

Study Abroad Fall 2018
History 335/W
3 credits/35.75 contact hours
prereq: sophomore standing or above

Europe in the Early Middle Ages:
Anglo-Saxon England



This study abroad class examines the formative years of European societies (circa 300-1050) through a close examination of Anglo-Saxon history and literature on display at the British Library and British Museum in London. The purpose of this course is to develop your historical thinking skills through the study of primary source materials *as physical objects* (manuscripts and other artifacts).

Contrary to popular notions, the early medieval British Isles was not a unified or homogenous culture but included diverse influences from Iron Age Celts, Graeco-Roman cultures of the Mediterranean, Judeo-Christian traditions of the ancient Near East, and waves of Germanic and Scandinavian migrants. Moreover, the British Isles (Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and various English kingdoms) were connected through religion and trade with the Eurasian continent, including polities in western and eastern Europe, Byzantium, the Islamic world, and beyond.

The syllabus is designed around taking advantage of an extraordinary exhibit on Anglo-Saxon England at the British Library opening October 19, 2018. Professor Jolly will be collaborating with the curators to provide unique access to the exhibits and will introduce students to the ways in which artifacts—texts and objects—are used to construct, as well as deconstruct, historical narratives of the past. As a group, we will visit both the British Library and the British Museum, as well as take field trips to archaeological sites. Individual and teams of students will also be doing “treasure hunts” for evidence to analyze in their papers. Because of the emphasis on written artifacts in the British Library exhibit, we will practice calligraphy imitating the scripts used in the manuscripts we study.

The style of the course is both “writing intensive” and a “flipped classroom.”

Writing intensive means we will work on *writing to learn* as well as *learning to write*. We will use in-class and online writing exercises to help you develop your historical thinking, particularly the analysis of primary sources as evidence. The four papers “snowball” in length, complexity, and value as your skills develop. We will also workshop the papers, so that you receive peer and instructor feedback on your drafts and learn to revise your own work while evaluating others.

A “flipped classroom” means students must come prepared to engage with the materials and each other rather than listen to a lecture. Students are required to do the assigned readings before class, and bring thoughts, questions, and ideas to develop through in-class exercises and discussion. Quizzes on the textbook reading at the beginning of each section will ensure that students are absorbing the needed background information to engage in deeper analysis of primary sources in their papers.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to identify the context and significance of major historical persons, places, and events in European history circa 300-1050 in relation to Eurasia and the Mediterranean.

2. Students will demonstrate in their arguments an awareness of the way historical narratives, particularly that of the British Isles and the “Anglo-Saxons,” reflect cultural values on display in national monuments, museums, and archives.

3. Students will be able to analyze with historical empathy the content and context of a primary source as a physical object (text or artifact) and appropriately use it as evidence, taking into account different interpretations.

4. Students will develop the ability to write a concise analytic history essay: clear thesis in the introduction indicating the line of argument; supporting arguments stated in the first sentence of paragraphs followed by appropriate evidence and examples; and a conclusion that ties the argument together with a larger set of historical issues.

Books for purchase

Barbara H. Rosenwein, *A Short History of the Middle Ages, Volume I: From c.300 to c.1150* (University of Toronto Press, 2014). Available in print or as an ebook. See online resources at <http://www.utphistorymatters.com/a-short-history-of-the-middle-ages-fourth-edition-spring-2014/>

John Blair, *The Anglo-Saxon Age: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2000). Available in print (small, slim paperback) or as an ebook.

Beowulf: An Illustrated Edition, trans. Seamus Heaney with introduction by John D. Niles (Norton, 2007). Print only, with color images.

Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, ed. and trans. Judith McClure and Roger Collins (Oxford University Press, 1994). Available in print or as an ebook.

Alfred the Great, ed. and trans. Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (Penguin, 1983). Available in print or as an ebook.

Materials: calligraphy pens and paper

Online Resources:

[Internet Medieval Sourcebook](#) (IMS)

[Electronic Sawyer](#) (Anglo-Saxon Charters)

[Online Medieval and Classical Library](#) (OMACL)

[Prospography of Anglo-Saxon England](#) (PASE)

[Domesday Book](#) (DB)

[Anglo-Saxon Chronicle](#) (ASC)

Grading	
10% Paper 1	A+ 97-100
15% Paper 2	A 93-96.9
20% Paper 3	A- 90-92.9
25% Paper 4	B+ 87-89.9
20% 4 quizzes	B 83-86.9
	B- 80-82.9
	C+ 77-79.9
	C 73-76.9
	C- 70-72.9
	D+ 67-69.9
	D 63-66.9
Grades are calculated on a 100 point scale:	D- 60-62.9
	F 0-59

Papers

I look for three things in your essays:

- 1) clear thesis and argumentation, indicated in the introduction and in the organization of the paper;
- 2) adept analysis of sources and other information as evidence or examples; and
- 3) vigorous, readable prose style free of grammar and syntax errors.

These three standards are interrelated, in part because developing a historical argument takes a lot of thought and much rewriting to make it clear. First drafts are pretty obvious in being stream of consciousness and uncertain: you start with some vague ideas or questions, follow several paths in the middle, and then end up with a clear thesis only in the last paragraph. Redrafting means starting from that conclusion as your introduction and marshaling your sub-arguments systematically under the umbrella of that main thesis. Arguments should then govern the organization of your paper, leading off each paragraph. Further, arguments are only as good as the evidence or examples you cite to support them, normally in the body of the paragraph. Rewriting also involves the careful choice of words, especially active verbs that explain why something is significant.

The better the draft you post for comments, the better the feedback you will receive, and the greater potential for improving the paper with a higher grade. Comments given on drafts deal with the most obvious issues (and not all of the finer points) to take the paper to the next level, but just fixing those doesn't make it "an A" if the paper starts out at a low level of analysis.

Paper drafts should be a complete and full paper, not some thoughts or just an introduction). The draft should be posted on Laulima as a GoogleDoc by noon. Students will be assigned two papers to review. The instructor will give participation credit to the peer reviewers as well as make suggestions for revisions.

Final papers should be submitted by noon of the due date, into your Laulima Dropbox. Papers should be double-spaced, 12-point font. Citations should use footnotes or endnotes following the Chicago Manual of Style for Humanities/History.

Quizzes

The four quizzes in weeks 1, 4, 6, and 9 are a basic check on the background information students should be learning from the four chapters assigned in the textbook, *A Short History of the Middle Ages*. Quiz questions are drawn from the textbook's online guide.

Participation

Participation points for class discussion and peer review are credited to your paper and quiz grades in each section so that you get feedback along the way and the participation grade is less arbitrary and subjective.

A lively class discussion depends on students doing the assigned reading or viewing for each day. Participation includes listening well, asking questions, and offering different points of view.

Student peer review comments should be specific and helpfully critical. Avoid the effusive praise ("I love this!") or the vague ("I don't get this!"). Instead, consider what is strong and what is weak: "the thesis gets at the central point...but the sentence needs a stronger verb to explain why this occurs" or "have you considered instead or in addition...".

Course Outline

H=*A Short History of the Middle Ages* B=Blair, *Anglo-Saxon Age*
Bede, EH=*Ecclesiastical History* ASC=Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (online)
BM=British Museum BL=British Library

[dep. Mon. Sep. 10, arrive Sep. 12; orientation Sep. 13-15; classes begin Sep. 24]
Contact hours (35.75): This class meets 75 minutes per week at Roehampton and two hours per week at the British Library, British Museum, or on field trip.

Introductions Sep. 16-22

Using the BL and BM, online catalogs

Preview textbooks

Field Trip: Sutton Hoo (for week 3, but the site closes Sept 30 for renovation)

Week 1 09/24: Roman World Transformed c. 300-c. 600

Reading: H 1 (quiz)

Online: Tacitus, Augustine, Boethius, Pope Gregory Life of Benedict, Benedictine Rule

BM: Roman Room 70, Roman Britain Room 49, Britain and Europe Room 50

Calligraphy: Uncial

Week 2 10/01: Romano-Celtic Britain and English Settlements

Reading: B 1; Bede, EH Book 1

Online: Gildas, ASC

BL: Bede manuscripts

Week 3 10/08: Beowulf and Sutton Hoo

Reading: *Beowulf*

BM: Sutton Hoo Room 41

Paper 1 Workshop

Paper 1 (2-3 pages): *Choose one artifact or text extract and analyze it as a piece of evidence: what is its historical context as an object (origin, transmission, current condition), and its significance for understanding the period circa 300-600 in Europe? Consider how textbooks or catalogs we referenced use it to support a historical narrative.*

Students must sign up by the end of Week 2 so that not everyone is doing the same item.

Student peer review online conducted in week 3.

Final draft of paper due in week 4.

Week 4 10/15: Emergence of Sibling Cultures c. 600-c. 750

Reading: H 2 (quiz); B 2-4

BM: Islamic World Room 34; Sutton Hoo Room 41; King Offa of Mercia's Dinar coin

Calligraphy: Majuscule

Week 5 10/22 (Reading Week) The Seventh Century: Bede's World

Reading: Bede EH Books II-V

Online: Gododdin of Aneurin; Adomnan's Life of Columba, Æthelbert's Law code; Æthelbald Mercian charters, Alcuin of York

BL: Lindisfarne Gospels, Cuthbert, and other Gospel books; [Cerne, Nunnaminster]

Field Trip (5 days): Bede's World, Lindisfarne, Ruthwell or York

Paper 2 Workshop

Paper 2 (3-5 pages): *Place a historical artifact (text, object, person, or event) in its physical location: how does the landscape shape the history of the object or writer? Consider the gap between the time when the events take place and the date of the surviving artifact.*

Choose your artifact by the end of Week 5.

We will workshop the paper drafts while traveling.

Final paper due week 7

Week 6 10/29: Creating New Identities c. 750-c. 900

Reading: H 3 (quiz)

BM: Islamic World Room 34; Sutton Hoo Room 41 or option day trip: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Calligraphy: Minuscule

Week 7 11/05: Vikings and Wessex

Reading: B 5; *Alfred the Great*

BL: ASC; Regularis Concordia, New Minster Charter, Ælfric manuscripts

Week 8 11/12: Crowning a King

Field Trip (day): Winchester

Paper 3 Workshop

Paper 3 (5-7 pages): *Pick an Anglo-Saxon king from circa 700-975: What physical evidence (texts, artifacts, artwork, architecture) testifies to the character and significance of their kingship and through whose eyes? Put your king and artifacts in both a local context (the British Isles) and the larger European and Mediterranean world.*

Choose your king by the end of week 7.

Drafts undergo peer review in week 8.

Final papers due Week 11

Week 9 11/19: Political Communities Reordered c. 900-c. 1050

Reading: H 4 (quiz)

BM: Medieval Europe Room 40

Calligraphy: Minuscule

Week 10 11/26: Late Anglo-Saxon England

Reading: B 6-7

Online: medical remedies, Wulfstan *Sermo Lupi*, *Battle of Maldon*, Charters

BL: Wulfstan, Laws of Æthelred and Cnut; Tribal Hidage; Byrhtferth's Manual; *Lacnunga* and *Leechbook*

Week 11 12/03: Domesday?

Online: Domesday Book, Bayeux Tapestry

Field Trip (two day): Canterbury and Battle Abbey in Hastings

Week 12 12/10: Closing

Paper 4 Workshop

Paper 4 (7-10 pages): *Compare the British Isles of circa 500 to that of 1000, in the context of changes across Europe and the Mediterranean: how would you narrate the changes and continuities in this history using artifacts as examples and evidence? Feel free to imagine yourself as a) a tour guide; b) explaining to family or friends back home what you learned; or c) designing a webpage.*

Drafts due at the beginning of the week.

Final papers due at the end of the week.