Readings

The following readings are available in the bookstore:


We will be reading part or all of the following text that is currently out of print:


This text and the individual articles or book chapters assigned in the following schedule of readings will be available in the “Content” section of the D2L site for this course.

Topics

**Week 1: January 14, 16**

*Introduction to the course*

*Science and Christianity in Late Antiquity.*


**Week 2: January 21, 23**

*The Patristic Period, Monastic Culture, and the Breakdown of Society. The Carolingian Reform*

Feudal Society.

Assignment: Hollister, ch. 8-9; Richard W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages* (New Haven 1968) ch. 2.

**NB: PLEASE ARRANGE AN APPOINTMENT TO DISCUSS THE ANALYTICAL ESSAY**

**Week 3: January 28, 30**

*Knowing It All: Medieval Fascinations with Encyclopaedic Knowledge*


*Medieval Technology.*


**Week 4: February 4, 6**

*The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century: The Investiture Contest.*

Assignment: Hollister, ch. 10-12; Southern, *Making of the Middle Ages*, ch. 3; Grant, *God and Reason* ch. 1.

*The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century: Politics, Religion and Sex*


**ITEM DUE: IDENTIFY SUBJECT OF ANALYTICAL REVIEW**

**Week 5: February 11, 13**

*Medieval Understandings of Aristotle*


*Medieval Universities: Paris.*


Week 6: February 18, 20

Medieval Universities: Oxford.

Assignment: none.

Medieval Universities: Curriculum and Teaching.


Week 7: February 25, 27

Scriptoria and Book Production

Assignment: none.

Classification of the Sciences.


ITEM DUE: SUBMIT BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF AUTHOR AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

Week 8: March 4, 6

The Condemnations of 1270 and 1277: Theology and Science in the Middle Ages.

Brunetto Latini, Le trésor; Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana, Ashb. 125, fol. 60r


Scotus, Ockham, and Nominalism.


Week 9: March 11, 13
The Analytic Languages of Science: The New Logic and Grammar.


God and Mammon: Theology, Nature, Money, and Quantification


March 15-23  
**Spring Break**

Week 10: March 25, 27

*Medicine and Natural History.*

Assignment: Lindberg, ch. 12-13. Listen to *In Our Time* podcast, “The Four Humours”

*Medieval Mathematics.*

Assignment: Lindberg, ch. 5

**ITEM DUE: OUTLINE OF IMPORTANT QUESTIONS/ISSUES IN THE TEXT**

Week 11: April 1, 3

*Medieval Mathematics.*

Assignment: Grant, Sourcebook no. 19, 25, 31.

*Medieval Optics.*

Assignment: Lindberg, ch. 10.

Week 12: April 8, 10

*Medieval Optics.*

Assignment: Grant, Sourcebook no. 61.1, 62.6, 62.9, 62.15, 62.18, 62.24, 62.27, 62.32.

*Cosmology and Astronomy.*

Assignment: Lindberg, ch. 8-9.

Week 13: April 15, 17

*Cosmology and Astronomy.*

Assignment: Grant, Sourcebook 67.4, 67.5, 68.1-3.

*Statics and Motion.*
Assignment: Lindberg, ch. 6-7.

Week 14-15: April 22, 24, 29

Statics and Motion.

Assignment: Grant, Sourcebook, 42, 43.

Statics and Motion.

Assignment: Grant, Sourcebook, 46, 48, 49, 50.1, 51.1.

Week 15: May 1

Why did medieval science decline after 1350?


ITEM DUE MAY 1: COMPLETED ANALYTICAL ESSAY

Special Note

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

Requirements

1. The most important requirement is, of course, the completion of the readings as assigned. Because the course will not be a traditional lecture, but rather lecture punctuated by discussion, it is imperative that everyone be able to contribute.

2. We will have two examinations, both of the take-home variety, one approximately in the middle of the semester, the other during finals week.

3. Students will complete a detailed analytical essay focused on a primary source text from the middle ages. During the second half of the course, you will gain some practice in doing this orally, since class time will be devoted to discussions of important texts in a variety of disciplines in the late middle ages. The analytical essay is designed to give you the opportunity to develop this kind of investigation on a topic of your own choice. The exercise will be spread over the entire semester. During the second week of the course, I want to meet with each of you to help identify an area of interest and to suggest places where you can begin looking for an appropriate source. By the end of the fourth week, I ask that you identify (in writing) the text you have selected as the focus of your review. By the end of the seventh week, you must provide a biographical sketch of the author of that text and a bibliography of materials that you will use.
in the analysis of your text. By the end of the tenth week, you must provide an outline of important questions or issues that the text addresses. On the last day of the course (May 1), you must submit the analytical essay. Each of these steps will be described in greater detail as we progress through the semester, and I will give you handouts of suggested materials that you can consult to find a primary source and for information on the author or related issues.

Academic Integrity

Please be aware of the seriousness of plagiarism. It is imperative that you acknowledge all sources. Plagiarism is defined as the unacknowledged use of specific ideas, arguments, or extended passages from any source. It is an extremely serious academic offense (to say nothing of the moral issues involved); you may wish to consult the Student Code for penalties. For your convenience, the Provost has created a comprehensive website on academic integrity at http://www.ou.edu/provost/pronew/content/integritymenu.html.

Just for Fun (and a Little Extra Credit)

The theme of Edward Grant’s final chapter is that the Middle Ages has suffered a ‘bad rap’ at the hands of modern popular (and often high) culture. And yet, the Middle Ages has remained a popular period for modern people, as evidenced by all of you who signed up for the course (see, I’m either naïve or an optimist); as Umberto Eco has wryly suggested, “It seems that people like the Middle Ages.” But of course liking something doesn’t necessarily mean understanding it, and this seems to be Grant’s point. As an extra-credit exercise, I ask you to analyze a substantial piece of modern exposition about the Middle Ages, on the basis of what you have come to learn about the period in this course. What is substantial?

• It might be a novel: two of the more popular choices from the past generation are Umberto Eco’s *Name of the Rose* and Michael Crichton’s *Timeline*, to say nothing of the whole series of mysteries by Ellis Peters on Brother Cadfael. But if you range a little farther afield, you will find other interesting works that purport to give insight into the Middle Ages, but may often tell us more about the modern world.
• It might be a film: both Eco’s and Crichton’s works have been turned into feature films. Classics are Ingmar Bergman’s “The Seventh Seal” (1957) or John Huston’s “A Walk with Love and Death” (1969). At the other end of the scale, of course, there is “Monte Python and the Holy Grail” (1975) or “A Knight’s Tale” (2001). You can find an extensive list of films in Kevin Harty’s *The Reel Middle Ages* (1999).
• It might be works of modern art: the German-American artist Kiki Smith includes emblems of Books of Hours and Bestiaries among the themes she uses; and while he is 18th-19th century, William Blake was well-known for his (then) modern portrayals of medieval themes.
• It might be a portfolio of modern advertisements: Xerox’s Brother Dominic (1975) who miraculously copies documents with his 9200, or AOL’s monks who have taken vows of silence, but communicate via Instant Messenger, or Pepsi’s alternating images of monks chanting and a rock band.

Whatever you choose, I ask that you produce a 3-page analytical essay that explores the way by which the modern medium has either captured an essential aspect of the Middle Ages, or as Eco has suggested, “reimagined” the Middle Ages in his (or her) own image. Essays will be due April 15. Those who submit an essay will be able to count it as 10% of the final grade; in other words, the three written exercises outlined above will constitute 90% rather than 100% of the total grade, thus distributing your effort and reducing the significance of each exercise. Only one such essay will be accepted from each student.

Contacting me…

Don’t hesitate: a question delayed is a problem created. My office is Old Chemistry 312; scheduled office
hours are Monday 11:00 – 12:00 and Wednesday 4:00 – 5:00, but you may call me (325-6490 or 325-2213) and arrange an appointment at most other hours during the week.

You can also send me email at slivesey@ou.edu.

I also don’t mind your calling me at home (at reasonable hours) 360-0282.