MEDIEVAL STUDIES

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

<table>
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<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,</td>
<td>200</td>
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<tr>
<td>or music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two courses in philosophy or theology</td>
<td>200</td>
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<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>Total Units</td>
<td>1200</td>
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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 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 (http://medieval.uchicago.edu/baCourses.shtml), divided among subject areas as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<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>
<tr>
<td>One course in art, archeology, architecture, or music</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One course in philosophy or theology</td>
<td>100</td>
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</table>
Two electives

Total Units

* 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), 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.

**ARTH 14200. Introduction to Medieval Art. 100 Units.**

Hybrid creatures carved in stone, gem encrusted metalwork, and page upon page of gold leaf: artists and artisans in the Middle Ages crafted objects like these that evidence complex and diverse techniques, political and ideological motivations, and religious beliefs. In this course, we will study the art of medieval Europe c. 500-1500 CE, with special emphasis on the artistic, political, and ideological forces that created the visual and material culture of the medieval world. The production of manuscripts, wall paintings, metalwork, textiles, and architecture in the period covered in this course bear witness to centuries of artistic traditions, political turmoil, and religious change; we will survey this varied corpus of sacred and secular objects with an eye to materials, techniques, and historical context. In examining the effects of changing social, political, economic, and religious forces on image-making, we consider how and why often-anonymous medieval artists created images and objects, and why these things looked the way they did. We will focus on medieval western Europe, but also attend to the global connections of the medieval world. Multiple class session will involve digital encounters with medieval objects in online collections, and the course will ask students to conceptualize their own museum exhibitions using digital tools.

Instructor(s): A. Kumler 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): MDVL 14200

**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): NEAA 10630, NEHC 16709

**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, FREN 31700, FNDL 21700
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. Assignments: 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: Autumn 
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 22407, 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): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 21103, CMLT 36701, CMLT 26701, REMS 33900, ITAL 33900

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.
Instructor(s): R. Rubini Terms Offered: Autumn 
Note(s): Taught in English. 
Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 25802, ITAL 36002

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.
Instructor(s): A. Maggi Terms Offered: Spring 
Note(s): Taught in Italian. 
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 36401, FNDL 26401
MDVL 15240. Medieval Death. 100 Units.
This course will examine late medieval representations of death and dying, considering it in terms of both a conceptual problematic and a practice, especially as it appears in the literature and art of fourteenth and fifteenth century England. In addition to reading poetic, theological, and philosophical texts from the medieval period, students will examine visual art, architecture, and other media to the end of asking questions about how people and cultures understand and prepare themselves for death. (Pre-1650)
Instructor(s): Jack Dragu Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 15240

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): Ahmed El Shamsy Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20601, SOSC 22000, HIST 25610, RLST 20401

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-interpretation. 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

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

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 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 25804, HIST 35804, MDVL 20502, CMES 30502, NEHC 30502, ISLM 30600
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): Holly Shissler
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): HIST 35904, HIST 25904, NEHC 30503

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 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): Ahmed El Shamsy
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22000, HIST 25610, RLST 20401, MDVL 20601

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): Franklin Lewis
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): MDVL 20602, SOSC 22100, HIST 25615, RLST 20402

NEHC 20603. Islamic Thought and Literature III. 100 Units.
This course covers the period from ca. 1700 to the present. It explores Muslim intellectuals’ engagement with tradition and modernity in the realms of religion, politics, literature, and law. We discuss debates concerning the role of religion in a modern society, perceptions of Europe and European influence, the challenges of maintain religious and cultural authenticity, and Muslim views of nation-states and nationalism in the Middle East. We also give consideration to the modern developments of transnational jihadism and the Arab Spring. This course sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.
Instructor(s): Orit Bashkin
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22000, HIST 25616, RLST 20430

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 25901, NEHC 30840, HIST 35901, MDVL 20840
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.
Terms Offered: Autumn Winter
Prerequisite(s): SPAN 20300 or consent of instructor.
Note(s): Taught in Spanish.