

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES

**Medieval Studies 1022**

M.J. Toswell  
Mondays 5:30-8:30

2016-2017

**Academic Calendar Description**

This foundation course will over the year introduce civilization and thought in Europe and the Mediterranean between 400 and 1500, with emphasis on the medieval roots of many modern institutions and attitudes, including philosophy, technology, law, governance, courtly love and attitudes to women, warfare, art and archaeology, Christianity and Islam, literature, music and coinage.

Antirequisite(s): Medieval Studies 1025F/G, 1026F/G, Medieval Studies 1020E  
3 hours, 1.0 course

**Course Description**



This course introduces the Middle Ages, looking at the major developments of technology and ideas, of religion and the development of countries and nations. We will look at Charlemagne and Alfred, Eleanor of Aquitaine and Abbess Hild of Whitby, Bernard of Clairvaux and Pope Sylvester II at the turn of the first millennium. However, this year we will also focus on Robin Hood, thinking about the world in which he lived, the legal and social issues surrounding outlawry, and the reception history of his legend. We will think about how people lived in the time of Robin Hood, and what kinds of issues would have caused them to risk their lives or

decide to live quietly. We will briefly consider whether Robin Hood existed, and at more length think about why he has such iconic power.

The detailed syllabus will offer a set of websites for most classes, as well as an introductory paragraph or two situating the topic of the day. You should go through all of the websites and readings before the class, thinking about the material presented, taking notes as necessary, and engaging closely with the material. Classes will largely be run as discussions, not lectures, after a preliminary mini-lecture. This means that your engagement with the material, and your willingness to discuss it in class, will be a significant feature of the course. You will not be sufficiently engaged with the course if you just come to class and take notes from the class discussion, or check the course website for the class reviews which the teaching team will provide. At the same time, you should use your discretion; some of the websites are very full and detailed, with more detail than is necessary for you at this level. Others are quite short clips, and still others are extended but user-friendly videos. Some effort has been made to provide different kinds of material each week, to appeal to different learning preferences.

**Official Course Outline**

The course outline posted to the Sakai website will be the definitive version. This has all the required information from Senate and the home department for this course, as well as the detailed version of the course websites, the course syllabus, and assignments or tests.

## Required Textbooks

Robin McKinley, *The Outlaws of Sherwood* (New York: Ace, 1988)

*The Lais of Marie de France*. Trans Glyn S. Burgess and Keith Busby. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986).

Terry Jones and Alan Ereira, *Terry Jones' Medieval Lives* (St Ives: BBC Books, 2004).

## Course Evaluation

The final grade will be calculated as follows:



Mid-term 1 - November 7, 2016 20%

Mid-term 2 - February 6, 2017 25%

Learning Cell - early October 7.5%

Online Assignment - March 7.5%

Final Examination 40%

Participation Marks - Bonus up to 3%

The two mid-terms and the final examination will have short-answer and identification questions amounting to about 25% of the total, and short and long essay questions whose value will be about 75% of the total. Sample midterms and final examinations will be posted as study aids.

**Learning Cell and Online Assignment:** These short assignments will offer students significant choice, and an opportunity to perfect their arguments about one specific aspect of the Middle Ages.

**Participation:** These bonus marks will be awarded for evidence of having completed the class preparation, and for good contributions to class discussions. Good contributions need not be lengthy or frequent; they should however be respectful of the class environment, engaged with the material, investigative in nature, and relevant to the issue currently under discussion.

## Teaching Team

M.J. Toswell, Old Ivey 1G40

Office Hours: Mondays 10:30-12, Wednesdays 2:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Tutorial Assistant: tba

## Course Syllabus

September *Medieval Lives*; late antiquity and the beginning of the Middle Ages

October the rise of Christianity, the rise of Islam, material culture, Charlemagne

November monasticism and asceticism, life in the early medieval court and monastic establishments: worship, education, leisure, work, music, food

December: pilgrimage, celebrations

January medieval manuscripts and coins; the first millennium, the eleventh century

February the twelfth century: the *lais* of Marie de France, courtly love, the Crusades

March the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries: castles and conflicts; the fifteenth century, tournaments, the end of Byzantium, city-states, medieval glory and excess

April *The Outlaws of Sherwood*; medievalism