Syracuse University

College of Arts & Sciences

Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Medieval Renaissance Course   
Descriptions

Fall 2022

The following undergraduate and graduate courses may be of interest to students who want to learn about the Medieval-Renaissance period.

Program Information (web):

Information about the [Minor](http://coursecatalog.syr.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=15&poid=7601&_ga=2.123395267.995535484.1554218502-768664213.1502988891) in Medieval-Renaissance Studies   
and the [Medieval-Renaissance Program](http://thecollege.syr.edu/academics/interdisciplinary/Medieval-Renaissance.html)

**ENGLISH**

**ENG 113 British Literature, Beginnings to 1789**

[**Morgan Shaw**](https://thecollege.syr.edu/english-department/english-graduate-programs/ma-and-phd-students/morgan-shaw/)

**ENG 117 American Literature, Beginnings to 1865**

[Jeffrey Adams](https://thecollege.syr.edu/english-department/english-graduate-programs/ma-and-phd-students/jeffrey-adams/)

This is a course about the making of America. “America” (the idea—the concept of this particular place and what it symbolized) was produced in and through representations of the Western Hemisphere written both by people who lived and traveled here and by people who had never been here at all. This course will investigate how these representations did the work of “making” “America,” in ways that still influence our conceptions of this place. We will treat early American writing as an historical artifact, in which writers responded to and attempted to shape major events and issues in their historical context. We will cover over three hundred years, during which span of time various literary genres waxed and waned in their importance, moving especially from nonfictional poetry and prose in the early periods to the rise of the novel and other fictional forms in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This course will be discussion-based and will help you to develop and sharpen your skills of reading, analyzing, and writing about literature, as well as encouraging you to question and investigate the meaning of “America.”

**ENG 121 Introduction to Shakespeare**

[Dympna Callaghan](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/callaghan-dympna/)

This course offers an intensive introduction to the life and language of arguably the world’s greatest writer, William Shakespeare. This class will focus on two key issues: first, the relation between Shakespeare’s life and his work, and secondly, on the language of his plays and poems. We will become familiar with Shakespeare’s biography, and we will read one work from every dramatic genre in which he wrote—comedy, tragedy, history and romance—, and also perhaps some of the poetry. No previous familiarity with Shakespeare is required, but you do need to be committed to careful and sustained critical reading and analysis as well as active participation in Friday discussion sections. The main goals of this class are to help you read and enjoy Shakespeare, to foster rigorous intellectual engagement his work, and to allow you develop your own critical writing skills.

We will emphasize understanding and engagement with Shakespeare’s language rather than simply its “translation” or the rehearsal of plotlines. Since Shakespeare’s language is what most distinguishes him from his rivals and collaborators—as well as what most embeds him in his own historical moment—this class will take language to be the very heart of Shakespeare’s literary achievement rather than as an obstacle to be circumvented by the reader or audience.

ENG 174: World Literature, Beginnings to 1000

[Harvey Teres](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/teres-harvey/)

Gilgamesh, The Iliad, Ramayana, the Bible, Chinese and Japanese literature, the Quran, and 1001 Nights. Texts are explored in historical context, both past and present.

**ENG 325 History and Varieties of English**

[Patricia Moody](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/moody-patricia/)

Want to know what runes are really about? Be able to decipher literature written in Anglo-Saxon? Read some Chaucer in Middle English? Better understand Shakespeare? Know what IPA is and how it is used? Learn why and how English speakers across the US and globe sound so different from “us”?

This course aims to provide students with as much knowledge as possible, as interactively as possible, of fundamental linguistic concepts, the basic structures of the English language and representations of its history. Equally important, the course aims to develop critical awareness of contemporary language issues and the complex ways in which language and our ideas about language embed attitudes in popular culture (including Disney!) about issues such as gender, race, and class.

**HISTORY**

**HST 101 American History to 1865**

[Tessa](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Schmeller,_Mark/) Murphy; Susan Branson

This introductory course will survey American history from the pre-colonial era to the Civil War. We will approach this period of history through a discussion of three themes. The first covers the period from the founding down to the middle of the eighteenth century and focuses on how Europeans from a medieval culture became Americans. The second theme explores the political, social and economic impact the Revolution had upon American society. And finally, we will focus on the modernization of American society in the nineteenth century and how that modernization was a major factor in causing the sectional crisis.

**HST 111 Early Modern Europe, 1350-1815**



[Chris Kyle](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Kyle,_Chris_R_/)

This course covers the history of Europe from the Black Death, which marked the end of the Middle Ages, to the French Revolution – the beginning of the modern world. While it will cover the major events of the period – the Renaissance, the Reformation, the English, French and scientific revolutions, the rise and fall of Napoleon, the growth of the modern state – the emphasis will be on changes in the lives of ordinary men and women. There will be a midsemester, a final, and two short (c. 5 page) papers.  
(Counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.)

**HST 121 Global History to 1750**

[George Kallander](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Kallander,_George_L_/)

This course introduces students to global history from the thirteenth century through 1750 by focusing on social, economic, political, intellectual, and religious developments in major regions of the world: Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and the Americas. Beginning with the Mongol’s Eurasian empire, their transformation of the continent, and the spread of Islamic empires from Central Asia to the Atlantic, it traces the historical patterns of different world regions in the fifteenth century through the trans-Atlantic slave trade and European imperialism. What types of exchanges were facilitated by maritime trade and trade diasporas? How were human interactions with their environment circumscribed by climate change and disease? The latter part of the course looks at global connections and local particularities facilitated by the spread of Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism. Course themes include empire, disease, environment, slavery, religion, state-formation, and the rise of global trade. Topics will be covered thematically in general chronological order. Lectures will be supplemented by maps, visual materials, music, documentaries and films. All students are required to attend lectures and one discussion a week.

**HST 208/MES 208 Middle East Since the Rise of Islam**

[Amy Kallander](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Kallander,_Amy_Aisen/)

This course is an introductory survey of Middle East history from the rise of Islam in the seventh century to 1900. It discusses major empires in Middle East covering topics such as culture and society, science and technology, and women and politics. We will approach the Middle East through the theme of exchange, considering the connections between Southwest Asia and North Africa and neighboring regions, as the crossroads of Asia and Europe. Other prominent themes include multiculturalism, reform, and modernization.

**HST 213 Africa: Ancient Times to 1800**

[Martin Shanguhyia](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Shanguhyia,_Martin_S_/)

This course is a survey of pre-modern African history, presenting an overview of the main themes and chronology of the development of African culture and society. It provides an exposition of the regional and continental diversity and unity in African political, economic, social and cultural histories with special emphasis on major African civilizations, processes of state formation, encounters with the Euro-Asia world, Africa’s role in the international Trans-Saharan, Indian Ocean and Atlantic trades, ecology, and urbanization.

**HST 300: Renaissance to Revolution**

[Brian Brege](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/directory/brian-brege)

**[Collapse section HOA 312 - Art, Architecture and the Supernatural in 11th-12th Century Europe](javascript:submitAction_win0(document.win0,'SSR_CLSRSLT_WRK_GROUPBOX2$3');)HST 311 Medieval Civilization**

[Samantha Herrick](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Herrick,_Samantha_Kahn/)

This course explores European civilization from about 800 to about 1200. We will study kings, saints, and villains; faith and violence, love and hatred; ideas and beliefs. Our questions include: how did these people make sense of their world? How did they respond to crisis and opportunity? How did their civilization work? What was life like in medieval Europe? To answer these questions, we will mainly read primary sources that show us what medieval people themselves had to say about their world. Our goal will be to understand the past on its own terms. We will also emphasize the skills of close reading, strong argumentation, and clear expression of ideas.

**HST 320 Traditional China**

[Norman Kutcher](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Kutcher,_Norman/)

In this course we will survey Chinese history from earliest times to the end of the Ming dynasty in 1644. This seemingly remote time witnessed the formation of a complex government and society whose influence extended to much of East Asia. Ranging over the centuries, the class will explore some of the main currents in Chinese political, cultural, social, and intellectual history. These include: Confucianism, Buddhism, Daoism, and Legalism as competing and sometimes intersecting philosophies; the imperial system and major changes in its form over time; the changing roles of women in society; popular rebellion and heterodox religion; and the place of science and technology in the Chinese past.

HST 328 Ancient and Medieval India

[Radha Kumar](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/directory/radha-kumar)

HST 355 The Italian Renaissance

in Florence

HST 401 The Barbarian Middle Ages

[Albrecht Diem](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/directory/albrecht-diem)

HST 600 Whose Middle Ages?

[Samantha Herrick](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/hist/Herrick,_Samantha_Kahn/)

HST 735 Renaissance Italy

[Brian Brege](https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/directory/brian-brege)

HISTORY OF ART

**HOA 105: Arts and Ideas I**

[Sally](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/cornelison-sally-j/) Cornelison

Introductory overview of art and architecture from antiquity through the late medieval period that emphasizes how visual culture relates to historical and intellectual circumstances, society, technology, and diverse and changing identities.

**HOA 203: Italian Arts from Antiquity to Michelangelo**

**In Florence**

**HOA 300: Byzantine Art**

[**Glenn Peers**](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/peers-glenn/)

**HOA320: Italian Renaissance Art**

**In Florence**

**HOA 396/ARC 331 Art and Architecture of India**

[Romita Ray Kapoor](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/ray--kapoor-romita/)

Art and architecture of the Indian subcontinent from the Indus Valley Civilization to the present.

**HOA 389/ARC 435 Islamic Architecture**

[Susan Henderson](https://soa.syr.edu/live/profiles/37-susan-henderson)

Major building traditions of Islam in the Middle East, North Africa, Spain, Turkey, and India elucidated through in-depth examination of major works and principles of architectural, urban, and garden design. Additional work required of graduate students.

**HOA 400: Renaissance Architecture Italy: 1400-1600**

**In Florence**

**HOA 424: Sixteenth Century Italian Art and Identity**

**In Florence**

**HOA 439: French Architecture, Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries**

[**Jean-Francois Bédard**](https://soa.syr.edu/live/profiles/18-jean-francois-bedard)

**HOA 521: Michelangelo**

**In Florence**

**HOA 524: The Italian Renaissance Home**

[Sally](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/cornelison-sally-j/) Cornelison

**HOA 620: Renaissance Art**

**In Florence**

This seminar will explore the variety and richness of architecture, painting, sculpture, and decorative and ephemeral arts produced for Italian courts from c. 1500-1600. Its principal focus will be the Medici court in Florence, but others, such as the papal court in Rome and the courts of Mantua, Urbino, and Genoa, will be also considered. The seminar’s geographical focus is not limited to Italy, in that we will also examine works Italian artists produced for the courts of other European heads of state. Examples of such cross-cultural patronage and production are the paintings and sculptures Titian and Leone Leoni made for King Philip II of Spain, and the paintings, sculptures, and decorative arts Rosso Fiorentino and Benvenuto Cellini created for King Francis I of France.

**HOA 622: Seminar in Renaissance Arts and Ideas**

**In Florence**

**HOA 653 Art and Patronage in England, 1558-1702**

[Wayne Franits](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/franits-wayne/)

**HISTORY OF MUSIC**

**HOM/MHL 267 European Music before 1800**

[Amanda Eubanks Winkler](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/eubanks-winkler-amanda/)

Our culture has repurposed the music of the past to serve our own very modern needs. Star producers have transformed chant into New Age soundscapes and even electronic dance music. Bach has been used in multiple film soundtracks to signify evil genius. But what did these musics mean to people when they were originally composed? This course seeks to answer this question through extensive listening, targeted readings, musical analysis, and performance.

**ITALIAN**

**ITA 412: Boccaccio’s Decameron**

[Anne Leone](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/leone-anne/)

During the plague of 1348 in Florence, seven ladies and three young men seek refuge outside the city. For ten days, they tell stories to pass the time. Their pastime frames Giovanni Boccaccio’s *Decameron* – 100 novellas comprising a masterpiece of medieval literature, which influenced Chaucer, Shakespeare, Molière, Keats, Pasolini and many others. With particular attention to historical context and literary form, this course engages with the text through close readings (in Italian and English) as well as discussion (in Italian).

**LITERATURE**

**LIT 200: Afterlives: From Dante to The Good Place**

[Anne Leone](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/leone-anne/)

**Is there life after death? This course explores afterlives in literature, film and TV shows from the Middle Ages to the present, asking: what constitutes the afterlife? Must it be located beyond our world – like heaven, hell or purgatory? Or may it include afterlives in this world – belief in ghosts, or in reincarnation; pursuits of artistic or literary immortality; representations of the undead? And, what do ideas about afterlives give us: comfort; explanations for unknowable things; threats of punishment? Readings and discussions in English, with the option to read texts in the original language (Italian, Latin, English).**

**RELIGION**

**REL 156 Christianity**

[Marcia Robinson](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/robinson-marcia/)

This course covers Christianity’s institutional forms, sacred writings, ideas and beliefs, worship practices, cultural and creative expressions, and ethical and political roles in society, from antiquity to the present. In covering these things, this course basically asks what Christianity has to do with being human. That is, how does Christianity address human needs, concerns, and desires? What are some of the problems that Christianity has caused believers and non-believers? And, why, in spite of its problems, does it remain appealing and viable to a broad array of people over centuries and across cultures?

**REL/MES 165 Discovering Islam**

[Jeanette Jouili](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/jeanette-s-jouili/)/[Tazim Kassam](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/kassam-tazim-r/)

Islam is the world’s fastest growing religion. Like Judaism and Christianity, it is an Abrahamic monotheistic faith but it remains unknown and misunderstood especially in the West. Take this course to understand the Islamic tradition and discover its historical roots, core teachings, ritual and spiitual practices, and multicultural diversity.

**REL 322 Martyrs and Saints in Christian Tradition**

[Virginia Burrus](https://thecollege.syr.edu/people/faculty/burrus-virginia/)