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 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, friendship, religion, family and class structures, and divorce.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: RL&L123F, COL123F, FGSS123F, WLIT249F
Prereq: None

MDST128 Constantinople: A Digital Archaeology of Medieval Rome
Constantinople was founded as New Rome by Emperor Constantine the Great in 330. From there, its history is that of the heart of the medieval Roman (Byzantine) Empire, which lasted until 1453, when it was succeeded by the Ottoman Empire and the city was called Istanbul. Now, we’re making medieval Constantinople come alive again with an interactive map-based digital encyclopedia. In this course--which requires no previous background in history--students will be introduced to the history of Constantinople and medieval Rome. Then, after exploring the textual and material relics of this medieval metropolis, students will pursue their own research interests by collaborating on a public digital database (https://argc.is/Oe4Lb4). At the end of the course, students will draw from this database to craft their own histories, applying both imagination and analysis into believable and reliable stories that convey the diversities and paradoxes of life in The City.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00

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 c. 1400 CE. Questions of style, content, function, and cultural and historical context will be examined, in addition to issues of religion, rulership, class, luxury, and the definition of art within its ancient and medieval milieu.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA109
Prereq: None

MDST151 European Architecture 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)
This course approaches the Hebrew Bible within its historical context while considering its literary, philosophical, and artistic legacy. Students will be exposed to the main historical strands of biblical criticism, while also engaging with the challenges of interpreting the Bible as modern readers: How and when did the Hebrew Bible come to be, and what relevance might it hold for us today? By beginning at the beginning and proceeding systematically through the Hebrew Bible, students will hone their skills as readers and interpreters of the Bible as a canon. Students will consider questions of the texts’ function, universality, and authority, and will be encouraged to explore the wide range of biblical interpretations in literature, music, and the fine arts from antiquity to the present day.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: RELI201, CJST244, COL237, WLIT281
Prereq: None

MDST304 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
MDST210 Medieval Art and Architecture, c. 1100-1400
This course introduces the art and architecture of Romanesque and Gothic Europe, c. 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

MDST212 Wesleyan University Collegium Musicum
The Collegium Musicum is a performance ensemble dedicated to exploring and performing the diverse vocal and instrumental repertories of the medieval, renaissance, and baroque periods of European music history. Emphasis is given to the study of healthy singing, musical style, performance practice, musical independence, and performance techniques. Various cultural aspects of the societies that produced the music under study are simultaneously explored; participants will work with primary source materials, such as facsimiles of musical manuscripts, as well as literary and historical writings. Students also attend a weekly sectional rehearsal, scheduled according to availability by voice part.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC438
Prereq: None

MDST213 Early Medieval Art, c. 300-1100
This class surveys the art and architecture of early medieval Europe, beginning with Late Antiquity multiculturalism, the decline of the Roman Empire, and the spread of Christianity, and continuing through the glory of Byzantium, the rise of Islam, and the establishment 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. The periods considered will include Late Antiquite, Byzantine, Umayyad, Abbasid, Migration, Insular, Carolingian, Mozarabic, and Ottonian 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
This course invites students to engage the text of the New Testament and other early Christian writings while becoming familiar with critical issues surrounding their composition, authorship, and reception. Students will be expected to demonstrate the following: acute engagement with the New Testament as an ancient text, ability to articulate (though not necessarily to agree with) viewpoints other than one’s own, an understanding of the formation of the New Testament, and an appreciation of the New Testament’s history of interpretation. Issues that will also be covered in this course include the study of the historical Jesus, the canonicity of the New Testament, extra-New Testament texts, interpretive strategies, and various issues involving the New Testament and race, sexuality, slavery, and gender.
Offering: Crosslisting
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: HA-RELI
Identical With: RELI212
Prereq: None

MDST215 Politics and Piety in Early Christianities
This course investigates the mystical and visionary aspects of religious music alongside the secular development of the vernacular love lyric. We explore tensions between individual and communal practices, authorship and artistry, power and politics, and the multiple social functions of music-making. Students learn about the musical legacy from Ancient Greece, tracing its influence through the Middle Ages to the end of the Renaissance. We cover the music of worship, romance, public ceremony, and private entertainment, observing the shifting balance between innovation and tradition. We study the relationship of notational systems to memory, become familiar with cultures that are remote from ours, and gain a historical respect for difference. By engaging with the deep past, you acquire skills not only to appreciate the musical creativity of a millennium ago, but also to better understand social and cultural distances in the modern world.

The course material will be presented through lectures and discussion, listening assignments, singing, and readings. Weekly lab sessions go over technical terminology and address the challenges that arise. The lab also facilitates reviews for quizzes and provides coaching in essay writing, research skills, and the development of analytical listening.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-MUSC
Identical With: MUSC241
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 Allegory and Devotion in Medieval and Renaissance Music
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. Museum trip(s) will expose students to original works of art.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ART
Identical With: ARHA222
Prereq: None

MDST222 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.
MDST224 Medieval Drama: Read It and Be in It
It was and still is revolutionary theater! This course will examine early English drama in its many forms, from the civic mystery cycles of the 15th century to the morality plays Mankind and Everyman. We will cover topics including the role of drama in defining communal identities, dramatic interpretations of gender, and the responses of drama to contemporary social and religious controversies. Most readings will be in modernized and annotated Middle English, so we will pay close attention to language.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL224, THEA224
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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST215
Prereq: None

MDST226 The Cosmos of Dante's Comedy
This course provides an in-depth introduction to Dante Alighieri's 14th-century masterpiece 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. Major topics include: representations of the afterlife; the soul's relation to the divine; concepts of modernity and antiquity in the Middle Ages; notions of authorship and authority during the 13th and 14th centuries; vernacular poetics and the medieval genre system; the culture and materiality of manuscripts in the Middle Ages; gender and genre in Dante and the 12th- to 14th-century lyric; intertextuality and imitation; classical and medieval language theory; the role of the classics in the Middle Ages; Dante's concepts of governance; myth and theology in Dante's Christian poetics; and the reception to Dante's work from the 14th-century to present. The course combines a close analysis of Dante's literary strategies with exercises in critical 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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: RL&L226, ITAL226, COL234, RELI218
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 Maria 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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: FREN228
Prereq: None

MDST230 Lancelot, Guinevere, Grail: Enigma in the Romances of Chrétien de Troyes
Chrétien 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
the hallucinatory thing itself. There is something for every taste: self-invention; made it its own. One secret of its lasting appeal is that, brilliantly improvisatory Trilling), one of the four great myths of modern individualism (Ian Watt). Each Western canon (Harold Bloom), all prose fiction is a variation on its theme (Lionel Sample superlatives: the one text that can challenge Shakespeare in the truth-telling folly; and of the competing claims of books and 'life' or history and realism; of Romantic idealism and skepticism, relativism, or materialism; of a touchstone at once of the modern and the post-modern; of prosaic and magical MDST236 Don Quixote: How to Read the Ultimate Novel
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 one 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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: RL&L236, COL236, WLIT247
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 misogynist 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: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL232, FGSS224, RL&L231
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
MDST251 Islamic Civilization: The Classical Age
This course surveys the historical development of Islamic civilization from the
time of the Prophet Muhammad to the rise of the ‘gunpowder empires’ of the
16th century. Special emphasis will be placed on the unique cultural forms
this civilization developed and the emergence of Islam as a world religion. This
course primarily deals with the political, intellectual, and social history of
the Muslim peoples of the Middle East and only secondarily with Islam as a system of
religious belief.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: SBS-HIST
Identical With: HIST231
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 nobler; 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: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: SPAN236, COL327
Prereq: None

MDST255 The Vikings and the Viking Age, 700-1066
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.
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 The Medieval Gig Economy: Saints, Scholars, Sailors
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 otherness 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 Petrarcha, 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.
MDST295 Love, War, and a Few Monsters: An Introduction to Medieval Literature
This course engages with a selection of French and English literature from ca. 1200 to 1400, with an emphasis on the popular genres of romance and epic. Our authors and works will include Marie de France’s and Béroul’s poems of magical and doomed love; contacts between Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Song of Roland and the Song of the Cid; and finally Chaucer’s masterpiece The Canterbury Tales. The topics that we will examine include the politics of chivalry and crusading, medieval views of gender and sexuality, religious controversies, and representations of the world beyond Europe.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-ENGL
Identical With: ENGL293
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

MDST308 Medievals on the Move: Pilgrimage, Jihad, Crusade, and Apocalypse
Medieval people moved: They traded and sent emissaries; they invaded and migrated; they wandered, begged, and ascended the heavens; they went on crusade, jihad, and pilgrimage. This course will first analyze the most consistently preserved sources on medieval movement: accounts of pious travel ‘for God’s sake and not for pleasure.’ We will then contextualize such accounts with two other types of movement: the physical journeys of traders, diplomats, and warriors, as well as the interiorized journeys of the prophet, the mystic, and the storyteller. By encompassing this variety we will be able to pursue a larger question: Can patterns of exchange across the physical and cultural barriers of geography, language, religion, and governance reveal a more global medieval world than we usually envision?
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-COL
Identical With: COL308, HIST303
Prereq: None

MDST311 The Body in Medieval Art
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 ones.
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 examine the categories of soul and body, ruler and ruled, language and thought—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 Marie de France’s ‘Lais and Fables,’ Chrétien de Troyes’s ‘Knight of the Lion,’ William of Palerne, Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, and Chaucer’s ‘Parliament of Fowls’ and ‘Nun’s Priest’s Tale’; also bestiaries (encyclopedias of beasts) and some treatises about hunting and falconry.
Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: A-F
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, its scrabbles, its little monsters and unexpected grotesques, its tears and signs,
Grading: 
Offering: 

relevant work in theory, and digital research methods.

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

MDST330 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 legitimation. 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 monolinguisme de l’autre.’

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RLAN
Identical With: FREN315
Prereq: None

MDST333 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
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: OPT
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 gender and sex, as well as contemporary historical, sociological, cultural, and
literary studies. Points of focus will include confession, mysticism, marriage,
celibacy, queer and trans* practices, politics, identities, and reproductive justice.

Offering: Crosslisting
Grading: OPT
Credits: 1.00
Gen Ed Area: HA-RELI
Identical With: RELI379, FGSS309
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

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

MDST413 Group Tutorial, Undergraduate
Topic to be arranged in consultation with the tutor.

Offering: Host
Grading: OPT