

# 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. 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

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

\* 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:

One course in history	100
One course in medieval language or literature *	100

One course in art, archeology, architecture, or music	100
One course in philosophy or theology	100
Two electives	200
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](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): RLST 11030, NEHC 30030, 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): ANTH 20701, SOSC 20101, CRES 20701, HIST 10101

**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 rabbinic 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, rabbinic, 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): RLST 22010, JWSC 12000, HIST 11701, NEHC 22010

**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): RLST 22203, FNDL 22204, RENS 12203, SIGN 26034, KNOW 12203, ITAL 16000, HIST 12203, CLCV 22216

**MDVL 12500. Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts of Interpretation. 100 Units.**

This class 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): Margaret Mitchell Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): Interest in this literature, and willingness to enter into conversation with like-minded and non-like-minded others on the texts and the issues involved in their interpretation.

Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 12000, BIBL 32500, FNDL 28202

**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

**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 16900. Ancient Mediterranean World III: Late Antiquity. 100 Units.**

Part III examines late antiquity, a period of paradox. The later Roman emperors established the most intensive, pervasive state structures of the ancient Mediterranean, yet yielded their northern and western territories to

Goths, Huns, Vandals, and, ultimately, their Middle Eastern core to the Arab Muslims. Imperial Christianity united the populations of the Roman Mediterranean in the service of one God, but simultaneously divided them 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 sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.

Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 20900, HIST 16900, SOSC 27910

**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 Karateke Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 20012, CLCV 25800, HIST 15603, SOSC 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): CMLT 20124, JWSC 20924, RLST 20124, FNDL 20124, HIST 29908

**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): CECILIA 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 15611, ISLM 30201, NEHC 30201, HIST 35621, RLST 20201, NEHC 20201

**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.

Prerequisite(s): Islamicate Civilization I (NEHC 20201) or Islamic Thought & Literature-1 (NEHC 20601), or the equivalent

Note(s): The Islamicate Civilization sequence does not fulfill the General Ed requirements

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 15612, NEHC 30202, HIST 35622, RLST 20202, ISLM 30202, NEHC 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, SOSC 20501, NEHC 30501, HIST 35704, RLST 20501, HIST 25704, CMES 30501, NEHC 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): SOSC 20502, HIST 35804, ISLM 30600, NEHC 20502, NEHC 30502, CMES 30502, HIST 25804

**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 20522, NEAA 30522

**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 30501, NEAA 20501

**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): Flowers, Adam Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): SOSC 22000, HIST 25610, NEHC 20601, RLST 20401

**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 sequence meets the general education requirement in civilization studies.

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 20402, HIST 25615, NEHC 20602, SOSC 22100

**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): HIST 36005, NEHC 30605, ISLM 30605, HIST 26005, NEHC 20605

**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 Median 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, RLST 20808, NEHC 30808, ISLM 30808

#### **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 conferees in the world of nature.

Instructor(s): James Robinson Terms Offered: Winter

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

#### **MDVL 21330. Despair 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 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): HIST 22121, GNSE 21330, RLST 21330

#### **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.

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): Frederick de Armas Terms Offered: Autumn

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

Note(s): Taught in Spanish. This course is the equivalent of SPAN 21703.

Equivalent Course(s): SPAN 21705

#### **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, CMLT 21901, FNDL 21905

**MDVL 21903. Medieval Christian Mythology. 100 Units.**

Heaven and hell, angels and demons, the Virgin Mary and the devil battling over the state of human souls, the world on the edge of apocalypse awaiting the coming of the Judge and the resurrection of the dead, the transubstantiation of bread and wine into body and blood, the great adventures of the saints. As Rudolf Bultmann put it in his summary of the "world picture" of the New Testament, "all of this is mythological talk," arguably unnecessary for Christian theology. And yet, without its mythology, much of Christianity becomes incomprehensible as a religious or symbolic system. This course is intended as an introduction to the stories that medieval Christians told about God, his Mother, the angels, and the saints, along with the place of the sacraments and miracles in the world picture of the medieval church. Sources will range from Hugh of St. Victor's summa on the sacraments to Hildegard of Bingen's visionary "Scivias," the Pseudo-Bonaventuran "Meditations on the Life of Christ," and Jacobus de Voragine's "Golden Legend," along with handbooks on summoning angels and cycles of mystery plays.

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

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 21903, HIST 31903

**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 Terms Offered: Winter

Equivalent Course(s): HIST 12000, HIST 32000

**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 middleliness 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 Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian.

Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 32000, FNDL 27202, ITAL 22000

**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 Terms Offered: Spring

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.

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 21804, ITAL 22101, ITAL 32101

**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, HIST 22123, HMRT 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): PLSC 22125, RLST 27215, HIST 22125

**MDVL 23422. Mourning and Commemoration in Pre-Modern French Literature. 100 Units.**

This is an introductory-level course that will interrogate how experiences of death and mortality were understood and described by literary works in the pre-modern era. Be they environmental, political, or medical, the crises we face today are by no means unique to the 21st century. As distanced as we may feel from plague, crusades, and unceasing warfare, a closer look forces us to rethink what has really changed in 500 years, while offering us a deeper understanding of practices and representations from the past. The shared human anxieties related to temporal and corporeal finality and the unknown will inform a critical reading of French literary works that take on death and mortality, including texts by Eustache Deschamps, François Villon, Michel de Montaigne, and Christine de Pizan.

Instructor(s): Kirsten Lopez Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): FREN 20500 or 20503.

Note(s): Introductory-level course. Taught in English with readings in French.

Equivalent Course(s): FREN 23422

**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, HIST 23510, FNDL 23902

**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 33518, FNDL 23518, HIST 23518

**MDVL 23753. Race, Gender and Religion in Medieval and Early Modern France. 100 Units.**

From the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century, France sees the development of several genres and literary movements that are foundational to the French literary tradition: the epic, the fable, the narrative genre, the essay, poetry, tragedy, comedy, and the fable are the various genres of premodern France that we will study. What was France at the time? Most of these texts are not originally written in a version of French you would recognize easily. How to build a nation, and how to live together, were also key questions for medieval and early modern writers. Some of the concepts developed in those texts undeniably led to a version of France that made Versailles but also the Code Noir - which defined the conditions of slavery in the French colonial empire - possible. In addition to race, gender, and class, we will discuss the themes that were important to premodern French authors and cultures, not least of them medievalism, Renaissance, and classicism. What makes these texts classics, and what do they still have to say for our time?

Instructor(s): Pauline Goul Terms Offered: Spring

Prerequisite(s): FREN 20300

Note(s): Taught in French. This is an introductory-level course.

Equivalent Course(s): FREN 23750, GNSE 23750

**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): CLCV 23809, RLST 23809, GNSE 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 possess relevant language skills.

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

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 23823, CMLT 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: Autumn

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): ENST 24110, GNSE 34103, FREN 24100, CEGU 24110, FREN 34100, GNSE 24103

#### **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 -- *Mīmāṃsā* 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): RLST 24202, SALC 30902, HREL 30300, SALC 20902, DVPR 30302

#### **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 (*sūnyata*) 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

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

Equivalent Course(s): EALC 44275, DVPR 44275, EALC 24275, RLST 24275

#### **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: Autumn

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

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 32419, GLST 24550, SIGN 26068, RLST 24550

**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 Akpınar Terms Offered: Winter

Prerequisite(s): 2 years of Arabic required.

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

Equivalent Course(s): ISLM 34590, NEHC 24590, NEHC 34590, RLST 24590

**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*" (genesis; 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 Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 24623, ITAL 34623, ITAL 24623

**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

Equivalent Course(s): FNDL 24806, RLST 24803, GNSE 23152, HIPS 24803

**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): FNDL 27002, RLST 25102

**MDVL 25218. Suhrawardī and His Interpreters. 100 Units.**

Shihāb al-Dīn Suhrawardī (d. 1191), the founder of the *ishraqī* 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 Kammūnah (d. 1284), Shahrazūrī (d. 1288), Quṭb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311), Dawānī (d.1502), Dashtakī (d. 1542), Qarabāghī (d. 1625) and Harawī (d. 1689). Topics include, Suhrawardī'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): FNDL 25218, ISLM 35218, NEHC 25218, NEHC 35218, RLST 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): NEHC 20471, NEHC 40470, FNDL 24106, RLST 21107, HREL 45401, RLVC 45400, ISLM 45400, HIJD 45400, JWSC 21107

**MDVL 25724. Ladies Errant: Adventure and Gender in Chivalric Literature. 100 Units.**

Some of the most enduring stories to come out of medieval literature were undoubtedly knights' tales: stories of King Arthur, Lancelot, Gawain, the Holy Grail, and a host of other chivalric figures. We commonly think of these stories as centering on a heroic, knightly male protagonist, and now many modern versions work to challenge this gender dynamic by placing women at the center or calling into question the values attributed to a knightly masculinity. But what if female heroism in chivalric literature isn't a modern invention, but in fact existed from the genre's very beginning? And what if knightly heroics have always been presented with a degree of complexity, humor, and ambivalence? As it turns out, we can find numerous examples of "adventuring ladies" or "ladies errant" in medieval literature, and the figure of the knight has never been simplistic. This class will read several examples of female protagonism in the French tradition of medieval romance, as Old French was the language of the earliest and most influential chivalric romances, and explore questions of gender, adventure, and conventions both social and literary.

Instructor(s): Jacqueline Victor Terms Offered: Winter

Note(s): Knowledge of French is not required. The texts will be made available in English, modern French, and Old French. Regular class discussion will be conducted in English, and coursework may be completed in English or in French. Students wishing to receive FREN credit will complete the readings and work in French and attend supplementary French-language discussions.

Equivalent Course(s): FREN 25724, GNSE 23161

**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): JWSC 28809, RLST 25809

**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 Aśvaghōṣa, 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): RLST 26250, SALC 34300, RLVC 34300, DVPR 34300, HREL 34300

**MDVL 26523. Dante's Vita Nuova: a Revolutionary Love. 100 Units.**

The course consists of a close, discussion-based reading of Dante's "Vita nuova," examined within its biographical, literary and cultural context. The aim is to understand why the "Vita nuova," an autobiographical narration in vernacular about Dante's love for Beatrice, represents a revolutionary book in the panorama of Medieval literature. The course will proceed with the reading and analysis of the most important chapters and poems, which will be contextualized within the author's self-representation strategy. In this way, we will retrace the fundamental stages of the inner renewal that lead Dante to discover a new conception of love and poetry.

Furthermore, some episodes will be read in relation to the cantos of "Purgatory" in which Dante returns to confront his past as a love poet. Finally, special attention will be paid to the relationship with Guido Cavalcanti, celebrated by Dante as "first friend" and dedicatee, but ultimately surpassed by Dante's new representation of love. 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 Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 36523, FNLD 26523, ITAL 26523

**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): R. Salicrú i Lluç

Note(s): Taught in Spanish.

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

**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 Rūmī's *Masnāvi* 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-Botan Terms Offered: Spring

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

Equivalent Course(s): RLST 28013, NEHC 29018, SALC 28013, CMLT 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 28311, ARTH 28311, ARTH 38311, CLCV 25923, CLAS 35923, RLVC 38311, KNOW 38311

**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.

Equivalent Course(s): CLAS 38323, RLST 28325, CLCV 28323, KNOW 38325, ARTH 38325, RLVC 38325, ARTH 28325

#### **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 multiethnic 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): RLST 28328, ARTH 28328, CLCV 25323

#### **MDVL 28404. Introduction to Old English. 100 Units.**

Moðe 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-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

#### **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): ARTH 28705, CMLT 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): JWSC 29104, RLST 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 personificational 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

