

MEDIEVAL STUDIES (MEDVL)

MEDVL 1101 - FWS: Aspects of Medieval Culture (3 Credits)

Topics and reading lists vary from section to section, but all will in some way address the subject of medieval culture. Consult the John S. Knight Institute Current Courses webpage to access current year offerings, instructors and section descriptions.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 1103 - FWS: Legends, Fantasy & Vision (3 Credits)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2021, Fall 2019, Fall 2016, Spring 2016
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 1104 - FWS: Modernity and the Middle Ages (3 Credits)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2020, Fall 2018, Fall 2015
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 1660 - The Vikings and their World (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 1660, NES 1660

Globalization may seem like a recent hot topic, but it was already very much in vogue 1000 years ago when Norse explorers burst out of Scandinavia to journey as far as North America, Azerbaijan, the Mediterranean and the White Sea. This course will introduce students to the Norsemen and women of the Viking Age and the centuries following it, weaving together literary, chronicle, archaeological and other sources to tell the remarkable stories of these medieval entrepreneurs and of the many people and places they encountered. Along the way, students will also pick up crucial historical thinking skills: assessing change and continuity over time, learning the basics of source criticism, and gaining an appreciation for interdisciplinary research.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Fall 2021, Fall 2019, Spring 2018
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 1740 - Imperial China (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 1740, ASIAN 2740, CAPS 1740

This course explores the history of imperial China between the 3rd century b.c.e. and the 16th century c.e. with a focus on the following questions: How did imperial Chinese states go about politically unifying diverse peoples over vast spaces? How did imperial Chinese approaches to governance and to relations with the outer world compare with strategies employed by other historical empires? How did those approaches change over time? How did major socio-cultural formations - including literary canons; religious and familial lineages; marketing networks; and popular book and theatrical cultures - grow and take root, and what were the broader ramifications of those developments? How did such basic configurations of human difference as Chinese (civilized)-barbarian identity, high-low status, and male-female gender operate and change over time?

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Fall 2018, Spring 2017, Spring 2016
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 2082 - Of Ice and Men: Masculinities in the Medieval North (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 2082, FGSS 2082, SHUM 2082

The Middle Ages are usually imagined as a time of manly men and feminine women: no room for gender ambiguity in Conan the Barbarian! Yet gender, then as now, was in fact unstable, multiple, and above all, constructed. This course explores the different ways masculinity was understood, manufactured, and manipulated in northern Europe - primarily early Ireland, England, and Scandinavia - using a variety of literary, legal, historical, archaeological, and artistic sources. Students will gain new perspectives on both gender and sex, on the one hand, and the history of medieval Europe, on the other.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2022, Fall 2019
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 2083 - A Land to Call Our Own: De-Colonizing Medieval Europe (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 2083

Colonial projects have a bad reputation; no one in their right mind would choose to identify as a colonizer, much less a colonialist. This was not always the case. In the 1800s, colonialism was the height of civilized accomplishment; everyone wanted in on it. In this course, we shift our gaze farther back in time to examine the thoughts and practices of people in medieval Europe. We delve into questions of function and type (is there a difference between colonization and colonialism?), of perspective and bias (does it matter how recent a colony is?), of social, cultural, regional, and temporal variation. By highlighting the non-self-evidence of truths we hold, the medieval past can help us appreciate why we cherish them nonetheless - or prompt us to re-evaluate them.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 2100 - Medieval Romance: Voyages to the Otherworld (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 2100

Romances were, essentially, medieval science fiction and fantasy writing. They were how authors in the Middle Ages imagined things beyond rational understanding that, at the same time, greatly extended the possibilities of the world around them. The course will survey some medieval narratives concerned with representative voyages to the otherworld or with the impinging of the otherworld upon ordinary experience. The syllabus will normally include some representative Old Irish otherworld literature: selections from The Mabinogion; selections from the Lays of Marie de France; Chretien de Troye's Erec, Yvain, and Lancelot; and the Middle English Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. We will finish by looking at a few contemporary otherworld romances, such as selections from J.R.R. Tolkien. All readings will be in modern English. This class counts toward the pre-1800 requirement for English majors.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2021, Spring 2020, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 2150 - Popular Medievalisms (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 2130

Why is popular culture so obsessed with the Middle Ages? Why are new fantasy worlds so often medieval? Why are we compelled to imitate, reinvent, and even relive aspects of the medieval past? What do these continuities and repetitions reveal about contemporary narratives of progress and identity formation (race, gender)? Examples of popular medieval forms we will examine include: premodern fandom (relics, saints' lives, heroic culture); fantasy series and movies (Game of Thrones; Harry Potter); histories of medieval epochs (e.g. The Saxon Stories; The Vikings); Tolkien and C.S. Lewis; gaming culture (Dungeons and Dragons to Assassin's Creed); medieval-inspired satire (Monty Python, The Knight's Tale); Arthuriana; and children's films (Shrek, Frozen). Assignments will include medieval texts and translations as well as theoretical, analytical, and creative writing. This class counts toward the pre-1800 requirement for English majors.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2021Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 2170 - Early Modern Iberian Survey (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with SPAN 2170, LATA 2170

This course explores major texts and themes of the Hispanic tradition from the 11th to the 17th centuries. We will examine general questions on literary analysis and the relationship between literature and history around certain events, such as medieval multicultural Iberia, the creation of the Spanish Inquisition in the 15th century and the expulsion of the Jews in 1492; the encounter between the Old and the New Worlds; the 'opposition' of high and low in popular culture, and of the secular and the sacred in poetry and prose. Readings may be drawn from medieval short stories and miracle collections; chivalric romances, Columbus, Lazarillo de Tormes, Cervantes, Lope de Vega, Calderon and Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, among others.

Prerequisites: SPAN 2095, or CASE Q++.**Distribution Requirements:** (ALC-AS, FLOPI-AS, HST-AS), (FL-AG)**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA, LAAREA, LALANG)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Spring 2023Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 2355 - Introduction to Medieval Art and Culture (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ARTH 2355

Survey lecture course covering the creation, encoding, and reception of Medieval (roughly AD 500-1500) European, Byzantine, and Islamic architecture, ornament, manuscripts, liturgical and luxury objects. The approach is thematic but chronologically grounded; attention is also given to cultural interaction in the Mediterranean basin.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2022, Spring 2021, Spring 2020Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 2555 - Sex and Sexuality in Islam (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with NES 2555, FGSS 2555, RELST 2555

This course will introduce students to the study of sex and sexuality in the medieval and early modern Islamic World, ending at the dawn of the twentieth century; we will begin with the study of desire in pre-Islamic and early-Islamic poetry and end with the study of the impact of colonialism on the family, the home and morality across the Islamic world. Students will read (in English) from the Qur'an, the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, obscene and chaste poetry, erotological works, medical treatises, moral condemnations of sex, legal case studies, erotic stories and travel literature. Students will also engage with modern scholarship on the history of sex and sexuality in the Islamic world. Major topics of study will include: the composition of the family across time and space, the intersection between slavery and sexuality, homosexuality and homoerotic desire in the premodern world, marriage and adultery, questions of consent and sexual violence in law and storytelling, and the discrepancies between law, morality and social practice.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, SCD-AS), (CA-AG, D-AG, LA-AG)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 2590 - The Crusades (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with HIST 2590

This course focuses on the ideas and practices of Crusading, from its birth ca. 1100 to the fall of the Kingdom of Jerusalem in 1292. We explore the roots of Crusading in Christian Europe and in the Islamic Near East; the conquest, settlement, and loss of the Latin Levant; and the impacts and afterlives of Crusading. Central themes include the institutional, intellectual, and political histories of Christianity (Latin, Byzantine, and other) and Islam; military, social, and economic narratives of the period; and social, cultural, and environmental analysis, using both material and textual sources.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (EUAREA)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Spring 2025, Spring 2021, Spring 2013, Fall 2011Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 2627 - Introduction to Islam (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with NES 2627, RELST 2627, HIST 2627

This course is an introduction to the study of Islam and Islamic history. Organized historically, the lecture series will begin with the career of the Prophet Muhammad, before charting the course of the Islamic Conquests, the establishment, zenith and collapse of various Islamic Empires, ending with European colonialism. Along the way, this geopolitical and historical overview will provide a backdrop to our exploration of changes and developments in Islamic thought and practice. In particular, we will focus on the emergence of the Sunni-Shi'i conflict, the rise of Sufism and Salafism, as well as how scholars across time and space thought and wrote about questions of ideal Islamic governance, the religious authority of the caliph, women's role in society and public space, slavery, the ethics of living under non-Muslim rule and the place of non-Muslims in Islamic society.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG), (HST-AS, SCD-AS)**Exploratory Studies:** (CU-ITL)**Last Four Terms Offered:** Fall 2024Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 2666 - Apocalypse! (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 2666, ARKEO 2666, JWST 2666, RELST 2666
For thousands of years, people have believed that the world is ending imminently. In this course, we will examine the roots of apocalyptic thinking in the ancient world, especially among Jews and Christians. We will look at biblical apocalyptic texts as well as a wide array of other apocalyptic literatures, such as the books of Enoch, the Sibylline Oracles, 4 Ezra, the Apocalypse of Adam, the Apocalypse of Paul, and many others. These texts contain visions of end times, journeys to heaven and hell, and dramatic images of angels and demons, war and peace, and the natural and supernatural worlds. Our goal is to understand the circumstances that gave rise to apocalypticism and how disaster-thinking may have, paradoxically, provided comfort during crises. Throughout the course, we will pay close attention to the meaning of apocalypse as revelation, an unveiling, a discovery.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 2722 - Of Saints, Poets, and Revolutionaries: Medieval and Modern Iran and Central Asia (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 2722, ASIAN 2294, RELST 2722
From the poet-kings of medieval Persia to the trading networks of the famed "Silk Road" to the wandering mystics of Herat to the constitutional revolution of Iran to the colonial and post-colonial occupations of contemporary Afghanistan, this course offers a broad cultural and political history of Iranian and Turkic Central Asia. In addition, we will explore the highly complex intellectual, artistic, and architectural trends and "cross-cultural" exchanges that formed the backbone of many disparate Iranian-Turkic cultures.

Distribution Requirements: (D-AG, HA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2020
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 2770 - Islam and Gender (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 2770, RELST 2770, FGSS 2770, ANTHR 2470, LGBT 2770
This course explores the role of gender and sexuality in shaping the lives of Muslims past and present. Through a close examination of ethnographies, intellectual histories, and religious treatises, we will analyze the key debates and discourses surrounding the intersection of gender and Islam. We begin by investigating Quranic revelations and hadith concerning gender and sexual ethics, female figures of emulation in early Islam, and feminist exegeses of the Quran. Continuing onward, we focus upon the everyday lives of Muslim women and non-binary individuals in medieval, colonial, and post-colonial contexts, highlighting the ways in which people negotiate and respond to the sexual politics of the times in which they live as we ask what, if anything, is specifically Islamic about the situations under discussion? Following this, we embark upon a history of sexuality within Islam, tracing the ways in which the categories of homosexuality and heterosexuality came to exist in the Muslim world, as well as the history and positionality of trans communities past and present. We then continue with an exploration of Islamic feminism as it exists today, looking to the ways in which Muslim feminists have critically engaged both religious texts as well as Western feminist theory. Finally, the course concludes by analyzing the relationship between the study of Islam, gender, and empire.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, D-AG), (GLC-AS, SCD-AS)
Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2019
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3080 - Icelandic Family Sagas (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 3080
An introduction to Old Norse-Icelandic mythology and the Icelandic family saga-the native heroic literary genre of Icelandic tradition. Texts will vary but will normally include the Prose Edda, the Poetic Edda, Hrafnkels Saga, Njals Saga, Laxdaela Saga, and Grettirs Saga. All readings will be in translation.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Fall 2020, Fall 2019
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3110 - Old English (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 3110
English has a recorded history longer and more variable than any other language, including poetry and prose as skillful as writings in any period. While learning the language (especially in the first half of the course) we will investigate writings that exploit the language's powers and complexities from the earliest pieces into early Middle English, when the language and its literary traditions disintegrated and began being reinvented at the Norman Conquest. We will also sample (in translation) Latin, Old Saxon, and Old Norse materials that fed the multilingual and multicultural world in which early English developed.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3120 - Beowulf (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 3120
Beowulf has received renewed attention in popular culture, thanks to the production of recent movies and riveting new translations. The poem's popular appeal lies in its complex depictions of monsters, its accounts of heroic bravery, and its lavish portrayals of life in the Meadhall. Through close readings we will also explore the darker side of the poem: its punishing depictions of loss and exile, despairing meditations on unstable kingship and dynastic failure, and harrowing depictions of heroic defeat and the vanities of existence on the Middle-Earth. Attention will be given to the poem's cultural contexts, its literary heritage, and its layered pagan and Christian perspectives. A bilingual edition of the poem will be assigned so that students may read in Old and Modern English.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3190 - Chaucer (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 3190
Chaucer became known as the father of English poetry before he was entirely cold in his grave. Why is what he wrote more than six hundred years ago still riveting for us today? It's not just because he is the granddaddy of this language and its literature; it's because what he wrote was funny, fierce, thoughtful, political, philosophical and, oh yes, notoriously bawdy. We'll read some of Chaucer's brilliant early work, and then dig into his two greatest achievements: the epic Troilus and Criseyde, and The Canterbury Tales, his oft-censored panorama of medieval English life. Chaucer will be read in Middle English, which will prove surprisingly easy and pleasant.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)
Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Fall 2020, Spring 2020
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3200 - The Viking Age (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 3200, JWST 3200, NES 3200

This course aims to familiarize students with the history of Scandinavia, ca. 800-1100 ad. Although well known as a dramatic chapter in medieval history, this period remains enigmatic and often misunderstood. Our goal will be to set Norse history within its European context, observing similarities with processes elsewhere in the medieval world, the better to perceive what makes the Norse unique. We will examine the social, economic and political activities of the Norsemen in continental Scandinavia, in Western and Eastern Europe, and in the North Atlantic.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3210 - Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with PHIL 3210, RELST 3150

A selective survey of Western philosophical thought from the fourth to the 14th century. Topics include the problem of universals, the theory of knowledge and truth, the nature of free choice and practical reasoning, and philosophical theology. Readings (in translation) include Augustine, Boethius, Anselm, Abelard, Aquinas, Scotus, and Ockham. Some attention will be given to the development of ideas across the period and the influence of non-Western traditions on the West.

Distribution Requirements: (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2022, Spring 2019, Fall 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3212 - Philosophy in the Islamic World (800-1400) (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with PHIL 3212, NES 3212

An introduction to some of the major thinkers and philosophical developments in the Islamic world from the 9th to the 14th centuries CE. Figures include Muslim thinkers such as Al-Kindi, Al-Razi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina (Avicenna), Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Rushd (Averroes) as well as important representatives of the Jewish tradition such as Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides). Themes include philosophical theology (the existence and nature of God, God's relation to the created world, prophecy, the place of reason in religion), metaphysics (the nature of existence, fundamental ontology, causality), mind and knowledge (the nature and mechanisms of cognition, our knowledge of ourselves and the world), and ethics and political philosophy (how best to live and organize the state).

Prerequisites: at least one course in philosophy.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, ETM-AS), (CA-AG, KCM-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3245 - Revolution or Reform? (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 3255, HIST 3255

This course explores the relation between literary and utopian Enlightenment cultures in Western history. For each moment of rapid change, from Plato to the Communist revolutions of the twentieth century and beyond, we will focus on two texts: one which promoted the enlightened and revolutionary utopian social blueprint; and one offering an alternative model of transformation or a dystopian account of the utopian model. You will come away from this course having a chronologically wide and intellectually deep immersion in 2500 years of European philosophical and literary history. Throughout, you are encouraged to think about what resources we use to imagine social transformation and to ask if revolution is in fact the best way to effect social transformation.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3255 - The Byzantine Empire: Culture and Society (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 3255, NES 3255, CLASS 3655

An introduction to the art, history, and literature of the Byzantine Empire, its neighbors, and successors, ca. 500-1500.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3300 - Romanesque and Early Gothic Art and Architecture: Europe and the Mediterranean, 1000-1150 A.D. (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 3300, NES 3759

This course will address both Romanesque and the earliest manifestations of Gothic art and architecture as Western Mediterranean phenomena, rather than northern European ones. We will adopt a comparative approach which includes Islamic and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine cultures and material. In addition to the more usual art historical skills, such as visual and stylistic analysis and compare-and-contrast, we will use selected primary sources and historical analysis to attempt to understand the objects and monuments we address.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Spring 2010, Spring 2009

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3315 - Old Norse I (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with LING 3315

Old Norse is a collective term for the earliest North Germanic literary languages: Old Icelandic, Old Norwegian, Old Danish, and Old Swedish. The richly documented Old Icelandic is the center of attention, and the purpose is twofold: the students gain knowledge of an ancient North Germanic language, important from a linguistic point of view, and gain access to the medieval Icelandic (and Scandinavian) literature. The structure of Old Norse (Old Icelandic), phonology, and morphology, with reading of selections from the Prose-Edda, a 13th-century narrative based on the Eddaic poetry.

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3316 - Old Norse II (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with LING 3316

Old Norse is a collective term for the earliest North Germanic literary languages: Old Icelandic, Old Norwegian, Old Danish, and Old Swedish. The richly documented Old Icelandic is the center of attention, and the purpose is twofold: the students gain knowledge of an ancient North Germanic language, important from a linguistic point of view, and gain access to the medieval Icelandic (and Scandinavian) literature. Extensive reading of Old Norse texts, among them selections from some of the major Icelandic family sagas: Njals saga, Grettis saga, and Egils saga, as well as the whole Hrafnkels saga.

Prerequisites: LING 3315 or permission of instructor.

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3448 - Islamic Mysticism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 3448, HIST 3448, RELST 3448

Sufism, popularly understood as Islamic mysticism, is a loose name given to a broad and diverse collection of beliefs, practices and groups that range and vary across time and space. Going from a small and largely secretive group of mystical practitioners to a mainstream form of piety in the late medieval period, Sufism has a fascinating history, filled with intrigue, controversy, conflict and interesting characters. In this course, students will delve deep into the history of Sufism and read widely from across the Sufi and anti-Sufi traditions. Concentration will be given to practical questions of how Sufis saw themselves and their relationship to God and the world, how they built mystic community, spurned or embraced family life, interacted with mainstream society, and engaged in controversial erotic practices. Across the course, we will read Sufi histories and biographies, poetry, introductory treatises, as well as anti-Sufi polemics and stories.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3530 - A Mediterranean Society and Its Culture (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 3530, JWST 3530, RELST 3530

This course examines the cultural and historical interaction of Muslims and Jews from the emergence of Islam in the seventh century through the classical age of Islam down to the turn of the thirteenth century. The intersection of the two cultures (scriptural, spiritual, intellectual, literary, communal, and interpersonal) and members of their respective religious communities will be studied through readings of primary texts (in translation). The course will conclude with some brief reflections on historical memory and the modern and contemporary significance of the two religious communities' interactions during the classical age of Islam.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3545 - Imagining the Middle Ages: Films, Games, and Media (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GERST 3545, COML 3113, PMA 3545, VISST 3545

Today, the legacy of the Middle Ages can be found everywhere, from the game of chess to Game of Thrones, the parliament to the university, the Crusades to the Vikings, the nostalgia for tradition to the very concept of modernity. This course explores the function of the medieval past through the lens of modern visual culture, as part of an emerging field known as "Medievalism." Along with readings of classic theories of Medievalism (Huizinga, Balázs, Panofsky, Bazin, McLuhan, Eco), screenings will put auteur films (Dreyer's *Passion of Joan of Arc*, Bergman's *Seventh Seal*, Kurosawa's *Ran*) in dialogue with popular culture (from Monty Python to *A Knight's Tale*) in order to raise the question of a Global Middle Ages.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3566 - Art and Architecture of the Pre-Columbian Americas (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 3566, VISST 3566, LATA 3566, ARKEO 3566, LSP 3566

This course introduces students to the arts of the ancient Americas from circa 2000 BC to the Spanish invasions of the 15th and 16th centuries. The term pre-Columbian refers to the span of time during which indigenous cultures flourished before Christopher Columbus' voyage of 1492. This course covers the arts of indigenous Mesoamerica (Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras), the Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and the Greater and Lesser Antilles), and Andean South America (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile). Students will become familiar with the history, archaeology, and visual arts of the earliest cultures that populated these regions up through the Inca, Aztec, and Maya cultures that encountered the Spaniards. This course also explores the legacies of pre-Columbian cultures among contemporary Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x artists in the United States.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Fall 2018, Fall 2016, Fall 2013

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3658 - History of Ancient and Medieval Iran (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 3658, HIST 3658

The course examines the most significant and defining stages of Iran's historic development concentrating on events and individuals that shaped its past and present. Drawing from various sources we will view the events from variety of perspectives and, among other questions, will also touch on much debated issues such as the meaning of "real Iranian" identity, relation of pre-Islamic Iranian practices and Islamic traditions in shaping of Iranian nation-state. The course will explore major developments in Iran's history from the time of the first empires to modern republic.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3720 - Playing God: Medieval and Early Renaissance Drama (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 3720, PMA 3720, SHUM 3721

After Rome's collapse, drama was gradually re-created from many sources: school-room debates, popular festivals, and, especially, religious liturgy. By the 17th century it was one of the most polished literary arts (and one of the sleaziest). This long span allows us to consider what happened in the middle. This course traces the residues of Roman drama and some rebeginnings of European drama, 10th to 13th centuries, then focuses mainly on late medieval drama in English in the 15th century, following that into the drama of the early Renaissance. We'll consider what became modern and what was utterly unlike anything later. Discussion, lecture, regular writing, some experiments with production. English texts will be read in Middle English with lots of help; no previous knowledge required.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2021, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3724 - Death and the Afterlife in Islam (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 3724, RELST 3724

What happens after death? If there is an Afterlife, how is it connected to earthly life? What would the Afterlife actually look like? What role does God or Satan play in the Afterlife? Since the earliest Qur'anic Revelations, Muslims have questioned, imagined and written about the Afterlife. In this course, we will read widely from across the Islamic religious and literary traditions, reading primary texts in translation. We will begin with a survey of the imagination of the Afterlife in scriptural, religious and literary texts, before examining the role and importance of the Afterlife in Islamic legal thinking and morality. Thereafter, we will focus on theological and ethical problems that arise from the imagination of the Afterlife, focusing in particular on the gendered experience of the Afterlife, as well as the question of whether the individual has free will and moral agency or whether eschatological fate is predetermined.

Distribution Requirements: (ETM-AS), (KCM-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3750 - Introduction to Dendrochronology (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 3750, ARTH 3250, ARKEO 3090

Introduction and training in dendrochronology (tree-ring dating) and its applications in archaeology, art history, climate and environment through lab work and participation in ongoing research projects using ancient to modern wood samples from around the world. Supervised reading and laboratory/project work. Possibilities exist for summer fieldwork in the Mediterranean, Mexico, and New York State.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Fall 2021, Spring 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3760 - On Practice and Perfection (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with FREN 3770, RELST 3770

Practice makes perfect, the old saying goes, but the nature of that connection remains opaque. This course, conducted in English and intended as a sequel to FREN 3540 - On Paying Attention, gives students the opportunity to engage with everyday material and spiritual practices, and to reflect upon the kinds of things these practices make. What is the place of routine and repetition in our lives? How can we open a conversation about our habits? We'll look for models to the long history of writing on the subject, largely but not exclusively by Christian thinkers (e.g. Augustine, Benedict, Aelred, Francis, Ignatius), even as we develop new ways of accounting for, and developing, the practices that make our lives meaningful. Artists, athletes, and introverts especially welcome.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, KCM-AG), (ETM-AS, GLC-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2022, Fall 2019, Spring 2017

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3775 - Future Past: Fantasy Fiction (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with FREN 3775

This course will introduce students to the relationship between modern fantasy fiction and the Middle Ages. What kind of world is the world of quests and secret love affairs, swords and sorcery? We'll begin with the two main models for adventure stories in medieval French literature, the Song of Roland and Lancelot, before examining how they appear in modern literature and film. Along the way, we'll consider more familiar exchanges between medieval literature and modern allegory in the work of C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, and we'll ask what fantasy fiction allows us to fantasize about.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3787 - The Qur'an (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 3787, RELST 3787

The Qur'an is a cornucopia of stories, laws, apocalyptic visions, Paradisical landscapes and stark warnings. This course presents students with the opportunity not only to read the Qur'an in translation in its entirety, but also to explore different ways in which the Qur'anic text has been and can be interpreted, and the different religious, social and ethical questions that derive from different methods of interpretation. Across the course, students will be asked to explore questions, such as: how does dating the Qur'an impact interpretation? How does the debate concerning Qur'anic (un)createdness impact its interpretation? Is it possible to use extra-Qur'anic material to interpret the Qur'an? How can the Qur'an be read as a literary text? Or as a source of law? Or as a source for history? What is the Qur'an's own view of the past, present and future? How do feminist and queer Muslims read and interpret the Qur'an? This course is secular and academic in nature. We will study a wide range of religious and secular/academic approaches to interpreting the Qur'an, some of which may challenge widely-held assumptions about the Qur'an's authorship, dating, composition and interpretation.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3850 - The Arts of Southeast Asia (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 3850, VISST 3696, ASIAN 3350

The arts of Southeast Asia are studied in their social context, since in traditional societies creative processes are often mapped on the sequence of events that compose human lives. We will be looking particularly at the gendered ways in which bodies are mapped on the land, and how these various framings are often reflected in the unique relationships that emerge between works of art and textual sources. The South Asian epics of the Ramayana (Story of Rama) and the Mahabharata will be explored during the semester as infinitely renewable sources of inspiration. Special emphasis will be devoted to localized encounters in Indonesia, Cambodia, Burma/Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2022, Spring 2019
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 3888 - Jews, Christians, and Others in Late Antiquity (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 3888, RELST 3888, JWST 3888

This course explores the interactions between Jews, Christians, and other religious groups in late antiquity, especially in Sasanian Persia circa the first through seventh century C.E. Students pay particular attention to the portrayals of Christians in Jewish rabbinic literature, including Midrash and Talmud, but also draw from early Christian, Zoroastrian, Manichaeism, and other sources. There will be an emphasis on the reading of primary texts in translation in their appropriate historical contexts, and in comparison with one another. Students engage such questions as: How did Jews define themselves in relation to Christians, and vice versa? In what ways did Jews and Christians part ways with one another, as scholars often maintain, and what were the factors at play in their separation? And, lastly, what role did other religious and political groups, such as Gnostics, Zoroastrians, Romans, Mandaeans, Manichaeans, and early Muslims play in these developments?

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2020
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4002 - Latin Philosophical Texts (1-2 Credits)

Crosslisted with PHIL 4002, RELST 4100

Reading and translation of Latin philosophical texts.

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2021
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4103 - Survey of Medieval Latin Literature (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with LATIN 4213

The Survey is designed to introduce participants to characteristic genres and discourses of Medieval Latin. The traditional focus is prose style and its implications for audience and genre from classical rhetoric to the humanist revival of a 'classical' style. A basic foundation in Latin morphology, syntax, and vocabulary is assumed. Intermediate and advanced topics in post-Classical idioms and syntax will be treated as they arise, with the goal of improving the facility with which students approach, read, and, especially, understand Latin writings from the Middle Ages. In addition to studying the practice(s) of style and Latin prose composition, modern approaches to stylistic analysis, and the intersections of style and identity, participants will gain a working knowledge of medieval theories of prose style as articulated in treatises on the genera dicendi, ars dictaminis, and ars praedicandi, as well as medieval (and modern) discussions of cursus and clausulae.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, FLOPI-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2018, Spring 2016, Fall 2012
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4170 - The Archaeology of the Text from Chaucer through the Renaissance (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 4170

This seminar explores the relation between book history and literary history during the span from medieval English manuscript culture through Renaissance print culture, with invitations to apply these concerns to any period and language. Skills taught are both theoretical and practical, focusing on manuscripts, old handwriting, literacy, printers, and issues linking material and social book-making to literary topics and forms. As a class, we will focus on the pivotal period of English literature from Chaucer to Shakespeare, but individual final editorial projects can take up any period or language. All students will learn to exploit chance archival discoveries, to write biographies of an early printer, and to use and create an edition.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4201 - Topics in Medieval Latin Literature (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with LATIN 4223

This topics seminar will explore genres, forms, and theories of Medieval Latin poetry in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (with a few forays into the fourteenth century and beyond). Topics include biblical and liturgical verse, historical epic, philosophical and didactic poetry, satire and parody, the ars versificandi, and historical/contemporary critical approaches to Medieval Latin poetics (Faral, Raby, Norberg, Zumthor, Leupin, Tilliette, Kay, et al.).

Prerequisites: a solid foundation in Latin grammar and morphology.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2020, Spring 2014, Fall 2011
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4295 - Premodern Literature and Media (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GERST 4285

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2019, Spring 2012
Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4305 - Looking for Love: Visual and Literary Cultures of Love in the Medieval Mediterranean, 1100-1400 AD (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4305, NES 4795

A comparative and interdisciplinary seminar whose focus is the visual world created by the pan-Mediterranean (Iberian Peninsula, Maghreb, France, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and Persia) culture of Courtly Love beginning during the 11th century ad, and continuing as a principle factor in medieval cultural production for the remainder of the period. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which the visual dimensions of this culture nuance, compliment, contradict, or at times even exist independently of, its oral and written spheres. Reading knowledge of any Romance or Semitic language and/or Persian, in addition to English, is highly advantageous.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022, Spring 2020, Spring 2010

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4310 - Methods in Medieval (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4310, NES 4700, JWST 4310, RELST 4310, SPAN 4570

Topic: Writing Through the Forest in Search of Trees. Hello, Humanities Student! Are you a plotter or a pantsner? Not sure? Come and join us to find out, and to gain valuable insight into what kind of a writer you are, and how to manage that writer most effectively and productively. This theme-centered methods seminar, through a communal focus on trees, woods, glens, and copses in the pre-modern world, will hone in on the most indispensable tool in the humanist's belt: writing. From the generation of ideas, to their organization into an outline (or a blueprint, or whatever euphemism we, as a group or as individuals, decide to apply to the initial, tangled pile of yarn) to the first draft. Followed by frank and constructive criticism of the initial draft as a group and in pairs, and then on to the part that all students-really, all humanists?okay, all writers-find to be the greatest struggle: Your paper has some good ideas, but it really needs a rewrite. Now what do you do? As we write, and rewrite, we will also read widely. In addition to primary sources, scholarly articles and essays, we will include criticism, personal essay, theory, excerpts from fiction, and more, in an effort to open students' writing up to a myriad of possibilities for persuasive and compelling written communication.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2015, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4351 - Problems in Byzantine Art (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4351, CLASS 4752, NES 4351, RELST 4351, VISST 4351, ARKEO 4351

Topic Spring 23: Portraiture. Byzantine artists produced a wide variety of images that modern interpreters have recognized as portraits. These images illuminate individual identity and visual representation in Byzantium. On the one hand, the constituent elements of a portrait (such as physiognomy, gesture, dress, and attributes) illuminate cultural understandings of personhood. On the other hand, those elements are assembled and displayed through means (composition, medium, and context) that illuminate cultural understandings of images and their ability to extend personal energy. We will focus on the primary sources, including preserved monuments (manuscripts, mosaics, sculptures, etc.) and literary witnesses (epigrams, historians' accounts, etc.), supplemented by selections from the secondary literature on identity, individuality, and subject formation in Byzantium. Seminar topics rotate each semester. Previous topics include: Ravenna, Hagia Sophia, Byzantine Iconoclasm, Spiral Relief Columns.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2016, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4471 - Premodern-Postmodern (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GERST 4471, COML 4471

The premodern world played a crucial role in the formation of postmodern theory. 'Biblical exegesis', 'negative theology', 'inner experience', and other premodern concepts and practices were taken up by postmodern authors including Ingeborg Bachmann, Georges Bataille, Italo Calvino, Michel de Certeau, Jacques Derrida, Martin Heidegger, Jean-François Lyotard, and Robert Musil. Each week we will read one modern author in dialogue with one premodern author, such as Origen, Pseudo-Dionysius, Meister Eckhart, Angelus Silesius, Hildegard of Bingen, and Mechthild of Magdeburg, among many others. The aim of our comparisons will be to interrogate the legacy of what Bruce Holsinger calls the "premodern condition."

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4540 - Moses Maimonides (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 4540, JWST 4540, RELST 4540, SPAN 4540
Moses Maimonides who was born in Cordoba (1138), moved to Fez as a youth and died in Cairo (1204) is regarded by Jewish, Islamic, and Christian tradition alike as the most important Jewish religious intellectual of the classical age of Islam/the High Middle Ages. This seminar will examine Maimonides as the product of his time and place including his complex relationship with Arabo-Islamic culture and, because of his stature as a communal figure, rabbinic scholar, court physician and philosopher, his role as a catalyst for cultural developments. For comparative purposes we also consider Maimonides' Andalusian contemporary, Ibn Rushd, the philosopher, Muslim jurist, physician and scholar of Islamic law.

Distribution Requirements: (CA-AG, HA-AG), (GLC-AS, HST-AS)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL); (EUAREA, LAAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4557 - Desert Monasticism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 4557, RELST 4557, CLASS 4677

How and why do landscapes come to inspire the religious imagination? And why do religious practices, rituals, traditions, and beliefs take place in particular landscapes? This seminar treats these questions by focusing on the desert, both imagined and real, as it has shaped religious ascetic practice, especially the development of Christian monasticism in the Middle East. We will read widely from monastic literatures, mostly from late ancient Egypt, to explore both the historical development of monasticism in Christianity and examine why the monastic impulse seems so closely tied to the desert. In addition to reading saints' lives and the stories of hermits, we will read early monastic rules, the desert fathers, and we will draw from archaeological sources to examine the varieties of ascetic practices in the deserts of late ancient Egypt, Gaza, Sinai, Palestine, and Syria. Throughout the course we will explore ancient and modern ideas about wilderness and we will explore parallels between ancient Near Eastern literatures and their nineteenth- and twentieth-century parallels in the American frontier and environmental literatures.

Distribution Requirements: (ETM-AS, HST-AS), (HA-AG, KCM-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2019, Fall 2017, Fall 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4691 - Crossing the Apocalypse (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 4691, JWST 4695, NES 4695, RELST 4691, CLASS 4691

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4706 - The Poetics of Embodiment: Figurines in the Early Middle Ages (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 4706, RELST 4706, ARKEO 4706, ARTH 4706
How can a small sculpture produce monumental effects? Recent shifts in metal-detecting and excavation practices have transformed our understanding of the scope of figural art after the Roman empire's collapse; the field is newly flooded with evidence of toys, puppets, and other tiny bodies. Working across the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, art history, philosophy, and gender studies, this course investigates how figurines shaped space, ritual, and concepts of personhood in the early medieval world.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS), (CA-AG, LA-AG)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4754 - Themes in Mediterranean Archaeology (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 4754, ARTH 4754, NES 4654, ARKEO 4254, ANTHR 4254

This seminar provides a higher-level general introduction to, and survey of, contemporary theories, methods, and approaches in the archaeology of the Mediterranean world. Rather than focusing on a specific geographical sub-region or chronological period, this course examines and critically assesses the practice and distinctive character of Mediterranean archaeology more broadly.

Prerequisites: some previous background in archaeology, material culture studies, ancient history, or related fields.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4761 - Albion: Post-Roman, Pre-Norman (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 4761

The people who invaded the isle of Britain after the withdrawal of Roman government in the early fifth century, and who dominated it until the establishment of Norman rule in the late eleventh century, are responsible for some of the best-known and most enduring legacies of the Middle Ages: Beowulf and Bede's Ecclesiastical History, the archbishoprics of Canterbury and York, Alfred the Great and the Unready. This course examines the Anglo-Saxons in their early-medieval context, focusing especially on the cooperation between history and its sister disciplines - archaeology, literary criticism, and others - that is so vital for shedding light on this distant, opaque era.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2019, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4858 - Dancing the Stone: Body, Memory, and Architecture (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 4858, ASIAN 4456, PMA 4358, VISST 4858

This course examines the role of temples and their sculptural programs in South and Southeast Asia as creative stimuli for performative reenactments. Choreographic encounters between imagination and memory will be mapped as they occur at various points historically and politically in Java, Bali, Cambodia and India. Since architectural choreography implies the human body's inhabitation and experience of place, the nature of ritualized behavior and its relationship to performance and politics will be explored spatially, both in organizing experience and defining or redefining identity on colonial, national, and diasporic margins. Bringing back the haptic sense (i.e. of feeling and doing at the same time) students will have the unique opportunity to balance the demands of learning a Balinese traditional dance while exploring performance traditions in historical perspective.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Exploratory Studies: (SAAREA, SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4910 - Approaches to Medieval Violence (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 4910

'Violence' has become an unavoidable - and urgently troubling - buzzword in contemporary Western culture. We worry about its manifestations and representations in our own civilization, we scan foreign societies with which we interact for any sign of it, we fantasize about consummating it or construct our utopias around its absence. This course is intended as an opportunity for students working on a variety of topics, periods and areas in premodern Europe to investigate its relevance to their own studies. Through an examination of readings on violence in particular historical contexts, from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern period, we will seek to elicit reflection on what is meant by the concept, to prompt consideration of distinctions among forms of violence, and to sample a variety of analytical approaches and tools.

Distribution Requirements: (HA-AG), (HST-AS)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 4963 - China's Early Modern (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 4963, ASIAN 4461, CAPS 4963

Theories of modernization have inspired, informed, and plagued histories of middle and late imperial China. For the Song-Qing eras (roughly 10th-19th centuries), comparative studies have variously found and sought to explain modernization emerging earlier than in Europe, an absence of modernization, or alternative paths of modernization. Regional models have argued for pan-East Asian systems and patterns of modernization. Global models have argued that China had a vital role in European development as a provenance of modernizing institutions and ideas, as a source of exploited resources, or otherwise as an integral part of global systems. In this course we explore these historiographical debates and develop critical perspectives, including approaches to escaping Eurocentric and teleological frameworks.

Distribution Requirements: (ALC-AS, HST-AS), (CA-AG, HA-AG, LA-AG)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2020, Spring 2016, Fall 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6020 - Latin Philosophical Texts (1-2 Credits)

Crosslisted with PHIL 6020, LATIN 7262, RELST 6020

Reading and translation of Latin philosophical texts.

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6102 - Latin Paleography (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with LATIN 7222

This course is an introduction to and survey of Latin scripts from Roman antiquity through the early Renaissance, with an emphasis on the identification, localization, and reading of scripts. Class meetings will combine practical study of Latin scripts through medieval manuscripts in the Kroch library, facsimiles, and online digital reproductions with instruction in the cultural-historical background to manuscript production, library practices, and bibliographical resources. Students will also be introduced to basic techniques for codicological description and the principles of textual criticism.

Prerequisites: a solid understanding of Latin grammar and morphology.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2021, Spring 2020, Fall 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6103 - Survey of Medieval Latin Literature (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with LATIN 7213

The Survey is designed to introduce participants to characteristic genres and discourses of Medieval Latin. The traditional focus is prose style and its implications for audience and genre from classical rhetoric to the humanist revival of a 'classical' style. A basic foundation in Latin morphology, syntax, and vocabulary is assumed. Intermediate and advanced topics in post-Classical idioms and syntax will be treated as they arise, with the goal of improving the facility with which students approach, read, and, especially, understand Latin writings from the Middle Ages. In addition to studying the practice(s) of style and Latin prose composition, modern approaches to stylistic analysis, and the intersections of style and identity, participants will gain a working knowledge of medieval theories of prose style as articulated in treatises on the genera dicendi, ars dictaminis, and ars praedicandi, as well as medieval (and modern) discussions of cursus and clausulae.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Fall 2018, Spring 2016, Fall 2012

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6110 - Old English (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 6110

English has a recorded history longer and more variable than any other language, including poetry and prose as skillful as writings in any period. While learning the language (especially in the first half of the course) we will investigate writings that exploit the language's powers and complexities from the earliest pieces into early Middle English, when the language and its literary traditions disintegrated and began being reinvented at the Norman Conquest. We will also sample (in translation) Latin, Old Saxon, and Old Norse materials that fed the multilingual and multicultural world in which early English developed.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2023, Fall 2022, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6120 - Beowulf (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 6120

Beowulf has received renewed attention in popular culture, thanks to the production of recent movies and riveting new translations. The poem's popular appeal lies in its complex depictions of monsters, its accounts of heroic bravery, and its lavish portrayals of life in the Meadhall. Through close readings we will also explore the darker side of the poem: its punishing depictions of loss and exile, despairing meditations on unstable kingship and dynastic failure, and harrowing depictions of heroic defeat and the vanities of existence on the Middle-Earth. Attention will be given to the poem's cultural contexts, its literary heritage, and its layered pagan and Christian perspectives. A bilingual edition of the poem will be assigned so that students may read in Old and Modern English.

Prerequisites: Recommended prerequisite: one semester's study of Old English, or the equivalent.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6145 - Race and Gender in the Middle Ages (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 6145

If the past is a foreign country, is it a country full of oppressed women? We can, with some smugness, agree that it may have been dreadful to be a woman or sexual minority in the Middle Ages, but it's nowhere near that simple. Also un-simple are medieval notions of race. Scholars long assumed that the European Middle Ages were entirely white and/or that since race as a concept hadn't been invented yet, it wasn't an issue. But both racial and gender difference matter tremendously, then as now. Together, we will think about race and gender as imagined at a time before the world we now know came into being, asking what the pre-history of difference might have to do with us and our future.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2019

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6170 - The Archaeology of the Text from Chaucer through the Renaissance (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 6171

This seminar explores the relation between book history and literary history during the span from medieval English manuscript culture through Renaissance print culture, with invitations to apply these concerns to any period and language. Skills taught are both theoretical and practical, focusing on manuscripts, old handwriting, literacy, printers, and issues linking material and social book-making to literary topics and forms. As a class, we will focus on the pivotal period of English literature from Chaucer to Shakespeare, but individual final editorial projects can take up any period or language. All students will learn to exploit chance archival discoveries, to write biographies of an early printer, and to use and create an edition.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6190 - Chaucer (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 6190

Chaucer became known as the father of English poetry before he was entirely cold in his grave. Why is what he wrote more than six hundred years ago still riveting for us today? It's not only because he was the model for a number of key literary forms and features, or because he opened projects that invited participation and imitation. It's also because what he wrote was funny, fierce, thoughtful, political, philosophical, scientific, and notoriously bawdy. We'll read some of Chaucer's early work against a few of his own models, then dig into his two greatest achievements: *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Canterbury Tales*. We'll learn to read Chaucer's Middle English, which will prove surprisingly easy and rewarding.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024, Fall 2018, Spring 2010Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 6191 - Images, Idolatry and Iconoclasm: Late Medieval to Early Modern (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ENGL 6191

Fear of idolatry is a recurrent feature of Western culture. The Christian image threatens to short-circuit the flow of spirituality between humans and God, just as images of the ancient, pagan gods threaten dangerously to preserve the energies of those lascivious and vengeful deities. And images, whether secular or religious, are always potentially threatening to literate culture: they compete with words, and seem to possess a much more immediate power to mesmerize the imagination. The Protestant Reformation in particular targeted images as the enemy to a true religion of the Word. Legislation in England determined the wholesale destruction of religious images (iconoclasm) between 1538 and 1644. On the other hand, many writers and artists, both secular and religious, look to the image for salvation of sorts. Guided by these perceptions, we will be looking to a range of pre- and post-Reformation texts and contexts. The course will be equally divided between late medieval and early modern texts. Students without Middle English should feel entirely at ease to take this course: all texts will be presented in reader-friendly editions.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 6201 - Topics in Medieval Latin Literature (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with LATIN 7223

This topics seminar will explore genres, forms, and theories of Medieval Latin poetry in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (with a few forays into the fourteenth century and beyond). Topics include biblical and liturgical verse, historical epic, philosophical and didactic poetry, satire and parody, the *ars versificandi*, and historical/contemporary critical approaches to Medieval Latin poetics (Faral, Raby, Norberg, Zumthor, Leupin, Tilliette, Kay, et al.).

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2020, Spring 2014, Fall 2011Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 6210 - Topics in Medieval Philosophy (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with PHIL 6210, RELST 6210

Graduate seminar covering a topic in medieval philosophy. Spring 2025
Topics include: Augustine; Philosophy in the Islamic World (800-1400).

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2024, Spring 2023, Spring 2022Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 6285 - Premodern Literature and Media (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with GERST 6285

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2019Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 6295 - Early Lyric in Transition (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ENGL 6295

The term lyric is uncommon before the sixteenth century, but the songs and short, non-narrative poetry that evidently constitute those traditions reach back to the beginnings of written literature. Theory of the lyric is a contested field, with much at stake in how poetry should be assessed and appreciated. Beginning with ancient and early medieval traditions, the seminar will focus on the star-studded period from the early fourteenth through the early seventeenth century, particularly Petrarch, Machaut, Chaucer, Gower, Hoccleve, Lydgate, Skelton, Sidney, Spencer, and Shakespeare. It will seek to explore their poems within literary exchanges as well as cultural history, from economics to media to colonialism to changes in the English language.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 6300 - Romanesque and Early Gothic Art and Architecture: Europe and the Mediterranean, 1000-1150 A.D. (3 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ARTH 6300, NES 6759

This course will address both Romanesque and the earliest manifestations of Gothic art and architecture as Western Mediterranean phenomena, rather than northern European ones. We will adopt a comparative approach which includes Islamic and, to a lesser extent, Byzantine cultures and material. In addition to the more usual art historical skills, such as visual and stylistic analysis and compare-and-contrast, we will use selected primary sources and historical analysis to attempt to understand the objects and monuments we address.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)**MEDVL 6305 - Looking for Love: Visual and Literary Cultures of Love in the Medieval Mediterranean, 1100-1400 AD (4 Credits)**

Crosslisted with ARTH 6305

A comparative and interdisciplinary seminar whose focus is the visual world created by the pan-Mediterranean (Iberian Peninsula, Maghreb, France, Italy, Turkey, Egypt, and Persia) culture of Courtly Love beginning during the 11th century ad, and continuing as a principle factor in medieval cultural production for the remainder of the period. Particular attention will be paid to the ways in which the visual dimensions of this culture nuance, compliment, contradict, or at times even exist independently of, its oral and written spheres. Reading knowledge of any Romance or Semitic language and/or Persian, in addition to English, is highly advantageous.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2022Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6310 - Methods in Medieval (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6310, NES 6700, JWST 6310, RELST 6310, SPAN 6590

Topic: Writing Through the Forest in Search of Trees. Hello, Humanities Student! Are you a plotter or a pantsner? Not sure? Come and join us to find out, and to gain valuable insight into what kind of a writer you are, and how to manage that writer most effectively and productively. This theme-centered methods seminar, through a communal focus on trees, woods, glens, and copses in the pre-modern world, will hone in on the most indispensable tool in the humanist's belt: writing. From the generation of ideas, to their organization into an outline (or a blueprint, or whatever euphemism we, as a group or as individuals, decide to apply to the initial, tangled pile of yarn) to the first draft. Followed by frank and constructive criticism of the initial draft as a group and in pairs, and then on to the part that all students—really, all humanists?okay, all writers—find to be the greatest struggle: Your paper has some good ideas, but it really needs a rewrite. Now what do you do? As we write, and rewrite, we will also read widely. In addition to primary sources, scholarly articles and essays, we will include criticism, personal essay, theory, excerpts from fiction, and more, in an effort to open students' writing up to a myriad of possibilities for persuasive and compelling written communication.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2023, Spring 2021, Spring 2015

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6330 - A Mediterranean Society and Its Culture (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 6330, JWST 6330, RELST 6330

This course examines the cultural and historical interaction of Muslims and Jews from the emergence of Islam in the seventh century through the classical age of Islam down to the turn of the thirteenth century. The intersection of the two cultures (scriptural, spiritual, intellectual, literary, communal, and interpersonal) and members of their respective religious communities will be studied through readings of primary texts (in translation). The course will conclude with some brief reflections on historical memory and the modern and contemporary significance of the two religious communities' interactions during the classical age of Islam.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2021

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6351 - Problems in Byzantine Art (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6351, CLASS 7752, NES 6351, RELST 6351, VISST 6351, ARKEO 6351

Seminar topics rotate each semester. Topic for Spring 2023: Portraiture. Byzantine artists produced a wide variety of images that modern interpreters have recognized as portraits. These images illuminate individual identity and visual representation in Byzantium. On the one hand, the constituent elements of a portrait (such as physiognomy, gesture, dress, and attributes) illuminate cultural understandings of personhood. On the other hand, those elements are assembled and displayed through means (composition, medium, and context) that illuminate cultural understandings of images and their ability to extend personal energy. We will focus on the primary sources, including preserved monuments (manuscripts, mosaics, sculptures, etc.) and literary witnesses (epigrams, historians' accounts, etc.), supplemented by selections from the secondary literature on identity, individuality, and subject formation in Byzantium. Previous topics include: Ravenna, Hagia Sophia, Byzantine Iconoclasm, Spiral Relief Columns.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Spring 2016, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6448 - Islamic Mysticism (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 6448, HIST 6448, RELST 6448

Sufism, popularly understood as Islamic mysticism, is a loose name given to a broad and diverse collection of beliefs, practices and groups that range and vary across time and space. Going from a small and largely secretive group of mystical practitioners to a mainstream form of piety in the late medieval period, Sufism has a fascinating history, filled with intrigue, controversy, conflict and interesting characters. In this course, students will delve deep into the history of Sufism and read widely from across the Sufi and anti-Sufi traditions. Concentration will be given to practical questions of how Sufis saw themselves and their relationship to God and the world, how they built mystic community, spurned or embraced family life, interacted with mainstream society, and engaged in controversial erotic practices. Across the course, we will read Sufi histories and biographies, poetry, introductory treatises, as well as anti-Sufi polemics and stories.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6471 - Premodern-Postmodern (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with GERST 6471

The premodern world played a crucial role in the formation of postmodern theory. 'Biblical exegesis', 'negative theology', 'inner experience', and other premodern concepts and practices were taken up by postmodern authors including Ingeborg Bachmann, Georges Bataille, Italo Calvino, Michel de Certeau, Jacques Derrida, Martin Heidegger, Jean-François Lyotard, and Robert Musil. Each week we will read one modern author in dialogue with one premodern author, such as Origen, Pseudo-Dionysius, Meister Eckhart, Angelus Silesius, Hildegard of Bingen, and Mechthild of Magdeburg, among many others. The aim of our comparisons will be to interrogate the legacy of what Bruce Holsinger calls the "premodern condition."

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6540 - Moses Maimonides (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 6540

Moses Maimonides who was born in Cordoba (1138), moved to Fez as a youth and died in Cairo (1204) is regarded by Jewish, Islamic, and Christian tradition alike as the most important Jewish religious intellectual of the classical age of Islam/the High Middle Ages. This seminar will examine Maimonides as the product of his time and place including his complex relationship with Arabo-Islamic culture and, because of his stature as a communal figure, rabbinic scholar, court physician and philosopher, his role as a catalyst for cultural developments. For comparative purposes we also consider Maimonides' Andalusian contemporary, Ibn Rushd, the philosopher, Muslim jurist, physician and scholar of Islamic law.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6566 - Art and Architecture of the Pre-Columbian Americas (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6566

This course introduces students to the arts of the ancient Americas from circa 2000 BC to the Spanish invasions of the 15th and 16th centuries. The term pre-Columbian refers to the span of time during which indigenous cultures flourished before Christopher Columbus' voyage of 1492. This course covers the arts of indigenous Mesoamerica (Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, and Honduras), the Caribbean (Cuba, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, and the Greater and Lesser Antilles), and Andean South America (Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, and Chile). Students will become familiar with the history, archaeology, and visual arts of the earliest cultures that populated these regions up through the Inca, Aztec, and Maya cultures that encountered the Spaniards. This course also explores the legacies of pre-Columbian cultures among contemporary Chicana/o/x and Latina/o/x artists in the United States.

Exploratory Studies: (LAAREA)

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6689 - Sex, Gender, and the Natural World in Medieval Culture (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 6689, FGSS 6689, LGBT 6689, FREN 6689

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6691 - Crossing the Apocalypse (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 6691, JWST 6695, NES 6695, RELST 6691, CLASS 6691

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6706 - The Poetics of Embodiment: Figurines in the Early Middle Ages (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with SHUM 6706, RELST 6706, ARKEO 6706, ARTH 6706
How can a small sculpture produce monumental effects? Recent shifts in metal-detecting and excavation practices have transformed our understanding of the scope of figural art after the Roman empire's collapse; the field is newly flooded with evidence of toys, puppets, and other tiny bodies. Working across the disciplines of anthropology, archaeology, art history, philosophy, and gender studies, this course investigates how figurines shaped space, ritual, and concepts of personhood in the early medieval world.

Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6721 - Playing God: Medieval and Early Renaissance Drama (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 6721

After Rome's collapse, drama was gradually re-created from many sources: school-room debates, popular festivals, and, especially, religious liturgy. By the 17th century it was one of the most polished literary arts (and one of the sleaziest). This long span allows us to consider what happened in the middle. This course traces the residues of Roman drama and some rebeginnings of European drama, 10th to 13th centuries, then focuses mainly on late medieval drama in English in the 15th century, following that into the drama of the early Renaissance. We'll consider what became modern-and what was utterly unlike anything later. Discussion, lecture, regular writing, some experiments with production. English texts will be read in Middle English with lots of help; no previous knowledge required.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2021, Spring 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6724 - Death and the Afterlife in Islam (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 6724, RELST 6724

What happens after death? If there is an Afterlife, how is it connected to earthly life? What would the Afterlife actually look like? What role does God or Satan play in the Afterlife? Since the earliest Qur'anic Revelations, Muslims have questioned, imagined and written about the Afterlife. In this course, we will read widely from across the Islamic religious and literary traditions, reading primary texts in translation. We will begin with a survey of the imagination of the Afterlife in scriptural, religious and literary texts, before examining the role and importance of the Afterlife in Islamic legal thinking and morality. Thereafter, we will focus on theological and ethical problems that arise from the imagination of the Afterlife, focusing in particular on the gendered experience of the Afterlife, as well as the question of whether the individual has free will and moral agency or whether eschatological fate is predetermined.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6754 - Themes in Mediterranean Archaeology (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with CLASS 7754, ARTH 6754, NES 7654, ARKEO 7254, ANTHR 7254

This seminar provides a higher-level general introduction to, and survey of, contemporary theories, methods, and approaches in the archaeology of the Mediterranean world. Rather than focusing on a specific geographical sub-region or chronological period, this course examines and critically assesses the practice and distinctive character of Mediterranean archaeology more broadly.

Prerequisites: some previous background in archaeology, material culture studies, ancient history, or related fields.

Enrollment Information: Enrollment limited to: graduate students.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2021, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6761 - Albion: Post-Roman, Pre-Norman (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 6761

The people who invaded the isle of Britain after the withdrawal of Roman government in the early fifth century, and who dominated it until the establishment of Norman rule in the late eleventh century, are responsible for some of the best-known and most enduring legacies of the Middle Ages: Beowulf and Bede's Ecclesiastical History, the archbishoprics of Canterbury and York, Alfred the Great and ?helred the Unready. This course examines the Anglo-Saxons in their early-medieval context, focusing especially on the cooperation between history and its sister disciplines - archaeology, literary criticism, and others - that is so vital for shedding light on this distant, opaque era.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2023, Spring 2019, Spring 2016

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6787 - The Qur'an (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 6787, RELST 6787

The Qur'an is a cornucopia of stories, laws, apocalyptic visions, Paradisical landscapes and stark warnings. This course presents students with the opportunity not only to read the Qur'an in translation in its entirety, but also to explore different ways in which the Qur'anic text has been and can be interpreted, and the different religious, social and ethical questions that derive from different methods of interpretation. Across the course, students will be asked to explore questions, such as: how does dating the Qur'an impact interpretation? How does the debate concerning Qur'anic (un)createdness impact its interpretation? Is it possible to use extra-Qur'anic material to interpret the Qur'an? How can the Qur'an be read as a literary text? Or as a source of law? Or as a source for history? What is the Qur'an's own view of the past, present and future? How do feminist and queer Muslims read and interpret the Qur'an? This course is secular and academic in nature. We will study a wide range of religious and secular/academic approaches to interpreting the Qur'an, some of which may challenge widely-held assumptions about the Qur'an's authorship, dating, composition and interpretation.

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6850 - The Arts of Southeast Asia (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6850

The arts of Southeast Asia are studied in their social context, since in traditional societies creative processes are often mapped on the sequence of events that compose human lives. We will be looking particularly at the gendered ways in which bodies are mapped on the land, and how these various framings are often reflected in the unique relationships that emerge between works of art and textual sources. The South Asian epics of the Ramayana (Story of Rama) and the Mahabharata will be explored during the semester as infinitely renewable sources of inspiration. Special emphasis will be devoted to localized encounters in Indonesia, Cambodia, Burma/Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Spring 2022

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6858 - Dancing the Stone: Body, Memory, and Architecture (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ARTH 6858, ASIAN 6656

This course examines the role of temples and their sculptural programs in South and Southeast Asia as creative stimuli for performative reenactments. Choreographic encounters between imagination and memory will be mapped as they occur at various points historically and politically in Java, Bali, Cambodia and India. Since architectural choreography implies the human body's inhabitation and experience of place, the nature of ritualized behavior and its relationship to performance and politics will be explored spatially, both in organizing experience and defining or redefining identity on colonial, national, and diasporic margins. Bringing back the haptic sense (i.e. of feeling and doing at the same time) students will have the unique opportunity to balance the demands of learning a Balinese traditional dance while exploring performance traditions in historical perspective.

Exploratory Studies: (SEAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2014, Spring 2009

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6888 - Jews, Christians, and Others in Late Antiquity (3 Credits)

Crosslisted with NES 6888, JWST 6888, RELST 6888

This course explores the interactions between Jews, Christians, and other religious groups in late antiquity, especially in Sasanian Persia circa the first through seventh century C.E. Students pay particular attention to the portrayals of Christians in Jewish rabbinic literature, including Midrash and Talmud, but also draw from early Christian, Zoroastrian, Manichaean, and other sources. There will be an emphasis on the reading of primary texts in translation in their appropriate historical contexts, and in comparison with one another. Students engage such questions as: How did Jews define themselves in relation to Christians, and vice versa? In what ways did Jews and Christians part ways with one another, as scholars often maintain, and what were the factors at play in their separation? And, lastly, what role did other religious and political groups, such as Gnostics, Zoroastrians, Romans, Mandaeans, Manichaeans, and early Muslims play in these developments?

Exploratory Studies: (CU-ITL)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2022, Fall 2020

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6910 - Approaches to Medieval Violence (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 6920

'Violence' has become an unavoidable - and urgently troubling - buzzword in contemporary Western culture. We worry about its manifestations and representations in our own civilization, we scan foreign societies with which we interact for any sign of it, we fantasize about consummating it or construct our utopias around its absence. This course is intended as an opportunity for students working on a variety of topics, periods and areas in premodern Europe to investigate its relevance to their own studies. Through an examination of readings on violence in particular historical contexts, from Late Antiquity to the Early Modern period, we will seek to elicit reflection on what is meant by the concept, to prompt consideration of distinctions among forms of violence, and to sample a variety of analytical approaches and tools.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 6963 - China's Early Modern (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with HIST 6963, ASIAN 6661

Theories of modernization have inspired, informed, and plagued histories of middle and late imperial China. For the Song-Qing eras (roughly 10th-19th centuries), comparative studies have variously found and sought to explain modernization emerging earlier than in Europe, an absence of modernization, or alternative paths of modernization. Regional models have argued for pan-East Asian systems and patterns of modernization. Global models have argued that China had a vital role in European development as a provenance of modernizing institutions and ideas, as a source of exploited resources, or otherwise as an integral part of global systems. In this course we explore these historiographical debates and develop critical perspectives, including approaches to escaping Eurocentric and teleological frameworks.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Spring 2020, Spring 2016, Fall 2014

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 7100 - Advanced Old English (4 Credits)

Crosslisted with ENGL 7100

Early English writers were of two minds about their homeland: they cultivated the mythology that the English were the New Israel, while they were intensely aware (and constantly reminded by Continental authorities) of their status as a backwater at the margins of Christendom. Scripture modeled for them the concept of divinely sanctioned colonization. It also portended for them the precarity of such an elite status, challenged in their day by Viking attacks, corruption in the Church, and various ecological disasters. Such conflicting ideas about their place in the world generated sophisticated reflections about difference with respect to what is now called race, nationality, indigeneity, and the status of the human in the world. Readings include numerous genres (poetry, sermons, riddles, and saints' lives available in Old English and translation) as well as a wide variety of relevant contemporary theory.

Exploratory Studies: (EUAREA)

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2023, Spring 2020, Fall 2016, Fall 2011

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 7777 - Medieval Studies Proseminar (2 Credits)

This course is designed to introduce graduate students to the study of the Middle Ages, with special attention to theory and methodology. Seminars will be led by Medieval Studies Program faculty who represent a broad range of disciplines, time periods, languages, and geographical areas.

Last Four Terms Offered: Fall 2024, Fall 2022, Fall 2020, Fall 2018

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 8010 - Directed Study - Individual (1-4 Credits)

This course gives students the opportunity to work with a selected instructor to pursue special interests or research not treated in regularly scheduled courses. After getting permission of the instructor, students should contact the department to request access to an instructor's section. Enrolled students are required to provide the department with a course description and/or syllabus along with the instructor's approval by the end of the first week of classes.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)

MEDVL 8020 - Directed Study - Group (1-4 Credits)

This course should be used for an independent study in which a small group of students works with one member of the graduate faculty. After getting permission of the instructor, students should contact the department to request access to an instructor's section. Enrolled students are required to provide the department with a course description and/or syllabus along with the instructor's approval by the end of the first week of classes.

Last Four Terms Offered: Spring 2025, Fall 2024, Spring 2024, Fall 2023

Schedule of Classes (<https://classes.cornell.edu/>)