terms Offered: Autumn. This course will not be offered for the 2021-2022 academic year.
Note(s): The Islamicate Civilization sequence does not fulfill the General Ed requirements
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 35621, NEHC 20201, NEHC 30201, HIST 15611, RLST 20201, ISLM 30201

MDVL 20202. Islamicate Civilization II: 950-1750. 100 Units.
This course, a continuation of Islamicate Civilization I, surveys intellectual, cultural, religious and political developments in the Islamic world from Andalusia to the South Asian sub-continent during the periods from ca. 950 to 1750. We trace the arrival and incorporation of the Steppe Peoples (Turks and Mongols) into the central Islamic lands; the splintering of the Abbasid Caliphate and the impact on political theory; the flowering of literature of Arabic, Turkic and Persian expression; the evolution of religious and legal scholarship and devotional life; transformations in the intellectual and philosophical traditions; the emergence of Shi’i states (Buyids and Fatimids); the Crusades and Mongol conquests; the Mamluks and Timurids; and the “gunpowder empires” of the Ottomans, Safavids, and Moghuls; the dynamics of gender and class relations; etc. This class partially fulfills the requirement for MA students in CMES, as well as for NELC majors and PhD students.

Instructor(s): Mustafa Kaya Terms Offered: Winter
This course will not be offered for the 2021-2022 academic year.
Note(s): This course meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 30202, NEHC 30202, HIST 35622, NEHC 20202, HIST 15612, RLST 20202

MDVL 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): Ahmed El Shamsy Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 30500, HIST 35704, NEHC 30501, NEHC 20501, CMES 30501, HIST 25704, RLST 20501, SOSC 20501

**MDVL 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): HIST 35804, HIST 25804, NEHC 20502, CMES 30502, SOSC 20502, ISLM 30600, NEHC 30502

**MDVL 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: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Introductory course in archaeology
Equivalent Course(s): NEAA 30522, NEAA 20522

**MDVL 20530. Introduction to Islamic Archaeology. 100 Units.**
This course is intended as a survey of the regions of the Islamic world from Arabia to North Africa, from Central Asia to the Gulf. The aim will be a comparative stratigraphy for the archaeological periods of the last millennium. A primary focus will be the consideration of the historical archaeology of the Islamic lands, the interaction of history and archaeology, and the study of patterns of cultural interaction over this region, which may also amplify understanding of ancient archaeological periods in the Near East.
Instructor(s): D. Whitcomb Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): NEAA 20501, NEAA 30501

**MDVL 20601. Islamic Thought and Literature I. 100 Units.**
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.
Instructor(s): O’Malley, Austin Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 20401, NEHC 20601, HIST 25610, SOSC 22000

**MDVL 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): Adam Flower - Firas Alkhateeb Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Taking these courses in sequence is recommended but not required. This course sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22100, RLST 20402, NEHC 20602, HIST 25615

**MDVL 20605. Colloquium: Sources for the Study of Islamic History. 100 Units.**
This course is designed to acquaint the student with the basic problems and concepts as well as the sources and methodology for the study of premodern Islamic history. Sources will be read in English translation and the tools acquired will be applied to specific research projects to be submitted as term papers.
Instructor(s): J. Woods Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 30605, NEHC 20605, ISLM 30605, HIST 36005, HIST 26005

**MDVL 20808. Biography of the Prophet Muhammad. 100 Units.**
This introductory course offers an overview of Prophet Muhammad’s life as portrayed in the early and medieval Arabic narrative tradition and through the lens of modern scholarship. We will discuss a diverse range of topics, such as life in pre-Islamic Arabia, the Prophet’s early life before prophethood, the first revelations, the Meccan period, his migration to Medina, his religio-political leadership and the military expeditions during the Medinan period, his reported miracles, etc. At the same time, students will gain an overview of the sira/maghaz’ literature, i.e., the texts devoted to the life of the Prophet Muhammad in the Muslim tradition. Modern methodological questions which concern the reliability of the narrative traditions in reconstructing the biography.
of the "historical Muhammad" and a wide range of approaches developed in Western academia to overcome problems related to the source material will also be addressed.

Instructor(s): Mehmetcan Akpinar Terms Offered: Autumn

Prerequisite(s): No background in Islamic studies or Arabic language required.

Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20808, ISLM 30808, NEHC 30808, RLST 20808

MDVL 20902. Empires and Peoples: Ethnicity in Late Antiquity. 100 Units.

Late antiquity witnessed an unprecedented proliferation of peoples in the Mediterranean and the Middle East. Vandals, Arabs, Goths, Huns, Franks, and Iranians, among numerous others, took shape as political communities within the Roman and Iranian empires or along their peripheries. Recent scholarship has undone the traditional image of these groups as previously undocumented communities of "barbarians" entering history. Ethnic communities emerge from the literature as political constructions dependent on the very malleability of identities, on specific acts of textual and artistic production, on particular religious traditions, and, not least, on the imperial or postimperial regimes sustaining their claims to sovereignty. The colloquium will debate the origin, nature, and roles of ethno-political identities and communities comparatively across West Asia, from the Western Mediterranean to the Eurasian steppes, on the basis of recent contributions. As a historiographical colloquium, the course will address the contemporary cultural and political concerns-especially nationalism-that have often shaped historical accounts of ethogenesis in the period as well as bio-historical approaches-such as genetic history-that sometimes sit uneasily with the recent advances of historians.

Instructor(s): R. Payne Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): Open to advanced undergraduates and graduate students.

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20802, CLAS 33718, HIST 30902, CLCV 23718, NEHC 30802, HIST 20902

MDVL 21100. A Medieval Menagerie: Animal Spirituality in the Middle Ages. 100 Units.

In contemporary philosophy, ethics, and literature, a subject attracting more and more attention is animals - human animals, non-human animals, and the complex relation between these paradigmatic others. The aim of this course is to consider many of the same problems and questions raised in modern discourse from the perspective of ancient and medieval sources. Drawing from a diverse corpus of texts - Aristotelian, Neoplatonic, Hindu, Jewish, Christian, Muslim - the course will explore the richness of the medieval traditions of animal symbolism, and the complexity of medieval human beings' understanding of themselves in relationship to their familiar and immanently present confreres in the world of nature.

Instructor(s): James Robinson Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIJD 31100, JWSC 26252, RLST 22406, HREL 41101, ISLM 41100, RLVC 41100

MDVL 21330. Dispersal and Consolation: Emotion and Affect in Late-Medieval and Reformation Christianity. 100 Units.

The course surveys major texts in Christian thought and culture from the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries, and it focuses on how these authors understood despair-a central theme in the writings of many women and men, secular and religious-and how, if at all, despair may be remedied. We will think alongside these late-medieval and early-modern figures about the phenomenon of emotion, the relations between of feeling and knowing, possible responses to (especially negative) affects, and how religious belief, practice, and experience shape and are shaped by emotional life. Major historical figures to be read include: Catherine of Siena, Jean Gerson, Christine de Pisan, Julian of Norwich, Heinrich Kramer, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Teresa of Ávila, and Michel de Montaigne. We will also read selected contemporary voices in affect theory and disability studies to hone our critical and analytical resources for interpreting the primary texts.

Instructor(s): M. Vanderpoel Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 21330, GNSE 21330, HIST 22121

MDVL 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.

Prerequisite(s): SPAN 20300 or consent of instructor.

Note(s): Taught in Spanish. Course not offered in 24-25

Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 21703

MDVL 21705. Iberian Literatures and Cultures: Medieval and Early Modern. 100 Units.

This course explores Spanish language, literature, and culture focusing on premodern Iberian texts and artifacts. We will start by anonymous "Cantar de Mio Cid," the first great vernacular epic in the Middle Ages, and we will end in Maria de Zayas's "Novelas ejemplares," one of the finest expressions of European early modern short story. Between these two literary works we will talk about music, painting, witchcraft, conversion, and the Inquisition as milestones of a five-century span. In this time Spanish consolidates as a written language, while numerous political and religious conflicts mark the struggle for hegemony in the Iberian Peninsula. In addition to enhancing your knowledge of Iberian cultural history and improving your close reading and critical thinking skills, this course is designed to continue building on your linguistic competence in Spanish.

Instructor(s): Noel Blanco Mourelle Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): SPAN 20300 or consent of instructor.

Note(s): Taught in Spanish. This course is the equivalent of SPAN 21703.
MDVL 21900. Dante’s Divine Comedy 1: Inferno. 100 Units.
This is the first part of a sequence focusing on Dante’s masterpiece. We examine Dante’s Inferno in its cultural (i.e., historical, artistic, philosophical, sociopolitical) context. In particular, we study Dante’s poem alongside other crucial Latin and vernacular texts of his age. They include selections from the Bible, Virgil’s Aeneid, Augustine’s Confessions, Ovid’s Metamorphoses, and the stilnovist and Siculo-Tuscan poets. Political turmoil, economic transformation, changing philosophical and theological paradigms, and social and religious conflict all converge in the making of the Inferno.
Instructor(s): H. Justin Steinberg
Note(s): Taught in English. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 21900, FNDL 27200, ITAL 31900

MDVL 21901. Beyond the Canon: The New Testament Apocrypha. 100 Units.
The twenty-seven books of the New Testament have been the authoritative canon for Christians for centuries. But these books were not the only Christian texts written in the early centuries CE to be read and circulated. While not adopted into the canon, these texts, which are often referred to as the New Testament Apocrypha, have had much influence on later literature, art, liturgy, and popular culture. The course provides a survey of these texts, which include gospels of the life of Jesus, acts of the lives of different apostles, and apocalypses of heavenly realms. In this course, we will explore a variety of questions: What were these alternative early stories about Jesus and his followers? Why were these texts written and for whom? What authority did these non-canonical accounts have? What can an analysis of these texts tell us about how textual authority is construed across religious traditions, especially in terms of popular piety? How can these accounts change our perception of early Christianity? Students will leave the course better acquainted with the diversity of the early Christian movement and the alternative paths the religious tradition could have taken.
Terms Offered: not being offered 23-24
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 21900, FNDL 21905, CMLT 21901

MDVL 22002. Money in Medieval Europe. 100 Units.
This course will investigate the history of minting and money in Europe from Late Antiquity to the end of the Middle Ages (ca. 1500). Topics will include the sourcing of silver and gold for coinage, the different monetary regimes in the different kingdoms of Europe, and the development of European banking systems from the thirteenth century onward. This course is open to all College students, and no prior knowledge of medieval European history is required. Grades will be calculated on the basis of class participation, two short papers and a final exam.
Instructor(s): J. Lyon
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 32000, HIST 12000

MDVL 22003. Dante’s Divine Comedy II: Purgatorio. 100 Units.
This course is an intense study of the middle cantica of the “Divine Comedy” and its relationship with Dante’s early masterpiece, the “Vita Nuova.” The very middleness of the Purgatorio provides Dante the opportunity to explore a variety of problems dealing with our life here, now, on earth: contemporary politics, the relationship between body and soul, poetry and the literary canon, art and imagination, the nature of dreams, and, of course, love and desire. The Purgatorio is also Dante’s most original contribution to the imagination of the underworld, equally influenced by new conceptualizations of “merchant time” and by contemporary travel writing and fantastic voyages.
Instructor(s): H. Justin Steinberg
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 32000, ITAL 21900, FNDL 21905

MDVL 22101. Dante’s Divine Comedy III: Paradiso. 100 Units.
An in-depth study of the third cantica of Dante’s masterpiece, considered the most difficult but in many ways also the most innovative. Read alongside his scientific treatise the “Convivio” and his political manifesto the “Monarchia.”
Instructor(s): H. Justin Steinberg
Prerequisite(s): Completion of the previous courses in the sequence not required, but students should familiarize themselves with the "Inferno" and the "Purgatorio" before the first day of class.
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 22101, ITAL 32101, FNDL 21804

MDVL 22123. Natural Law in the Hist of Scholastic Political Thought: Aquinas, Vitoria, Suárez, Hooker, Grotius. 100 Units.
The concept of natural law has played a central role in the history of Western political thought, and it has often been deployed in political argumentation at pivotal moments in human history, from the discovery of the New World and the American founding to the Nuremberg trials and the Civil Rights Movement. Though the doctrine has antecedents in Greek and Roman philosophers, including Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics, it received its classic articulation in the writings of the Scholastic thinkers of the Middle Ages and early modern period. In this seminar, we will read key primary source texts in the development of natural law theory in the Scholastic
age from five of the Scholastic tradition’s seminal thinkers: Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Francisco de Vitoria (1483-1546), Francisco Suárez (1548-1617), Richard Hooker (1554-1600), and Hugo Grotius (1583-1645). In reading their works, we will consider the theories of natural law they construct as well as the implications of their respective theories for political debates concerning such questions as Spanish treatment of Native Americans, religious toleration, the foundations of international law, and the origins of political authority. We will also consider questions of continuity and discontinuity between the authors and the ways in which their works reflect the historical contexts in which they were written. Throughout, we will focus on close reading and careful exegesis of the primary source texts.

Instructor(s): S. Waldorf
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 27123, HMRT 22123, HIST 22123

MDVL 22125. Nature, Consent, and the Origins of Political Authority. 100 Units.
The question of the basis of political authority is one of the fundamental problems of political philosophy. The course will examine the history of this question, focusing especially on the tradition of thought that grounds political legitimacy in claims about human nature, and that which locates it in the consent of the governed. We will read classic representatives of political naturalism such as Aristotle and Aquinas, examine the role of popular sovereignty in Marsilius of Padua’s intervention in debates between pope and emperor, consider the attempts of late-Scholastic thinkers such as Suarez to bridge naturalism and government by consent, and explore the emergence of social contract theory in early Enlightenment thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. Throughout, we will focus on a close reading of primary texts, seeking to understand how these philosophers thought about the source of political authority and how their theories were shaped by their historical contexts. We will also address broader themes such as the place of normative conceptions of human nature in a democratic society.

Instructor(s): S. Waldorf
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 22125, PLSC 22125, RLST 27215

MDVL 22350. Speaking Truth to Power in Medieval Iberia. 100 Units.
In the multilingual and multireligious environment of the Iberian middle ages, poetry can express many things. And while literary history has granted a prestigious space to some of these things, such as love or spirituality, it has consistently neglected others, such as socio-political satire or vulgarity. This class will be paying attention to that other less talked-about poetry that gets into the political struggles of the period, that talks in profanities about profane things. In other words, the poetry that does not speak to the eternity of existence, but that gets its hands dirty with earthly matters. The poetry that savagely mocks and cuts through social conventions in a way that makes seem contemporary Twitter trolls benevolent in comparison. For this class we will be reading authors who wrote in Galician-Portuguese such as Joao Soares de Paiva or King Alfonso X, authors who wrote in Catalan such as Guillem de Bergueda or Ramon Vidal de Besalu, and authors who wrote in Spanish such as Juan Ruiz or Juan de Mena. Translations to Spanish will be provided or worked through class discussion.

Instructor(s): N. Blanco Mourelle
Note(s): Course not offered in 24-25
Equivalent Course(s): CATA 32350, CATA 22350, SPAN 32350, SPAN 22350, PORT 32350, PORT 22350

MDVL 22402. Anglo-Saxon England. 100 Units.
The kingdom seized by William the Conqueror in A.D. 1066 had been centuries in the making. Founded by pagan warlords following the retreat of the Roman legions, the kingdoms of the Anglo-Saxons were already old when missionaries arrived from Rome in A.D. 597, bearing icons and Gospel books. What happened when their kings converted to Christianity? How did their language, law, politics, culture, society, and economy change? What roles did monks, warriors, women, merchants, and poets have in crafting a kingdom so richly endowed that William coveted it as his prize? This course charts the making of Anglo-Saxon England through close readings of primary sources, including histories, epic poems, liturgies, and laws, alongside archeological surveys and works of art. Special attention will be given to the links that the Anglo-Saxons cultivated both with Rome and cultures even further south and east.

Instructor(s): R. Fulton Brown Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 32402, HIST 32402

MDVL 23101. Early Italian Lyric: Dante and His Rivals. 100 Units.
An intense reading of Dante’s early experiment in autobiography, self-commentary, and self-anthologizing. The Vita Nova is an essential text for readers of Dante’s Commedia since the poet constantly refers back to it, and we will read it keeping in mind this dialogue. However, our primary focus will be to examine the Vita Nova in the context of contemporaneous literary practices. How does Dante engage with the philosophical and aesthetic debates of his time? We will use Vita Nova to gain entry into the larger world of early Italian poetry (Guittone, Guinizelli, Cavalcanti, and others) and we will examine his contribution to the courtly love tradition.

Instructor(s): J. Steinberg Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 23101, ITAL 33101

MDVL 23510. The Arts of Language in the Middle Ages: The Trivium. 100 Units.
Throughout the Middle Ages, formal education began with the study of language: grammar, including the study of literature as well as the practical mastery of the mechanics of language (here, Latin); logic or dialectic, whether narrowly defined as the art of constructing arguments or, more generally, as metaphysics, including the philosophy of mind; and rhetoric, or the art of speaking well, whether to praise or to persuade. In this course, we
will be following this medieval curriculum insofar as we are able through some of its primary texts, many only recently translated, so as to come to a better appreciation of the way in which the study of these arts affected the development of medieval European intellectual and artistic culture.

Instructor(s): R. Fulton Brown
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 33510, FNDL 23902, HIST 23510

MDVL 23518. Colloquium: How to Be Good. 100 Units.
Medieval Christians understood virtue as both a habit and a gift of grace. In this course, we will test this understanding by comparison with the definitions of virtue found in three complementary traditions: Greek, Jewish, and Confucian. Readings will be taken from the New Testament, Thomas Aquinas, Aristotle, Plato, the Torah, the Talmud, and the Analects. Our purpose will be to discover how each of these systems of training the soul works, along with their similarities and differences.

Instructor(s): R. Fulton Brown
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 23518, HIST 33518, FNDL 23518

MDVL 23809. Pain, Truth, and Justice. 100 Units.
Why should the truth hurt? Does pain guarantee the truth told? Is pain the price of exposure to the truth? Does that make punishment just? In this course, we will take a historical and philosophical approach to examine the relations between pain, truth, and justice. In the premodern period, we will draw from Genesis, Sophocles’ Oedipus, Augustine, Tertullian, martyrdom accounts, and public penance in medieval Christianity. To study the theme in the early modern nation-state spectacles of punishment, colonial contexts, and contemporary scenes of justice, we will turn to the writings of Foucault, Fanon, and others. Over the course of the historical and philosophical examinations, we will trace the themes of body, affect, and performance; truth, law, and ritual; power, religion, and the nation-state. In the end, we will turn a critical eye to contemporary cultural discourses and representations of pain, truth, and justice in the arts, law, literature, philosophy, and politics. No prerequisites.

Instructor(s): Maureen Kelly Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 23809, GNSE 23809, CLCV 23809

MDVL 23823. Melancholy: Readings in Medieval Christian Literature. 100 Units.
The idea of melancholy, a persistent affective orientation toward sadness and/or despair, is ubiquitous in Christian writings from the Middle Ages. This course considers the nature and function of melancholy and possible remedies in Christian discourses, and in so doing it provides a survey of medieval Christian literature. Readings may be drawn from authors such as Boethius, Alan of Lille, Jean de Meun, Marguerite Porete, Dante, and Christine de Pizan. Special attention will be given to the role of literary form in Christian writing, competing accounts of despair and hope, and the relationship of Christianity to non-Christian discourses. There are no language prerequisites, though reading groups may be formed if sufficient students posses relevant language skills.

Instructor(s): M. Vanderpoel Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 23823, RLST 23823

MDVL 24103. Nature and the Natural in the Middle Ages. 100 Units.
In this course we will undertake a study of nature and ideas about what is "natural" centered around three main axes, and will adopt a variety of relevant critical perspectives (e.g., ecocriticism, studies of gender and sexuality, political theory) to support our analyses. First, we will explore nature as the created world of which humans are a part (as one of God’s creations), yet from which they also stand apart (as sovereign caretakers). Second, we will examine how the diffusion of Aristotelian works (notably the Politics) in the later Middle Ages provided a justificatory framework for social and political hierarchies and practices of economic exploitation. Third, we will consider the intersection of nature with gender, sexuality, and reproduction, a topic complicated by the fact that Nature is itself represented, in allegorical terms, as a woman.

Instructor(s): Daisy Delogu Terms Offered: Course not offered in 24-25.
Prerequisite(s): Reading knowledge of French for all students. FREN 20500, 20503 or a literature course taught in French for those seeking credit for the French major/minor.
Note(s): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 24103, FREN 24100, FREN 34100, ENST 24110, CEGU 24110, GNSE 34103

MDVL 24202. Indian Philosophy II: The Classical Traditions. 100 Units.
This course follows the first module on Indian philosophy by exploring the debates between several classical "schools" or "viewpoints" (darśanas) of Indian philosophy. In addition to expanding upon the methods of systematized reasoning inaugurated by the Nyāya and Buddhist epistemological traditions, particular attention will be given to systems of scriptural hermeneutics -- Mimāṃsā and Vedānta -- and their consequences for the philosophy of language, theories of cognitive error, and even poetics.

Instructor(s): Anand Venkatkrishnan, Andrew Ollett Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): SALC 30902, DVPR 30302, SALC 20902, RLST 24202, HREL 30300

MDVL 24275. Chinese Buddhist Omnicentrism: Tiantai and Huayan. 100 Units.
In this course we will read and analyze the key texts (in English translation) of the two great classical "sinifying" Chinese Buddhist theoretical schools of the Sui, Tang, and Song dynasties: Tiantai and Huayan, with special attention to what is arguably their biggest shared innovation: the development of the classical Mahāyāna Buddhist idea of Emptiness (śūnyāta) into the "omnicentric" idea that each entity, precisely through its emptiness,
is in some sense present in all times and places, is eternal and omnipresent—and the controversies arising from the different justifications and implications advanced by the two schools for this shared doctrine. Readings will include the works of Zhiyi, Zhanran, and Zhili from the Tiantai school, and Dushun, Zhiyan, Chengguan, and Zongmi. Some basic background in Buddhist thought is recommended. Readings will be in English, but an optional reading group working with the original classical texts will likely also be convened.

Instructor(s): Brook Ziporyn
Terms Offered: Autumn

MDVL 24550. Major Trends in Islamic Mysticism. 100 Units.
An examination of Islamic mysticism, commonly known as Sufism, through secondary English literature and translations of premodern Arabic Sufi texts. The goal is to gain firsthand insight into the diverse literary expressions of Islamic spirituality in their historical context, and to understand exactly what, how, and why Sufis say what they say.

Instructor(s): Yousef Casewit
Terms Offered: Winter

MDVL 24590. Early Islamic Theological (Kalām) Texts. 100 Units.
This course offers the opportunity of engaging first-hand with the Arabic texts that define the discussions and polemics in Islamic theology of the formative period (7-10th centuries). Besides studying texts from different genres and produced by authors of differing theological orientations, we will discuss a wide range of themes, such as faith, free will, God’s attributes, revelation, etc., in their intellectual and polemical contexts. The study of the primary readings will be supplemented by secondary scholarly literature. The main objective of this course is to enable students to understand the early theological texts in their religious and historical contexts, which will also inform their study of the major theological works of the Islamic tradition in the later periods.

Instructor(s): Mehmetcan Akpinar
Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): 2 years of Arabic required.

MDVL 24623. Dante’s Inferno: Judging the Earthly World. 100 Units.
The course will offer a close, discussion-based reading of Dante’s “Inferno.” The course begins with an introduction to the fundamental features and meanings of the “Commedia” (genius; structure; models; language; realism; literal and allegorical sense; poetry and prophecy). We will then proceed with the reading and analysis of the most significant cantos of the “Inferno.” In particular, the protagonist’s path of redemption will be examined in its autobiographical and allegorical dimension. In his dual identity of author and character, Dante takes on the role of judge (the author), who accuses and condemns his contemporaries, and of penitent (the character), who finds himself in front of the same passions and sins that tormented his earthly life. We will try to understand how the ambiguous and eternal charm of the great characters of the “Inferno” (Francesca, Farinata, Pier della Vigna, Brunetto, Ulysses, Ugolino) arises from the conflict between these two dimensions. Upon completion of the course, students should have improved their ability to think critically, and to understand and analyze a literary text on different levels of meaning. Furthermore, they should have developed an in-depth knowledge of Dante’s works and the methodologies of Dante studies.

Instructor(s): Roberto Rea
Note(s): Taught in English, but Italian majors, minors and grad students are required to do the readings and writing in Italian.

MDVL 24803. History of Sexuality and Sin. 100 Units.
Since Foucault’s groundbreaking work on the History of Sexuality, we have become attuned to the effects of power and the political implications of the science of sexuality. While Foucault’s text has offered a critical avenue to examine the secular state’s administrations of sexuality, it begins with Christianity’s techniques of power based on the confession of one’s sex. The Christian formulation of the relationship between ‘sex’ and ‘sin’ is essential to understanding the techniques of power that connect sexuality, legality, criminality, normality, and transgression in modern secular contexts. In this class, we will begin with the critical questions of the History of Sexuality, then turn to primary texts in order to examine the way ‘sex’ and ‘sin’ became conceptually connected in Christianity, and finally interrogate the effects of this relation for medieval and modern politics. Over the course of these readings, we will trace the relation between the concepts and their effects to discern the histories of sexuality that lie at the root of contemporary debates on freedom, power, resistance, and desire. No prerequisites.

Instructor(s): Maureen Kelly
Terms Offered: Spring

MDVL 25102. Reading Augustine’s Confessions. 100 Units.
This course will carry out a close reading of Augustine’s Confessions. We will study the work not only as a spiritual autobiography—a common approach—but also as a philosophical argument against alternatives to Christian faith and practice in the late fourth century. That argument will invite us to examine the implications of religious faith for human well-being and on how religious convictions affect the quality of human relationships, self-knowledge, and the emotions. We’ll thus examine how Confessions interrogates the quality of human love,
fear, hatred, and regret; moral responsibilities to ourselves and others; the (anxious) awareness that we are limited in body and time; and how to craft an honest narrative of self-understanding. We will ask (among other things), Is religion a source of personal healing and health, or an obstacle to it? What sorts of problems is religion meant to cure? What problems do religious beliefs create? How does religion bear on the self’s loves, its past, its mortality, its doubts? Along the way we’ll ask whether it is possible to want to do evil, whether it is possible to love or grieve too much, whether we are responsible for what happens in our dreams, what it means to be a friend to others—and how Augustine’s answers to these questions presuppose a wider account of divine justice, charity, and the ordering of the cosmos.

Instructor(s): Richard B. Miller
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 25102, FNDL 27002

MDVL 25218. Suhrawardī and His Interpreters. 100 Units.
Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (d. 1191), the founder of the ishrāqī philosophical tradition, is undoubtedly one of the most innovative and influential philosophers in the history of Islamic thought. In this seminar, we will examine major themes in the writings of Suhrawardī along with excerpts from Arabic commentaries by Muslim and Jewish authors such as Ibn Kamīnān (d. 1284), Shahrazūrī (d. 1288), Qūf al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311), Dāwānī (d. 1502), Dāshkātī (d. 1542), Qarābāgī (d. 1625) and Harawi (d. 1689). Topics include, Suhrwardi’s understanding of the history of philosophy, light and the order of existence, virtues and human happiness, self-knowledge and self-awareness, conceptual and non-conceptual knowledge, and theory of ritual actions.
Instructor(s): Nariman Aavani
Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): 2 years of Arabic.
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 25218, FNDL 25218, ISLM 35218, NEHC 35218, NEHC 25218

MDVL 25400. Readings in Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed. 100 Units.
A careful study of select passages in Maimonides’ Guide of the Perplexed, focusing on the method of the work and its major philosophical-theological themes, including: divine attributes, creation vs. eternity, prophecy, the problem of evil and divine providence, law and ethics, the final aim of human existence.
Instructor(s): James T. Robinson
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 45400, NEHC 40470, HIJD 45400, RLST 21107, RLVC 45400, FNNDL 24106, HREL 45401, JWSC 21107, NEHC 20471

MDVL 25809. Islamic and Jewish Political Philosophy. 100 Units.
What can we learn about political philosophy from reading Muslim and Jewish thinkers? The flowering of political philosophy in the medieval Islamic world provides a mirror for examining our own assumptions about religion, politics, and philosophy. In this course, students read major works by Muslim and Jewish thinkers who debated whether and how to apply philosophical ideas to the political life of a community governed by divine laws. We will begin by discussing the transmission of Greek philosophy into Arabic-Islamic culture, the debates that ensued over the status of “foreign wisdom,” and the issue of esoteric writing. These preliminary topics provide necessary background for studying the tradition of political philosophy that developed under Islam and Judaism in the Middle Ages. Major themes include approaches to divine law, the figure of the philosopher-prophet, logic and language, scriptural interpretation, the place of the philosopher in society, and the nature of human perfection.
Instructor(s): Yonatan Shemesh
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): No prerequisites
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 25809, JWSC 28809

MDVL 26250. Buddhist Poetry in India. 100 Units.
The substantial Buddhist contribution to Indian poetry is of interest for what it teaches us of both Buddhism and the broad development of Indian literature. The present course will focus upon three phases in this history, with attention to what changes of language and literary genre tell us of the transformations of Indian religious culture from the last centuries B.C.E. to about the year 1000. Readings (all in translation) will include the Therīgāthā, a collection of verses written in Pali and the most ancient Indian example of women’s literature, selections from the work of the great Sanskrit poets Aśvaghoṣa, Aryaśūra, and Mātṛceta, and the mystical songs, in the Apabhraṃśa language, of the Buddhist tantric saints.
Instructor(s): Matthew Kapstein
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): General knowledge of Buddhism is desirable.
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 34300, DVPR 34300, HREL 34300, SALC 34300, RLST 26250

MDVL 26700. Jeanne d’Arc, histoire et legende. 100 Units.
Instructor(s): Daisy Delogu
Terms Offered: Course not offered in 24-25.
Prerequisite(s): FREN 20500, 20503 or a literature course taught in French.
Note(s): Taught in French.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 26700, FREN 26700

**MDVL 27020. Christianity and Islam in the Western Mediterranean World during the Late Middle Ages. 100 Units.**

El curso analizará los contactos mantenidos entre mundo cristiano y mundo islámico en el Mediterráneo bajomedieval, tomando la Corona de Aragón y sus ricas fuentes documentales como observatorio privilegiado. Las particularidades de la Corona de Aragón se compararán con las de otros estados cristianos del Occidente mediterráneo que mantuvieron relaciones sostenidas con los musulmanes. Tras la definición de la naturaleza y de las especificidades de los contactos político-diplomáticos, mercantiles y pirático-corsarios entre Cristiandad e Islam, las clases se focalizarán en la identificación y caracterización de colectivos y personas que actuaron como mediadores lingüísticos y culturales entre ambas realidades. Se determinarán las circunstancias y motivos que permitieron que agentes diplomáticos, mercaderes, mercenarios, piratas-corsarios o cautivos-esclavos vehicularan los contactos. Y se analizarán y compararán las distintas tipologías documentales que son plasmación de todos esos intercambios y contactos culturales y humanos.

**Instructor(s):** Jaś Elsner and Karin Krause  
Terms Offered: Spring

**Note(s):** Taught in Spanish.

**Equivalent Course(s):** SPAN 27020, CATA 37020, RLST 27020, SPAN 37020, CATA 27020

**MDVL 28013. Love, Desire, and Sexuality in Islamic Texts and Contexts. 100 Units.**

What separates love from lust? How do our erotic desires and sexual practices intersect with our beliefs? This interdisciplinary class explores these questions in conversation with foundational thinkers from the Islamic tradition alongside insights from feminist and queer theory. We will delve into questions on the relationship between romantic, familial, and divine love; gender, sexuality, and the body; and Orientalism and the politics of reading desire cross-culturally. Exploring a diverse set of primary sources that range from the Qur'an to Rumi's Masnavi to contemporary Bollywood, we will encounter different representations of love, desire, and sexuality in religious and philosophical discourses, literary representations, and visual media. We will examine not only how these representations reflect different historical norms, but also how and to what extent texts and images can inform or impact the norms of their contexts as well. No prerequisite knowledge of the topics or time periods discussed is needed, and students will have the opportunity over the course of the class to develop a project that relates our content to their own interests.

**Instructor(s):** Allison Kanner-Botani  
Terms Offered: Spring

**Note(s):** This course counts as a Concepts course for GNSE majors.

**Equivalent Course(s):** RLST 28013, NEHC 29018, CMLT 28013, SALC 28013, GNSE 23135

**MDVL 28311. Image, Iconoclasm, Animation. 100 Units.**

This course will explore the fantasies of the animation of images both ancient and early Christian, both secular and sacred, as the backdrop to examining the phenomenon of iconoclasm as an assault on the image from pre-Christian antiquity via Byzantium to the Protestant Reformation. It will tackle both texts and images, the archaeological context of image-assault and the conceptual (indeed theological) contexts within which such assault was both justified and condemned. These historical issues cannot be separated, in our scholarly approaches and responses, from a vibrant contemporary culture around question of virtuality, animation, image-worship and image-destruction in the current world. The course will provide space to reflect on the problems raised by this. The course will be taught over the first four and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule. It will be examined on the basis of a paper, due on a subject to be agreed and on a date to be agreed at the end of the Spring quarter.

**Instructor(s):** Jaś Elsner  
Terms Offered: Spring

**Prerequisite(s):** The course will be taught over the first 4 and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule.  
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.

**Equivalent Course(s):** RLST 28013, NEHC 29018, CMLT 28013, SALC 28013, GNSE 23135

**MDVL 28325. Art and Description in Antiquity and Byzantium. 100 Units.**

This course explores the rich tradition of ekphrasis in Greco-Roman antiquity and Byzantium - as it ranges from vivid description in general to a specific engagement with works of art. While the prime focus will remain on texts from Greece, Rome and Byzantium - in order to establish what might be called the ancestry of a genre in the European tradition and especially its fascinating place between pagan polytheistic and Christian writing -- there will be opportunity in the final paper to range beyond this into questions of comparative literature, art (history) writing and ekphrasis in other periods or contexts, depending on students' interests and needs. A reading knowledge of Greek in particular could not be described as a disadvantage, but the course can be taken without knowing the ancient languages. The course will be taught over the first 4 and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule. It will be examined on the basis of a paper, due on a subject to be agreed and on a date to be agreed at the end of the Spring quarter.

**Instructor(s):** Jaś Elsner and Karin Krause  
Terms Offered: Spring

**Prerequisite(s):** The course will be taught over the first 4 and a half weeks in the Spring Quarter on an intensive schedule.

**Note(s):** This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
MDVL 28328. Africa’s Byzantine Heritage: Religion and Art in Pluralistic Societies. 100 Units.
This quarter-length course is conceived around themes and artifacts of an innovative special exhibition titled ‘Africa & Byzantium’ at the Metropolitan Museum of Art that we will be visiting together (Feb. 16-18, 2024). It will be the first time a museum has showcased the important contributions of Africa’s multi-ethnic societies to the cultural and religious life of the Christian Empire of Byzantium. In addition, the Met boasts a world-renowned permanent collection of Byzantine artifacts, several of which we will be studying as well during our field trip. The Byzantine Empire (4th cent.-1453) encompassed large parts of the Mediterranean, the Balkans, Anatolia, and the Middle East, with North and East Africa forming part of the empire from the fourth century CE to the Islamic conquest (early 7th cent.). Under Islamic rule, the African continent’s Byzantine-Christian legacy continued to be influential and has a rich afterlife to this day. The field trip will enable students hone their competence in visual analysis through close-up study of artworks representing a range of artistic media and techniques. The classroom sessions will illuminate the historical and cultural framework in which the artifacts are situated. Africa’s Byzantine heritage is an emerging field of study and in this course students who wish to pursue their own research projects will have ample opportunity to do so. Students will also attend weekly discussion sections led by the TA.
Instructor(s): Karin Krause Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Students enrolled in this course will participate in a ‘mandatory’ three-day field trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art (Feb. 16-18, 2024). Travel and lodging will be fully covered through a Curricular Innovation and Undergraduate Research grant provided by the College.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 28328, CLVC 25323, RLST 28328

MDVL 28404. Introduction to Old English. 100 Units.
Moððe word fræt.” These are the first words of a riddle that students will learn how to read in this course. As the first part of the Medieval Research Series, this course introduces students to the Old English language, the literary history of early medieval England, and current research tools and scholarship in the field of Old English. In studying the language, we will explore its diverse and exciting body of literature, including poems of heroic violence and lament; laws, medical recipes, and humorously obscene riddles. Successful completion of the course will give students a rich sense not only of the earliest period of English literary culture, but also of the structure of the English language as it is written and spoken today. (Pre-1650; Med/Ren) This course is the first in a two-quarter Medieval Research sequence. No prior experience with Old or Middle English is required. The second course in the Medieval Research sequence (Beowulf) will be offered in the Spring Quarter.
Instructor(s): Benjamin Saltzman Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 38404, ENGL 28404

MDVL 28405. Old English Riddles (Med. Research Sequence II) 100 Units.
In this course, we will read and translate all of the Exeter Book Riddles from Old English, attending closely to issues of language, paleography, textual cruxes, and-of course-interpretaion. In an effort to understand these riddles within a broader early medieval tradition of enigmatic poetry, we will also read several Old English charms as well as Anglo-Latin riddles in translation. Emphasis will also be placed on the history of scholarship on early medieval riddles, and over the course of the term, each student will produce a piece original scholarly research that engages with a riddle or set of riddles and the critical tradition. (Pre-1650, Poetry); (Med/Ren).
Instructor(s): Benjamin Saltzman Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): This course is the second in a two-quarter Medieval Research sequence and prior knowledge of Old English will be required.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 38405, ENGL 28405

MDVL 28705. Christian Iconography. 100 Units.
In Christian culture, visual images have for many centuries played a pivotal role in ritual, devotion, intellectual thought, and religious instruction. The most important aims of this course are that students understand images convey meaning in very unique ways and learn how to decode their visual messages. The study of iconography encompasses a variety of methods used to identify the subject matter of a pictorial image, describe its contents, and analyze its discursive strategies in view of its original cultural context. We will cover some of the most important themes visualized in the arts of Christianity by analyzing imagery spanning different periods, geographical regions, pictorial media, and artistic techniques. While special emphasis is placed on the intersections of art and literature, we will also examine pictorial themes that are independent of a specific textual basis. Alongside the study of Christian iconography, this course will address broader issues of visual inquiry, such as patronage, viewer response, emotions, and gender roles. In this course, students will acquire a ‘visual literacy’ that will enable them to explore all kinds of works of art fruitfully as primary sources in their own right. Students will be examined on the basis of an essay and one oral presentation of a work of art. Active participation in the classroom discussion is also a requirement.
Instructor(s): Karin Krause Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course is intended primarily for students who have little or no familiarity with the methods of visual analysis.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 28705, ARTH 28705, RLST 28705
MDVL 29104. Antisemitism and Islamophobia, Historically and Today. 100 Units.
How are antisemitism and Islamophobia linked together? Are they two different modes of oppression and discrimination or are they part of a similar phenomenon? Moreover, are they religious, racial, or ethnic forms of discrimination? Throughout this course, we will complicate the media narrative that sees Jews and Arabs as perpetual enemies through a historical and philosophical exploration into the origins and development of Orientalism, Islamophobia, and antisemitism. Students will think historically about the construction of race, ethnicity, and religion, and the discriminatory modes by which these are employed; and they will use that knowledge to think critically about current depictions of anti-Jewish and anti-Islamic violence. In the first part of the course, we will consider the historical and conceptual underpinnings of antisemitism and Islamophobia. We will look to 14th and 15th century Spain in order to better understand how and where they originated; we will then track their development through modernity, paying close attention to how these discourses changed and evolved over time; finally, we will look at the impact of the Holocaust and the rise of the State of Israel and consider current iterations of Islamophobia and antisemitism in Europe and America today.
Instructor(s): Mendel Kranz Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 29104, JWSC 29104, HIST 26009

MDVL 35418. Figura, Persona, Vox: Prosopopoeia in the Middle Ages. 100 Units.
This course considers fictional persons, tropes of anthropomorphism and vivification, and personification allegory as these operate in the theory and practice of medieval imaginative writing. In addition, it places practices of prosopopoeia within ongoing scholarly conversations about lyric voice, literary character, affect, the ontology of fiction, and the relation of speech to writing. (Med/Ren)
Instructor(s): Julie Orlemanski Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 35418