Medieval Europe, 1000-1300: Faith and Power
Course Descriptor

COURSE SUMMARY

The middle ages were one of the most dynamic periods in European history. In the year 1000 much of Western Europe had been divided into numerous petty fiefdoms, united only by vague notions of loyalty to weak kings and the shared culture of the Christian Church. Over the next three hundred years it saw the establishment of strong and intensive monarchical government, laying the foundation for modern nation states. Externally it was a period of expansion, in which Western European knights established new kingdoms in England and Ireland, Jerusalem and Spain. Internally it saw the growth of urban life, the establishment of the first European universities and a flowering of religious devotion, as people sought new ways to accommodate their faith to the changing times. In this course students explore the roots of the dynamic growth of European culture in this period and the way in which it shaped the future of Europe.

This course investigates the way in which Europe changed in this period and seeks to answer why. It looks in particular at the transformation of politics and government and the dynamic developments in religious life. The course finishes with a more in-depth look at the changing world of aristocratic men and women, and at the growth of lay spirituality and the way it found expression in both crusades and private devotion, confession and asceticism. Students will also investigate the development of courtesy, courtly love and the cult of chivalry against the background of a more commercial economy.
COURSE AIMS

- Enable students to develop an understanding of the dynamics of political and religious life in medieval Europe and the way this provided the background for later developments.
- Allow students to develop a solid understanding of Europe’s medieval history.
- Provide students with the opportunity to engage with primary sources from medieval Europe and develop an understanding of the methodological challenges they present.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

K1a demonstrate knowledge of medieval European society and its dynamics (PPH: K1a)
K3a understand the ways in which medieval history impacts on later European and global history (PPH: K1a & K2a)

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC SKILLS

S1a develop an overview of, and write essays about, an unfamiliar historical period (PPH: S2a)
S2a develop familiarity with identifying and utilising sources from a remote historical period
S3a develop competence in analysing sources from a remote historical period (PPH: S1a)

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

T1a construct essays and critical arguments (PPH: T2a)
T2a understand the basics of source criticism (PPH: T1a)

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning strategies for this course will include:

- 16 hours of full-cohort lectures
- 4 x 1 hour one-to-one tutorials per student
- 2 revision sessions

Course information and supplementary materials are available on the College’s Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

At the end of Michaelmas and Hilary, students will attend Collections (formal meetings) in which they receive comprehensive and collated feedback about their performance over the term.
Students are required to attend and participate in all the formal and timetabled sessions for this course. Students are also expected to manage their directed learning and independent study in support of the course.

**EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS**

- Experience in assembling data in answer to set questions.
- Experience in writing coherent, concise and precise written communications in answer to set questions.
- Learning about and mastering unfamiliar subjects.

**ASSESSMENT**

**FORMATIVE**

Students will be formatively assessed during the course by means of set assignments. These do not count towards the end of year results, but will provide students with developmental feedback, for example through written feedback on essays and oral feedback in tutorials.

**SUMMATIVE**

Assessment will be in one form:

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<th>Weighting (%)</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exam</td>
<td>100%</td>
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The examination will consist of a number of questions from which the student will have the choice of answering a specified number. Both the examination and the written assignment will be assessed in accordance with the assessment aims set out in the Programme Specification.

**FEEDBACK**

Students will receive formal feedback in a variety of ways: written (including via email correspondence); oral (within one-to-one tutorials or on an *ad hoc* basis) and indirectly through discussion during group tutorials. Student’s will also attend the formal meeting, Collections, at the end of Michaelmas and Hilary in which they will receive constructive and developmental feedback on their term’s performance.

Feedback is provided on written assignments (including essays, briefings and reports) and through generic internal examiners’ reports, both of which are posted on the College’s VLE.

**INDICATIVE READING**

Note: Comprehensive and current reading lists for courses are produced annually in the Course Guide or other documentation provided to students; the indicative reading list provided below is used as part of the approval/modification process only.

**BOOKS**

JOURNAL ARTICLES


INDICATIVE TOPICS

Students will study the following topics:

- The World of the Knight: France c. 1000
- The World of the Monk: Monastic Life in the Eleventh Century

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Approved by: Academic Board

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| 1.0            | June 2020     | June 2020      | Lars Kjaer| 1. Academic Handbook > Course Descriptors  
                              2. VLE                           | April 2025                     |

Modifications (As per AQF4)

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