

# MEDIEVAL STUDIES (MDST)

## MDST125 Love, Sex, and Marriage in Renaissance Europe

This writing-intensive seminar will compare literary and artistic depictions of love, sex, and marriage during the Renaissance by authors and artists from England, Spain, France, Flanders, Germany, and Italy. We will read both male and female writers in genres ranging from poetry, the short story, and theater to the essay, the travel narrative, and the sermon. We will also examine other arts such as painting, sculpture, and the decorative arts (e.g., wedding chests). Questions we will explore include, but are not limited to, How were love and marriage related during the Renaissance? What role did sex, gender, and violence play in relationships between couples and within society? How do gender and genre affect the ways in which love, sex, and marriage are depicted? How did cultural differences influence writers' and artists' interpretations of love, sex, and marriage? And what about same-sex unions? Other topics will include virginity and celibacy, erotic literature, family and class structures, and divorce.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L123, COL123, FGSS123**

Prereq: **None**

## MDST125F Love, Sex, and Marriage in Renaissance Europe (FYS)

This seminar compares literary depictions of love, sex, and marriage from the 14th to the 17th centuries by writers from England, France, Germany, Italy, the Low Countries, Spain, and Sweden. (Students will be able to study writings from other parts of Europe over the course of the semester should they so choose.) We will read texts composed by women and men in genres including poetry, theater, the short story, the essay, the maxim, the travel narrative, and the sermon. Though the seminar is focused on literature, we will also consider painting, engravings, sculpture, and the decorative arts (e.g., wedding chests). We will explore questions such as: How were love and marriage related during the Renaissance? What roles did sex, gender, race, class, and violence play in relationships between couples and within society, and how were they represented in literature and art? How do gender and genre affect the ways in which love, sex, and marriage are depicted? How did cultural differences influence writers' and artists' interpretations of love, sex, and marriage? And what about homosexual love, same-sex unions, and depictions of dissident sexualities and genders? Finally, how do contemporary (21st-century) writers reimagine Renaissance representations of love, sex, and marriage, and why do Renaissance texts and images matter today? Other topics will include virginity and celibacy, friendship, erotic literature and pornography, religion, family and class structures, and divorce. This seminar engages students with university-level research by navigating search engines and databases (beyond a Google search!), honing their analytical skills, and polishing their academic prose. Students will also have the opportunity to write creatively should they so choose.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L123F, COL123F, FGSS123F, WLIT249F**

Prereq: **None**

## MDST125Z Love, Sex, and Marriage in Renaissance Europe

This seminar compares literary depictions of love, sex, and marriage from the 14th to the 17th centuries by writers from England, France, Germany, Italy, the Low Countries, Spain, and Sweden. (N.B. Students will be able to study writings from other parts of Europe over the course of the semester should they so choose.) We will read texts composed by women and men in genres including poetry, theater, the short story, the essay, the maxim, the travel narrative, and the sermon. Though the seminar is focused on literature, we will also

consider painting, engravings, sculpture, and the decorative arts (e.g., wedding chests). We will explore questions such as: How were love and marriage related during the Renaissance? What roles did sex, gender, race, class, and violence play in relationships between couples and within society, and how were they represented in literature and art? How do gender and genre affect the ways in which love, sex, and marriage are depicted? How did cultural differences influence writers' and artists' interpretations of love, sex, and marriage? And what about "homosexual" love, same-sex unions, and depictions of dissident sexualities and genders? Finally, how do contemporary (21st-century) writers reimagine Renaissance representations of love, sex, and marriage, and why do Renaissance texts and images matter today? Other topics will include virginity and celibacy, friendship, erotic literature and pornography, religion, family and class structures, and divorce. This seminar engages students with university-level research by navigating search engines and databases (beyond a Google search!), honing their analytical skills, and polishing their academic prose. Students will also have the opportunity to write creatively should they so choose.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L123Z, COL123Z, ENGL123Z, FGSS123Z, WLIT249Z**

Prereq: **None**

## MDST128 Rome After Rome: Culture and Empire of Constantinople

Rome did not fall. Rome was swallowed by a new idea of what it means to be Roman when, in the fourth century, the empire left its own founding city behind and moved the capitol to the newly-minted city of Constantine, Constantinople. This course gives students a hands-on introduction to one of the most astounding sociopolitical transformations in human history, tracing out the cultural, political, and economic trajectories of the Roman empire of the Middle Ages.

In exploring the textual and material relics of this medieval metropolis on their own terms, students apply and publish their research interests on the collaborative place-based interactive teaching encyclopedia Constantinople as Palimpsest (<https://arcg.is/0e4Lb4>). For their final project students will design a unit for a high school history course, using Constantinople as Palimpsest to introduce the diversities and paradoxes of life in the city of New Rome.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-COL**

Identical With: **COL295, HIST230**

Prereq: **None**

## MDST131 Introduction to Western Art I: Ancient to Medieval

This course introduces the art and architecture of the Western world during the ancient and medieval periods. The artistic traditions of the Near East, Europe, and the wider Mediterranean will be surveyed from the prehistoric era to ca. 1400 CE. Questions of style, content, function, and cultural and historical context will be examined alongside such perennial concerns as religion, rulership, social class, luxury, and the definition of art within its ancient and medieval milieus.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA109**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST151 European Architecture and Urbanism to 1750**

This course is an introduction to architecture and related visual art as an expression of premodern Western European civilizations, from ancient Greece through the early 18th century, including Roman, Early Christian, Byzantine, early medieval, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque architecture, landscapes, and cities. The focus is on analysis of form in architecture and the allied arts. Emphasis is on relationships between style and patronage. In each era, how does architecture help to constitute its society's identity? What is the relationship between style and ideology? How do architects respond to the works of earlier architects, either innovatively or imitatively? How do patrons respond to the works of their predecessors, either locally or distantly? How are works of architecture positioned within those structures of power that the works, in turn, help to define? How do monuments celebrate selected aspects of history and suppress others? How were the major buildings configured, spatially and materially? Emphasis will be on continuities and distinctions between works across time, seeing Western traditions as a totality over centuries. Lectures and readings convey different historiographic approaches to these issues.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA151**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST203 Introduction to the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament)**

The Hebrew Bible is one of the most influential texts in the world. From antiquity to the present, it has served as a source of philosophical, literary, and artistic reflection. It is a fascinating document, combining narrative, poetry, law, prophetic proclamations, and puzzling parables. What kind of book is the Hebrew Bible? Who wrote it and why? How do we approach such a text across the distance of time? Through a systematic reading from the very beginning, we will place the Bible in its historical context while giving special attention to the philosophical and literary questions it raises: Is obedience to authority always justified? Why do good people suffer unjustly? What is God's gender? In answering these and other questions, you will gain an understanding of the ways contesting interpretations make authoritative claims.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RELI**

Identical With: **RELI201, CJST244, WLIT281**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST204 Medieval Europe**

This introductory lecture course is a history of European politics, culture, and institutions from the end of the Roman Imperial era through 1520. Within a chronological framework we will focus on the creation of kingdoms and government; the growth and crises of papal-dominated Christianity, its crusades and its philosophy; the rise and role of the knight, lady, and aristocratic culture; masculinity and gender relations; the crises of the later Middle Ages, including the Black Death, heresy, mysticism, and war. These all contributed to the beginnings of the modern world, including the Renaissance and the Reformation, events that ended the medieval period. We will also at least glance at the borderlands of Europe, the edges of Islamic and Orthodox worlds.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST201**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST207 Chaucer and His World**

In this course, we will read Chaucer's fascinating dream-visions, *The Book of the Duchess* and *The House of Fame* and his best-known work, *The*

*Canterbury Tales*. We will also read selections from Chaucer's sources and consider how he adapts these texts in his own literary works. Some of the topics we will explore are the various genres of Chaucer's poetry (allegory, epic, romance, satire), medieval ideas about psychology and dreams, the ideology of chivalry, Chaucer's reinvention of the classical world, and views of gender and sexuality. All readings will be in Middle English, so we will read slowly and carefully, with attention to the language.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ENGL**

Identical With: **ENGL207**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST209 Mosque and Cathedral: Islam and the West, c. 600-1500**

This course examines the interaction between the Islamic world and medieval Europe from the perspective of art and architecture, from late antiquity and the rise of Islam through the end of the Middle Ages. Our approach will seek out both intersections and comparisons: while attending to the borders, crossings, and overlaps that existed between medieval Christendom and the Islamic world, this course will also stage comparisons of key themes specific to these traditions, chief among them the picturing of divinity, the status of a sacred text, the organization of sacred space, and the practice of luxury. We will survey a series of historical encounters, including Byzantine Iconoclasm, the Crusades, and trade and diplomacy in general, before culminating in Renaissance Italy. Special emphasis will be reserved for key geographies of exchange, including Spain, Sicily, North Africa, and the Holy Land. Consideration will be given to the media of architecture, mosaic, painting, relief sculpture, decorated books, ivory, metalwork, and textiles. Questions of geography, ethnicity, the other, the idol, cultural translation, and the status of text vs. image will be threaded throughout.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA209**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST210 Romanesque and Gothic Art and Architecture**

This course introduces the art and architecture of Romanesque and Gothic Europe, that is, later medieval Europe ca. 1100-1400, focusing especially on Germany, France, Italy, England, and Spain, as well as the wider Mediterranean. Architecture, painting, sculpture, and the luxury arts (e.g., metalwork, ivory, and textiles) will be our focus, supplemented by primary-source texts and secondary literature. Key themes will include sacred spaces, such as cathedrals and monasteries; sacred images and devotion; gender; pilgrimage and the relic; geography; the Other; the monstrous and the miraculous; courtly love and chivalry; the relationship between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam; and premodern definitions of art, the artist, the donor, craftsmanship, and value.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA210, RL&L210**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST210Z Romanesque and Gothic Art and Architecture**

This course introduces the art and architecture of Romanesque and Gothic Europe, that is, later medieval Europe ca. 1100-1400, focusing especially on Germany, France, Italy, England, and Spain, as well as the wider Mediterranean. Architecture, painting, sculpture, and the luxury arts (e.g., metalwork, ivory, and textiles) will be our focus, supplemented by primary-source texts and secondary literature. Key themes will include sacred spaces, such as cathedrals and monasteries; sacred images and devotion; gender; pilgrimage and the relic; geography; the Other; the monstrous and the miraculous; courtly love

and chivalry; the relationship between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam; and premodern definitions of art, the artist, the donor, craftsmanship, and value.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA210Z, RL&L210Z**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST211 Magic, Witchcraft, and Miracle, from Saints to Salem**

Until the "disenchantment of the world" in the 18th and 19th centuries, Europeans lived in a universe shot through with hidden and awesome power. God's action in the world was possible, but puzzlingly he often operated through other agents, through the saints and by miracle. On the other hand, humans were often tempted to appeal to other powers to get what they wanted, and the use of magic--some pagan in origin, some not--was a pervasive influence. The world was full of demons and even devils, who used illusion and magic to entrap people by possessing them or turning them toward witchcraft in exchange for wealth and health. Surprisingly, the occult was not all bad, and Catholics and later Protestants too wrestled with the question of what to accept and what to suppress. Magical forces did not fade with the Renaissance but actually grew alongside the first developments toward modern natural science in the 16th and 17th centuries. The necromancer joined the saint, the priest, and the witch as the faces of occult power. This course will take a broad look at the people and powers that filled the place where science and a lot of religion sit today. The course will survey medieval developments and will end in New England in the 17th century. The instructor will provide background and narrative history in order to place the readings into their appropriate context. In surveying the long history of magic and miracle in Europe, we shall ask such questions as: What exactly do these terms mean and how have the meanings changed? How far away from such a worldview are we today and did magic really end in the 17th century? And, if so, why? Who controlled the use of magic and how was its misuse identified and punished? Were the processes of law, inquisition, and prosecution fair or effective? Were there really witches or just witch hunts? Why did people believe in miracles and magic? Who were the practitioners? Why did it all decline?

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST235**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST212 Wesleyan University Collegium Musicum**

The Collegium Musicum (literally "company of musicians") is a vocal performance ensemble dedicated to exploring and performing the diverse European repertoires of medieval, renaissance, and baroque music. Emphasis is given to the study of musical styles, performance practices, vocal independence, healthy singing, and musicianship. Students investigate various cultural aspects of the production of music, including primary sources, acoustics, and cultural heritage. Outreach projects include singing with and for seniors.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-MUSC**

Identical With: **MUSC438, COL138**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST213 Cross, Book, Bone: Early Medieval Art, ca. 300-1100**

This class surveys the art and architecture of early medieval Europe, beginning with the multicultural world of Late Antiquity, the decline of the Roman Empire, and the spread of Christianity, and then continuing through the glory of Byzantium, the rise of Islam, and the development of Germanic kingdoms in Northern Europe. Style, content, function, and historical context shall be

examined across monuments of architecture, sculpture, mosaic, manuscripts, painting, and the luxury arts. Questions of religious practice, political messaging, and cross-cultural translation shall be threaded throughout, for example: Could one picture God? How might divinity be conceptualized and accessed? How might one best picture a ruler? How did early medieval Europe define both art and the figure of the artist? How might we see dialogue, overlap, and/or competition between the art and architecture of Islam and Christianity, among other religious traditions? The art historical periods considered will include Late Antique, Byzantine, Umayyad, Abbasid, Migration, Insular, Carolingian, Mozarabic, Ottonian, Anglo-Saxon, and Viking art.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA213**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST214 Introduction to the New Testament**

The purpose of this course is to provide an introduction to those writings of the earliest Christians that came to be included in the Bible. These writings will be examined critically with respect to their social-historical origin, religious content, and place within the development of ancient Christianity. Interpreting early Christian texts constitutes the most important task in the study of the New Testament. We will therefore focus on a close reading of the New Testament in light of historical situations and social contexts in the Greco-Roman world, having as one of the chief aims of the course the acquisition of critical skills in reading and understanding the Bible. In the process we will necessarily engage secondary scholarship and wider theoretical interests, thereby providing students with a general introduction to the academic study of religion.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RELI**

Identical With: **RELI212, WLIT282**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST215 Religion and Politics in Early Christianity**

The first four centuries of the Christian era will illustrate the lively twists and turns of social experimentation that set the stage for the emergence of the Christian religion. This course will be concerned with fundamental arenas of intellectual and social conflict, including constructions of Christian myths of apostolic origins and authority; the appropriation of the Jewish epic; the challenge of gnosticism; the domestication of Greek philosophy; interpretations of sexuality and gender; experiences of martyrdom and prosecution; theological reflections on human nature and society; and the ways Christians were seen by Romans. The objective will be to grasp the beginnings of the Christian religion as a human achievement of cultural consequence.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-RELI**

Identical With: **RELI215, CLST215**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST219 Northern Renaissance Art**

The Northern Renaissance, roughly ca. 1400-1600, was a period of thrilling transition in Europe and profound change for the Western tradition of art and architecture. For art history, the period's many paradigm shifts include the rise of oil painting, the spread of the printing press and print media, the growth of middle-class patronage, the Protestant Reformation, radical developments in the practice of portraiture, an increasingly global worldview and mentality, the foundations of what might be referred to as an art market, and a fundamental revision of the purpose and definition of both art and the artist. This course explores these and other histories as they played out within panel painting, book

painting, the sumptuous arts (e.g., tapestries and metalwork), printing, sculpture, and architecture, focusing mainly on France, the Low Countries, Germany, and England. We will begin within the late medieval world of Burgundy, Prague, and Germany before progressing through such key artistic personalities as Sluter, Broederlam, the Limbours, Campin, van Eyck, van der Weyden, Fouquet, Riemenschneider, Lucas van Leyden, Bosch, Dürer, Grünewald, Altdorfer, Cranach, Holbein, and Bruegel. Such a narrative will be equally enriched with less familiar and less canonical works. Threaded throughout are questions of mimesis, realism, skill, medium, and the growing cult of genius, as well as the relationship with the Italian Renaissance, the Mediterranean, and the expanding globe.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA220**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST220 Love and Loss in Medieval and Early Modern French Literature and Culture**

The interconnected themes of love and loss encompass others such as desire, passion, friendship, death, separation, and grief. This course introduces students to the uses of these themes in French literature of the medieval and early modern periods by reading a range of texts, from the courtly romance and lyric poetry, to the essay, the novella, and theater. We will examine how men and women treat these themes, and we will be especially sensitive to the ways in which women write in genres traditionally dominated by men. Topics of study will include the body, virtues and vices, marriage, sexuality, seduction, chastity, and violence. We will also place emphasis on improving French pronunciation and on developing oral presentation and written skills. Readings, papers, and discussions will be in French.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN222, COL217**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST221 Mystical Visions, Medieval Women, and the Performance of Early Music**

This course challenges the traditional male-dominated history of early music by focusing on the women who commissioned, performed, heard, and composed music in pre-modern times. Discovering love lyrics that express desires, conflicts, and sufferings that seem equally true today helps collapse the notion of linear time. In addition to finding similarities across centuries, we will draw from multiple disciplines, including comparative literature, religion and cosmology, and gender and sexuality studies. An interdisciplinary approach will guide our investigation of the mystical and visionary aspects of medieval music. Topics to be explored include communal music-making practices, authorship, power and politics, and the multiple civic and social functions of music. We investigate how the music of worship differs from that of romance, public ceremony, and private entertainment. These inquiries help to cultivate skills not only to appreciate our musical heritage but also to better understand contemporary social and cultural practices.

Various "medievalisms"—modern interpretations of the medieval—are explored, to show how musicians continue to interact with early practices in new and exciting ways. This allows us to talk not only about performers of historical early music, but also about composers like Kaija Saariaho, folk groups like Vulcan's Hammer and Folkal Point, and pop artists like Janelle Monáe and Florence Welch.

The creation of medievalist music for films and video games is also relevant, as an arena where musicians reimagine the medieval for new audiences.

Coursework involves learning through performance, examination of manuscripts, research, writing, transcription, and editing. There are also weekly listening assignments and readings.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-MUSC**

Identical With: **MUSC241**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST222 Early Renaissance Art and Architecture in Italy**

This course surveys key monuments of Italian art and architecture produced between ca. 1300 and 1500. Focusing on major centers such as Florence, Milan, Rome, and Venice, as well as smaller courts such as Urbino and Mantua, it considers the works and careers of the most important artists and architects of the period, among them Giotto, Brunelleschi, Donatello, Giovanni Bellini, Botticelli, and Leonardo da Vinci. Monuments are studied in their broader intellectual, political, and religious context, with particular attention paid to issues of patronage, devotion, gender, and spectatorship. Class discussions will be based on close readings of primary sources and scholarly texts on a wide range of topics.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA221, RL&L212**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST223 The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly: Rethinking the Italian Renaissance**

In this course we explore the intellectual achievements of the Italian Renaissance. We study the development of new secular values and the quest for the fulfillment of body and soul, glory, and exuberant pleasures. We question notions of beauty, symmetry, proportion, and order. We also unveil often-neglected aspects of Renaissance counter-cultures, such as the aesthetics of ugliness and obscenity and practices of marginalization (e.g., misogyny, homophobia). We inquire into the rediscovery of classical civilizations. We consider how the study of antiquity fundamentally changed the politics, literatures, arts, and philosophies of Italy at the dawn of the modern era. Through a close reading of texts by authors such as Francesco Petrarca, Niccolò Machiavelli, and Michelangelo, we investigate continuities and ruptures between their quest for human identity and ours. This course is conducted in English, and all primary and secondary sources are in English.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L224, COL224, ITAL224**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST224 Re-imagining Dante's Inferno: Social Justice and the Arts**

Sentenced to death for crimes he did not commit, Dante Alighieri wrote his epic poem about a journey from hell to heaven in an impoverished state of exile. Drawing on innovative techniques of music, dance, painting, and theater Dante denounced political corruption and social injustice in a story that has inspired artists throughout the world to create new work about the search for freedom, including the Russian dissident poet Osip Mandelstam, Black revolutionary playwright Amiri Baraka, the Chinese artist/activist Wei Wei, and 17th century prisoners of the Inquisition. Students will read selected cantos from Dante's

"Commedia," consider contemporary news accounts of modern equivalents to medieval injustices, examine previous adaptations of the poem, and devise their own responses to Dante in the art form of their choice (theater, dance, poetry, playwriting, rap, music, spoken-word, visual arts).

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-THEA**

Identical With: **THEA222, COL235, ITAL244, RL&L222**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST225 European Intellectual History to the Renaissance**

This class will examine some of the major texts in Western thought from ancient Greece to the Renaissance. Emphasis will be placed on close reading and analysis of the texts.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST215, COL216**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST226 The Cosmos of Dante's "Comedy"**

In 1321, Dante Alighieri completes the final cantos of the "Comedy" and breathes his last. After 700 years, the "Comedy" has not finished saying what it has to say. This course provides an in-depth introduction to Dante's masterwork as a point of entry to the history of Western literature, philosophy, and science. The core of the course consists of an intensive study of Dante's encyclopedic poem in relation to the culture and history of Medieval Europe. We examine the poem as both a product and an interpretation of the world it describes. We also observe how the "Comedy" casts its long shadow on modern culture: in Primo Levi's description of the horror of Nazi concentration camps, or in Amiri Baraka's fragmentary representation of America's infernal racist system. We investigate the challenges that Dante's text elicits when it migrates to visual and cinematic arts (from medieval illuminations to Robert Rauschenberg to David Fincher), continuously camouflaging and adapting to different media. Major topics of this course include: representations of the otherworld; the soul's relation to the divine; Dante's concepts of governance and universal peace; mythology and theology in Dante's Christian poetics; the role of the classics in the Middle Ages; intertextuality and imitation; genres and genders in medieval literature; notions of authorship and authority during the 13th and 14th centuries; the culture and materiality of manuscripts in the Middle Ages; and the reception of Dante's work from the 14th century to the present. The course combines a close analysis of Dante's inventiveness and literary strategies with exercises in analytical writing and in multimedia translation and adaptation, aimed at prompting critical reflection on the ways in which present cultural practices are built upon the practices of the past. This course is conducted in English; no previous knowledge of Italian is required.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L226, ITAL226, COL234, RELI218, WLIT250**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST227 What Can the Middle Ages Teach Us About Nature?**

Today nature is at the center of our preoccupations. This course will go back to a time before human beings thought they were the masters of nature, when nature was at the same time teaching and allegory, metaphor and science. We will explore the different functions of nature in bestiaries, poems, romances, and herbaria from the Middle Ages to the beginning of the Early-Modern period (in modern French translation). We will be able to see a real herbarium in the Special Collections & Archives. Students will also visit the Davison Center for the Arts and the Joe Webb Peoples Museum to explore visual representations

of nature as well as scientific displays. During the semester, students will put together a herbarium that will be displayed in an exhibition at the end of the semester.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN229, ENVS229**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST228 Heroes, Lovers, and Swindlers: Medieval and Renaissance Spanish Literature and History**

This course is designed to develop students' ability to make informed and creative sense of four fascinating, complex, and influential medieval and Renaissance Spanish texts in their multiple (literary, historical) contexts: the "national" epic EL CID (12th-13th century); the bawdy and highly theatrical prose dialogue known as LA CELESTINA (1499); the anonymous LAZARILLO (1554), the first picaresque novel; and María de Zayas's proto-feminist novella THE WAGES OF VICE (1647). Through these and selected historical readings, the course is also intended to provide students with a basic knowledge of Spanish culture (in its plurality) from the 11th through the 17th centuries, the texture of everyday life, and the larger movements of long-term historical change. We will draw on literature and history to imagine the world of chivalry and crusade in the medieval Spain of "the three religions of the book" (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam); of mercantile values, courtly love, and prostitution in the Renaissance city; of social injustice and religious hypocrisy in imperial Spain; and of the exacerbated gender and caste tensions that followed from the political crises of the 1640s. We will reflect on the interplay of literature and history in our efforts to come to grips with a past both familiar and strange; address the crossing of linguistic, artistic, ethnic, religious, caste, and gender boundaries that has long been a conspicuous feature of Spanish society; and consider what texts and lives of the past might still have to say to us today. No prior historical or literary preparation is required, only a willingness to engage the readings closely (textually and historically).

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **SPAN230, COL229**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST229 Fight like the French: Debates, Quarrels and Polemics in French Culture**

In the age of "fake news" and polarization, knowing how to debate is essential. The French are notoriously practiced in debate; the importance of public opinion and the figure of the public intellectual have made French society as a whole particularly prone to the agonistic discussion of ideas. This course will survey foundational aesthetic and political debates in French culture from the 15th century to this day, focusing on those that were led by writers, philosophers, and intellectuals and that have entered French literary and cultural history. The course will show how controversies mark and make paradigmatic changes in the cultural landscape, advancing the arts and sciences and voicing political dissent. Throughout the course we will read literary works, treatises, letters, and newspapers.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN228**

Prereq: **None**



**MDST230 Lancelot, Guinevere, Grail: Enigma in the Romances of Chretien de Troyes**

Chretien de Troyes, the greatest writer of medieval France, was the first to tell the stories of Lancelot and Guinevere's fatal passion and of the quest for the Holy Grail. Written at the height of the Renaissance of the 12th century, his Arthurian tales became the basis for all future retellings of the legend. We will read these tales in depth, paying particular attention to their enigmatic quality.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN220**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST231 Cuneiform to Kindle: Fragments of a Material History of Literature**

This course provides a theoretical and historical investigation of diverse media of literary expressions from clay tablets to digital texts. We will inquire into the history of writing through different technologies and modes of composition, circulation, and reception from antiquity to the present day. By engaging in such topics as the transition from scroll to codex, from manuscript to print, and from book to Kindle, we will consider the history of literacy in relation to other forms of expression (oral, visual, networked) and analyze different practices of organizing textual materials (punctuation, paragraphing, annotation). We will scrutinize paratextual elements (title, front matter, opening information, foreword) and various forms of verbal accretions (glosses, commentaries, editorial interventions). We will examine shifting notions of authorship and originality and explore different systems of storage (libraries, archives, museums). And by questioning the multifaceted, nondeterministic interplay between literary artifacts and the media by which they are formalized and materially formed, we will provide a critical and historical reflection on the nature of textuality, writing, and media.

Readings will set essays in the history of the book and media studies alongside key literary case studies from various periods and geographical areas. Projects will engage with textual materiality (including through the creation of book-objects of our own). The course will be conducted in English.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L234, COL232, WLIT261**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST232 Obscure Enigma of Desire**

This course is an introduction to the study of the ways we create meanings when we read texts. It will focus on several deliberately obscure literary texts from twelfth-century France and will examine them in the light of the classical and medieval concepts of enigma, the marvelous (wonderful), fabula, and allegory as well as some modern theoretical works about how we understand narratives. We will seek to understand why deliberate obscurity is an important part of literature and how medieval authors created narratives that seem particularly meaningful precisely because they are obscure. We will consider why we feel these texts have meaning and the ways in which we make them meaningful to us. This course will be co-taught in parallel with a course (in English) on the same subject offered at the Charles University in Prague by Professor Lucie Dolezalova. About half of the classes will be conducted together with the class in Prague through teleconferencing and Professor Dolezalova will teach one week of the course at Wesleyan and meet with students while she is here.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L232**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST234 Days and Knights of the Round Table**

This course will study the evolution of the Arthurian legend from its origins in sixth-century Britain to its development in the 12th-century romances of Chrétien de Troyes. The course will look at the way the various developments of the legend were rooted in specific historical circumstances and yet contributed to the elaboration of a rich and complex narrative that has been appropriated in different ways by each succeeding period of Western European culture.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN334**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST235 Days and Knights of the Round Table**

This course will study the evolution of the Arthurian legend from its origins in sixth-century Britain to its fullest development in the 13th-century French Lancelot-Grail cycle. The course will look at the way the various developments of the legend were rooted in specific historical circumstances and yet contributed to the elaboration of a rich and complex narrative that has been appropriated in different ways by each succeeding period of Western European culture.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L176**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST236 Don Quixote: How to Read the Ultimate Novel**

No novel is more celebrated than "Don Quixote," albeit in often contrary ways: touchstone at once of the modern and the post-modern; of prosaic and magical realism; of Romantic idealism and skepticism, relativism, or materialism; of a truth-telling folly; and of the competing claims of books and "life" or history and fiction. Sample superlatives: the one text that can challenge Shakespeare in the Western canon (Harold Bloom), all prose fiction is a variation on its theme (Lionel Trilling), one of the four great myths of modern individualism (Ian Watt). Each generation recognizes itself differently in it and every major literary tradition has made it its own. One secret of its lasting appeal is that, brilliantly improvisatory and encyclopedic, it resists being pinned down. Nothing quite prepares us for the hallucinatory thing itself. There is something for every taste: self-invention; the biology of personality; humor, pathos, and tragicomedy; high and low culture; prose, poetry, and theatrics; episodic variety in a long narrative arc; probing examination of the ambiguities of heroism with a parade of spirited and resourceful heroines who rival and often upstage the heroes; and the disruptive transformations of a new world order (the print, educational, and military revolutions; early modern globalization; incipient capitalism; the explosive growth of profit-driven entertainments). A celebration of the transformative power of imagination even as it casts a gimlet eye on how fantasies can go awry, what passes for "the real world" is often as nutty as the hero himself. We will read, discuss, and write about "Don Quixote" in English, together with key examples of the critical, philosophical, literary, and artistic responses it has inspired. The course assumes no familiarity with literature, history, or Spanish; it does call for an interest in grappling with this wonderful text closely, imaginatively, and historically.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L236, COL236, WLIT247**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST237 Dante in His World: Politics, Poetry, Religion**

Dante Alighieri is one of the great figures of European history and culture. He has been famous since his life, especially for his poem "The Divine Comedy," including its depictions of the Inferno, Purgatory, and Heaven. It reveals his massive intellectual knowledge and his deep and complex commitments. It might be less well known that he was also an active politician and a political theorist, as well as a student of literature and style.

This course will examine the body of his work and use it to outline some of the great political, moral, and religious crises of Europe around the year 1300, a moment closely connected to the very idea of the Middle Ages. Important course themes will include the question of the political balance of church and state, the role of mysticism and philosophy in expressing ethics, and the uses of history, theory, and poetry in seeking the good life. Readings will focus on Dante's own writings, including "The Divine Comedy," "The New Life" (La Vita Nuova), and "On Monarchy."

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST236, WLIT342**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST238 Mystics and Militants: Medieval Women Writers**

In this class we will read a wide range of works written by European women between ca. 1100–1400, including courtly, devotional, and polemical texts. The course will explore ideologies of gender in the Middle Ages and examine the ways in which our authors confronted the antifeminist discourses of their eras with learning and imagination. We will consider such topics as constructions of sexuality and the body, "courtly love," mystical religious experience, heresies, humanism, and utopian realms. In short, we will read works by women who created their own forms of authority and in doing so, both influenced and defied the authorities of their time.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ENGL**

Identical With: **ENGL232, FGSS224, RL&L231**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST241 Your Revolutionary Life: Biography as Political Power from Antiquity to Modernity**

Death is not enough to turn a life into a political movement. That translation requires a story. This course asks why, since Gandhi, few leaders have successfully drawn upon the power of adopting a revolutionary approach to living as a means of effecting political, social, and cultural change. A student-centered collaborative pedagogy equips students with the tools and concepts to collectively workshop principles drawn from a wide range of examples of revolutionary living from the period known as the middle ages; from well-known and widely imitated examples such as the Buddha, the Prophet, and the Christ, to lesser-known examples including cross-dressing nuns, hermits on pillars, desert mothers, begging collectives, and much more. Students will then apply the ways these past lives were remembered and transmitted to contemporary movements such as Occupy Wall Street or the Black Lives Matter CHOP in Seattle. Course assignments consist of short essays, presentations, and a self-designed final project that can be analytical, creative, or demonstrative.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-COL**

Identical With: **COL221, HIST232**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST245 The Invention of Fiction: Giovanni Boccaccio's Decameron**

In this course we read and discuss Giovanni Boccaccio's Decameron (ca. 1353), a collection of 100 short stories traded by an "honest brigade" of 10 Florentine men and women. They tell each other these stories while sheltered in a secluded villa as the plague of 1348 rages in Florence. We study the Decameron as both a product and an interpretation of the world Boccaccio inhabited. We examine the Decameron's tales and narrative frame as a point of entry into the cultural and social environment of medieval Italy. We look at its scurrilous, amusing, and provocative innuendos as traces of erotic, religious, ethnic, and cultural questions. We investigate the sexual exuberance of many of Boccaccio's tales and the tension between "high" and "low" culture. We consider the development of mercantilism and literacy in early-modern Europe and its emerging virtues of wit and self-reliance. We review the dynamics of composition and reception in manuscript culture and the book's adaptation into different media, from illuminations to film. And by impersonating the 10 Florentines, we will reenact their pastime of telling stories and appreciate Boccaccio's remarkably modern sensibility and unsurpassed art of writing fiction. This course is conducted in Italian.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **ITAL235, COL255**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST247 Devotion and Deception: Erotic Discourse from Dante to Petrarca**

In this course, we will investigate the ideology, content, and material forms of love literature from Dante Alighieri to Francesco Petrarca. Through a close reading of such texts as Dante's Vita nova (ca. 1295), Giovanni Boccaccio's Decameron (ca. 1353), and Petrarca's Rerum vulgarium fragmenta (often referred to as the poetry book par excellence: il canzoniere, ca. 1374), we will unveil the literary and fictitious nature of medieval erotic literature. We will explore the origins of love poetry in medieval France and its subsequent interpretation and rewriting in Italian courts and comuni. We will inquire into the cultural constructions of the medieval notion of the lyrical self and how it still has an impact on our own notion of consciousness. We will study the forms, themes, and characters that populate 'love stories' in the Middle Ages. We will analyze the dynamics of composition, circulation, and reception in manuscript culture. Our close analysis of the texts as they have been preserved in manuscript form will help us gauge the differences between medieval and contemporary ways of writing, reading, and loving. This course is conducted in Italian.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **ITAL227, COL296**

Prereq: **None**

**MDST249 The Fall of Rome and Other Stories**

The fifth-century fall of Rome to barbarian invaders is an idea that slowly crystallized over time. This course will examine the birth and development of this "fall"—one of the most persistent stories in history—using the very texts in which it was first articulated. We will work with selections from a range of authors—Suetonius, Eusebius of Caesarea, Ammianus Marcellinus, Augustine of Hippo, Jordanes, Procopius of Caesarea, and many others—to connect the fall of Rome with other attempts to explain catastrophe and change. The course will conclude by surveying the persistence of the fall of Rome as an idea, through the medieval, early modern, and modern periods, right into contemporary discourse.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-COL**

Identical With: **COL247, CLST247, HIST247**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST254 Cervantes**

Cervantes is known chiefly for DON QUIXOTE, often described as the first modern novel and fountainhead of one of the great modern myths of individualism. DON QUIXOTE also reimagines virtually every fashionable, popular, and disreputable literary genre of its time: chivalric, pastoral, picaresque, sentimental, adventure, and Moorish novels; the novella; verse forms; drama; and even the ways these kinds of literary entertainment were circulated and consumed, debated, celebrated, and reviled. It is a book about the life-enhancing (and endangering) power of books and reading and the interplay of fiction and history and truths and lies. Cervantes' art remains fresh and unsettling, sparing no one and nothing, including the author and his work. Distinguished by its commitment to the serious business of humor, make-believe, and play, the novel is at once a literary tour de force and a fascinating lens through which to examine the political, social, religious, and intellectual debates of its moment. Characteristic themes include social reality as artifact or fiction, the paradoxical character of truths, the irreducible diversity of taste and perception, the call for consent in politics and love, and personal identity (including gender) as a heroic quest. In this course, we will read, discuss, and write about DON QUIXOTE, along with a sampling of critical, philosophical, literary, and artistic responses it has inspired.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **SPAN236, COL327**

Prereq: **SPAN221**

#### **MDST255 The Vikings and the Viking Age, 700-1243**

The Vikings erupted from their isolated northern homelands throughout Europe from the eighth century, and arguably reoriented European history both in the West, where they were instrumental in the history of the British Isles and France, as well as the East, where they were founders of the Russian kingdom. By 1100, they and their descendants had also established themselves in the Mediterranean, Italy, Sicily, and the Holy Land. This course will examine the reasons the Vikings emerged, and will explain their role not only as warriors, but as important merchants, administrators, and contributors to a robust European literary culture. They provide the perfect avenue by which to understand the creation of European culture and politics. The course will also act as an introduction to the dark age history of England, France, and Northern Europe.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST255**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST257 Knights, Fools, and Lovers: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance French Culture**

The study of history and past literature provides intellectual, psychological and emotional resources that make one more resilient in adapting to new circumstances, enable one to see new possibilities of being-in-the-world, and provide new capacities for self-understanding. A knowledge of the European past, moreover, can be an advantage for people seeking to study, live, or work in Europe. This course will help students develop those resources and knowledge through a study of various forms of short fiction and poetry from the French Middle Ages and the Renaissance (12th-16th centuries). We will focus on the representations of human relations, above all romantic relations and their inherent conflicts of power, in these works. We will also view a couple of historical films in order to develop our visual imagination.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN230**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST258 Medieval Gigs: Saints, Scholars, Sailors, Sinners**

A friar preaching to birds, a scoundrel passing as a saint, a nun conversing with Jesus, a Greek hero sinking into hell, a scholar talking to the dead, and a merchant exploring uncharted territories: We find unusual professional figures gigging in Italy circa 1300. In this course we explore medieval alterity through the voices of its most illustrious representatives: from Francis of Assisi to Dante Alighieri, and through a variety of other workers in the Italian economy. We examine various aspects of medieval religious culture ranging from mystical visions to the institutional politics of the Church. We consider the development of mercantile capitalism and its emerging virtues of wit and self-reliance. We track seafarers as they encounter the Other during their maritime voyages. For those staying closer to home, like clerics and other literate "Italians," we review the dynamics of composition and reception from orality to manuscript culture. We observe how medieval culture is embodied through different media, from manuscript illuminations to film. And by combining micro- and macro-perspectives, we approach the Italian Middle Ages from a broad aesthetic, historical, and socio-anthropological standpoint.

The course is conducted in Italian. Authors include Francis of Assisi, Catherine of Siena, Angela of Foligno, Giotto, Dante Alighieri, Francesco Petrarca, Giovanni Boccaccio, Marco Polo, and Christopher Columbus.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **ITAL256**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST268 The Origins of Global Capitalism: Economic History, 1400-1800**

This course explores how the modern market economy came into being in Europe and why this system expanded outward to bring the rest of the world into its orbit by 1800. Among other things, it seeks to provide answers for why China's economy--perhaps the most sophisticated in the world before 1500--fell into relative stagnation and why Europe was the first region to develop mechanized industry and break out of a poverty trap that had restricted prosperity for millennia. The course begins by exploring late medieval European agriculture, market systems, institutions, and technology to reveal how the paths of economic development taken in Europe began to diverge fundamentally from those taken by societies in Africa, Asia, and the Americas. It will explore the role of the spice trade in the expansion of European influence abroad, the significance of new food and cash crops in the development of plantation systems and long-haul trade, the impact of organized coercion in the development of monopolies and monopoly companies, and the role of proto-industrial methods of production and colonial economies in the birth of the Industrial Revolution. The course aims to be accessible, broad, and comparative, drawing insights from many fields to consider the environmental, geographical, cultural, institutional, and political factors shaping the economic changes that have created modern capitalism.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST268**



Prereq: **None**

### **MDST272 Law, Court, and Crime in England, 600--1660**

This course will discuss the nature and development of law, dispute resolution, custom, and rule in England from the arrival of the English on the island in the age of Arthur when feud and compensatory justice dominated. It will then examine the rise of royal power, local custom, and the common law in the 12th and 13th centuries, including the Magna Carta crisis. We will focus on the growing politicization of law and the development of courts and lawyers alongside new sorts of lawmaking in parliament and through the power of the king. The growth and challenge of royal and parliamentary power will frame the last parts of the course that anticipate the revolutionary crisis of the 17th century. Along the way, the course will ask, Who gets to make law, what is the role of writing in the development of custom and law, how did the English decide who was right and who wrong: calculation, testimony, jury, or ordeal? What were the forms of punishment and compensation employed, and what did this tell us of conceptions of the person: mutilation, execution, or incarceration? How did social status and gender shape expectations and outcomes in the legal process: Who could be a legal actor, a responsible malefactor, a property owner, or a slave; who could be judge and legislator? The course will be based on the examination both of recent scholarship and a wide array of primary sources such as law codes, court record books, advice manuals, literature, treatises on law, and the practical documents from lawyers in courts and judges that are plentiful in medieval, Tudor, and Stuart England. The course provides a background to the sources of law in early America as well as other common law countries around the world.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST272**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST273 The History of Science in Islam**

This course will examine the intellectual legacy of the sciences in the Islamic world. Premodern Muslims cultivated various dimensions of what are today understood as the "hard sciences," including physics, mathematics, biology, and chemistry. In addition to exploring Islamic contributions to these fields during the classical period, known according to some sources as the "Golden Age of Islamic Science," we will explore Islamic medicine and medical theories, astronomy and astrological works (including tools used for astronomical observation), and the sciences of optics and alchemy. We will chart the development of these sciences while looking at the broader cultivation of scientific knowledge in Islamic societies, including the establishment of scientific institutions such as universities, observatories, hospitals, and pharmacies.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-COL**

Identical With: **COL273, RELI274, STS273**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST302 The Arthurian Legend on Film**

This course will serve both as an introduction to the Arthurian legend and to its cinematographic representation since the 1940s. Medieval texts will be paired with films that are "based" -- more or less closely -- on them. We will consider the ways in which these stories are told in literature and in film and the differences between them. We will also consider the ways in which the legend was used to address both medieval and modern preoccupations.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L300**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST310 Muslims, Jews, and Christians: Convivencia in Medieval Iberia**

For eight centuries, Muslims, Jews, and Christians lived side by side as neighbors on the Iberian Peninsula in a carefully negotiated state of coexistence known as "convivencia." While much of the written record is full of enmity, religious polemic, and mutual suspicion, the artistic record tells another version, of lives lived in close proximity giving rise to shared cultural practices, artistic tastes, and long interludes of mutual well-being.

This seminar will explore the works produced by the pluralistic societies of medieval Iberia from the perspectives of art, architecture, history, archaeology, literature, and music. As we study renowned monuments such as the synagogues of Toledo, the Alhambra, and the Way of St. James, we will learn to decode elements such as dress and home decor, food and hygiene, and gardening and agriculture, to expand our picture of culture and lived experience. Finally, we will ask why "convivencia" ultimately failed, and how the medieval Iberian experience can enlighten our own uneasy attempts at building a multicultural, multi-confessional society.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA310**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST311 The Body in Medieval Art**

Medieval thinkers theorized the body in ways vastly different from how human bodies are conceptualized and defined today in the twenty-first-century West. Indeed, the "medieval body" was not at all a stable or monolithic entity, but rather a shifting constellation of ideas and practices that waxed, waned, and coexisted throughout the European Middle Ages, c. 400-1400. The diversity of medieval attitudes toward the body helped inform its representation in art, which, simultaneously, was also dependent upon conventions of craft, medium, artistry, preciousness, and style. "Body" signals not only earthly bodies--sexed, fleshly, corruptible, and soon to decay--but also the soul (equally fragile), as well as heavenly, angelic, and divine bodies, including that of Christ. This course analyzes medieval strategies of representing these bodies while situating them in their respective intellectual and cultural environments. Primary-source materials will be contextualized by secondary literature, and our inquiries will remain cognizant of gender-, sexuality-, race-, and performance-critical methods. The bodies examined will include, and are not limited to, saintly, gendered, racialized, clerical, monstrous, virginal, heretical, sickly, healthy, courtly, resurrected, and uncircumscribable bodies.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA311**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST312 The Medieval Beast**

How did medieval writers think about the distinction between human and animal? This course will begin with the categories of soul and body, ruler and ruled, speech and noise--among others. We will also read about human-animal hybrids like werewolves and bird-men in order to think through some of these binaries. Texts will include bestiaries (encyclopedias of animals), treatises on hunting, beast-fables from Christian, Muslim, and Jewish traditions, Marie de France's "Lais" and "Fables," Chrétien de Troyes's "Knight of the Lion," "Sir Gawain and the Green Knight," and Chaucer's "Parliament of Fowls."

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ENGL**

Identical With: **ENGL310**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST313 Medieval Manuscripts**

Medieval manuscripts were dense, considered gatherings of text and image, and they are among the richest of artifacts bequeathed to us by the Middle Ages. Manuscripts both crystallized and intervened in many of the key intellectual, religious, and aesthetic foundations of medieval Europe. To step into a luxurious medieval manuscript--into its script, its miniatures, its marginal decoration, its scribbles, its little monsters and unexpected grotesques, its tears and signs of use--is to probe a particular artform, distinct to pre-modernity, in which the definition of painted image and written word differed markedly from later centuries of the Western tradition. Throughout, basic questions of the relationship between text and image, and the linguistic and the pictorial, repeatedly beg attention. How were these books made, who used them (if they were used at all), how did the reading process unfold in the medieval period, and how did pictorial decoration assist in revealing--or, perhaps, obscuring--truth? These questions, and more, will inform this seminar's systematic inquiry of the making, function, and layout of the medieval book, from its Late Antique origins to the 15th century advent of printing.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA312**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST315 The Politics of the French Language and the Birth of the French State**

Today, the advantages of national borders and monolingual language policies are being trumpeted all across the world. And yet, the study of premodern languages and literatures reveals that the history of national languages has always been a multicultural affair. In this course, we will look at the case of the French language, particularly the establishment of French as a literary language through strategies of legitimization. Starting with an examination of the first text written in the language that would later become French, from the 9th century, we will then go on to study (in modern French) a series of medieval and early-modern poems, plays, treatises and essays that borrow from other languages and literatures, even as they establish French as a literary and a national language. The final portion of this class will include a meditation on the status of French language in contemporary Francophone countries based on Derrida's essay "Le monolingualisme de l'autre."

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN315**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST321 Dialogues of Love: A Close Reading**

Towards the end of the fifteenth century amidst the burgeoning cultures of the Italian Renaissance in Naples, Genova, and Venice, the exiled Ibero-Sephardic philosopher and physician Judah Abravanel (Leone Ebreo) composed a philosophical work on erotic ethics as a dialogue between love (Philoné) and wisdom (Sophia). "The Dialogues of Love" (1535) presented early modern readers with an erotic cosmology which drew upon Ancient and Medieval texts including Plato, Neo-Platonism, Neo-Aristotelianism, Kabbalah, and scriptural commentary. Widely translated, read, and reprinted throughout the sixteenth century, this text animated literary and cultural life throughout sixteenth-century Europe, finding its way into the work of poets and fiction writers such as Miguel de Cervantes. This course engages this unique and breathtaking work of early

modern philosophy through a close reading of a Renaissance cosmos staged as a lovers' courtship.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-COL**

Identical With: **COL321, RL&L321, CJST321**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST330 Lancelot, Guinevere, Grail: Enigma in the Romances of Chretien de Troyes**

Chretien de Troyes, the greatest writer of medieval France, was the first to tell the stories of Lancelot and Guinevere's fatal passion and of the quest for the Holy Grail. Written at the height of the Renaissance of the 12th century, his Arthurian tales became the basis for all future retellings of the legend. We will read these tales in depth, paying particular attention to their enigmatic quality.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **FREN330**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST350 History as Tragedy: Genre, Gender, and Power in the Alexiad of Anna Komnena**

Why did it take until the 11th century for a woman to write a work in the genre of history? What did it take for Anna Komnena--a renowned student of ancient literature, mathematics, astronomy, and philosophy, and a princess of the East Roman (Byzantine) Empire--to finally break into this most gendered of genres? And, how has Anna Komnena's accomplishment been received? This course will spend an entire semester delving into this deeply literary history, and its influence from the Middle Ages to the present. Students will engage with "The Alexiad" through close intertextual readings, critical scholarship in history, relevant work in theory, and digital research methods.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-COL**

Identical With: **COL350, HIST328**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST353 Race, Ethnicity, and Religion in Medieval Literature**

Why do white supremacists celebrate the European Middle Ages as a lost era of racial and religious purity? This course approaches that question by considering the emergence of medieval ideas of race, ethnicity, and religious difference. We will also think through the meaning of these categories in medieval studies. Our focus will be on a selection of texts dealing with encounters--real and imaginary--of Western European Christians with cultures from the Mongol Empire to the Jewish communities in their own territories. The readings will begin historically with the Crusades and the gruesome chronicles written by Christian, Muslim, and Jewish authors. We will move on to religious polemics, travel accounts, and romances: fictions that re-imagine the past in terms of exoticized sexuality, racial transformation, cannibalism, and nationalist fantasy.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ENGL**

Identical With: **ENGL353, CJST353**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST354Z Self and Text in Roman North Africa: Augustine's Confessions**

The native North African Augustine of Hippo wrote the most influential autobiographical text in (so-called) Western literature. It remains the most brilliant text I have ever read: a mind-bendingly complex and yet fully coherent

literary self. Let's read it together. Set between Carthage and Rome in 400, Augustine wrote just 10 years before the Eternal City would be sacked by the disaffected former legions of the empire (the Goths). Split between conqueror and conquered, civilization and apocalypse, Augustine wove humanity's existential and epistemological questions into a literary tapestry for the ages: Who am I? How do you speak? Who are you? How do I listen? Who are we? How do we know? At once memoir, critique of empire, philosophy, psychology, theology, personal history, criticism, and a letter, these Confessions require close, careful, focused, attentive readings from a diverse group of interpreters. Join our learning community and spend two snowbound weeks at Wesleyan with a book you will never forget.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-COL**

Identical With: **COL354Z, HIST354Z**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST360 The Mediterranean Archipelago: Literary and Cultural Representations**

"Islands which have / never existed / have made their ways / onto maps nonetheless" (Nicholas Hasluck). In this course, we study Mediterranean islands as geographical, textual, and metaphorical spaces. We focus on specific islands -- both fictional and real -- as case studies for the aesthetic, political, and metaphysical implications of insularity, while also aiming to present the Mediterranean as a spatial, historical, and cultural network of relationality and conflict. Elaborating upon Predrag Matvejevitc's statement that "the Mediterranean is not only geography," we approach Mediterranean insularity not only in cartographical representations (from Greek geographers to Arab cartographers), but also as poetic topos (from Ariosto's Island of Alcina to Goethe's Capri), narrative stratagem (from Homer's Phaeacia to Boccaccio's Rhodes), literary protagonist (from Deledda's Sardinia to Murgia's Sardinia), political concept (from Plato's Atlantis to Campanella's Taprobane), and existential condition (from Cervantes's Cyprus to Cavafy's Ithaca). We engage in a diachronic and synchronic exploration of Mediterranean islands' inherent dialectic between resistance and occupation, identity and assimilation, marginality and integration, zoological extinction and speciation, inbreeding and metissage, autochthony and allogey, linguistic conservatism and creoleness, territorial boundedness and internal division. Our approach will also be archipelagic and include methods and concepts from historical linguistics and dialectology to diplomatic history and postcolonial poetics.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-CHUM**

Identical With: **ITAL289, WLIT340**

Prereq: **ITAL112**

### **MDST363 (Un)Popular Performances/Performances (Im)Populaires**

In 1607, a young Scotsman named William Drummond was studying law in Bourges, France, a popular "study-abroad destination" for Scottish students as well as an important stopover city on the routes of itinerant professional and amateur actors. While in Bourges, these actors performed a variety of different kinds of plays, including tragedies, comedies, tragicomedies, pastorals, and farces. Although these performances were often met with hostility from the city's religious authorities, Drummond attended several plays during his stay and, lucky for us, took rather detailed notes about them. His observations from the 1607 "season" are preserved in his personal papers in the National Library of Scotland. This course will use Drummond's notes as a guide to discover and examine other forms of evidence--both traditional and nontraditional--that help us understand what was at stake in theater, performance, and (un)popular culture in late 16th- and early 17th-century France. We will study the ways the past has been organized and cataloged, how traditional sources and research

have shaped our view of the past, and how unconventional methodologies can help us locate new sites of knowledge and culture. Written assignments, class discussions, and (most) readings will be in French.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-CHUM**

Identical With: **FREN363, COL363, THEA363**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST373 From Courtly Love to Cannibalism: Medieval Romances**

Romance is the narrative form of medieval sexualities and courtly love, but it also gives literary shape to social worlds in which a protagonist switches genders, skin color changes with religion, and a dog might be the hero of a narrative. In this course, we will begin with texts that date from the Romance's origins in 12th-century France and continue with the form's development up to the well-known Middle English texts of the 14th century, including Sir Gawain and the Green Knight set at King Arthur's court. Some of the topics we will consider are Romance's engagement with "chivalry," the religious and racial conflicts of the Crusades, and of course, Christian mysticism and the Holy Grail.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ENGL**

Identical With: **ENGL373**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST376 Travel and Communication in Europe**

This course will explore the character of travel and communication networks, patterns, technologies, and ideas in Europe in the medieval and early modern periods. Students will therefore learn the concept of travel and mobility, whether commercial, cultural, or bureaucratic, and the concept of notable reconfigurations and acceleration of exchange in this period. Beyond ideas, the networks they linked to will be prominent. These include technologies such as the bridge, road, and wayfinding, as well as cybernetic creations like the riding horse (with iron shoes and complex needs); the development of institutions of hospitality, like the monastery, the hostel and the inn; and the adaptation of writing to facilitate motion and communication. Due attention will be paid to exotic travel such as crusading, pilgrimage and warfare; however, routine business travel will be key, such as the trips required by law, by trade, by the search for money, and the desire to see family.

Methodologically, the course will focus on the idea of networks and the techniques of the digital humanities. Thus, text mining for information; mapping in GIS (Geographic Information Systems); and analyzing network relations will be important additions to the usual historical skills of reading and writing essays.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **SBS-HIST**

Identical With: **HIST376**

Prereq: **None**

### **MDST378 Visionary Journeys through Sacred Landscapes: Japanese Art of Pilgrimage**

This course examines the ways in which religious paintings were used and viewed in medieval Japan. Emphasis will be laid on images of sacred landscapes and the visionary journeys they inspired. Though primarily conceived as fundraising tools and advertisements aimed at inspiring viewers to undertake a physical journey to the illustrated site, these images became sacred in their own right and were approached by worshipers as one would approach the enshrined deity of the represented site. They also allowed spiritual travel through the images,

providing virtual pilgrims with the karmic benefits of actual pilgrimage without the hardships of travel.

Each week we will immerse ourselves in a sacred site, reading about its history, deities, religious practices, and unique benefits. We will then look at how these were given visual form and the artistic language developed to endow these visual representations with the power to inspire and move contemporary audiences.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-ART**

Identical With: **ARHA379, CEAS379**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST379 Christianity and Sexuality**

This course will explore a range of Christian teachings on, attitudes toward, and technologies of sex and sexuality. We will read medieval and modern theologies of sexuality, as well as contemporary historical, sociological, and cultural studies. Points of focus will include confession, mysticism, marriage, celibacy, queer and trans practices and identities, and reproductive justice.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **A-F**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RELI**

Identical With: **RELI379, FGSS309**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST390 Directed Research in European Studies**

This course is intended for students who wish to undertake a significant research project or get a head start on a senior essay or thesis devoted to any aspect of European civilization from 500 to 2021. The course will begin with three weeks of regular meetings devoted to the purpose of academic research in the humanities and social sciences, developing and refining a research topic, organizing one's research, bibliographies and sources, the construction of an argument, and the organization of a research paper. Students will work on their research projects individually during the rest of the semester, although the class will meet as a group from time to time so students can present and discuss the state of their work. Students will also have weekly tutorials with the instructor to discuss their progress and plan their next steps. Students who are able to do so are encouraged to engage with research materials in languages other than English.

Offering: **Crosslisting**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **HA-RLAN**

Identical With: **RL&L390, COL393, GRST291, FREN390**

Prereq: **None**

#### **MDST401 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

#### **MDST402 Individual Tutorial, Undergraduate**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

#### **MDST403 Department/Program Project or Essay**

Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **A-F**

#### **MDST404 Department/Program Project or Essay**

Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **A-F**

#### **MDST407 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)**

Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **A-F**

#### **MDST408 Senior Tutorial (downgraded thesis)**

Downgraded Senior Thesis Tutorial - Project to be arranged in consultation with the tutor. Only enrolled in through the Honors Coordinator.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **A-F**

#### **MDST409 Senior Thesis Tutorial**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

#### **MDST410 Senior Thesis Tutorial**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

#### **MDST411 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

#### **MDST412 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate**

Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

#### **MDST466 Education in the Field**

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

#### **MDST470 Independent Study, Undergraduate**

Credit may be earned for an independent study during a summer or authorized leave of absence provided that (1) plans have been approved in advance, and (2) all specified requirements have been satisfied.

Offering: **Host**

Grading: **OPT**

Credits: **1.00**

Gen Ed Area: **None**

Prereq: **None**