COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course begins with the Franks who, under the leadership of Clovis, managed to blend their barbarian culture with that of Late Roman Christianity to produce the nation we have come to know as France. Next we move to the Merovingians (the “Long-Haired Kings”) and the world of Charlemagne, examining the process of reform that marked the Carolingian Renaissance and the decline that followed the Viking invasions. The Capetian dynasty (987-1328) becomes the focus of the central portion of the course. We look at expanding horizons, the creation of Normandy, an urban explosion, the rise of universities, and cultural and social changes in the High Middle Ages, culminating in the holiness of Louis IX and the arrogance of his grandson Philip the Fair. With the coming to power of the Valois dynasty (1328-1498), we trace a pattern of decline and disaster on all fronts. Finally, we examine the “militant miracle” of Joan of Arc and the process of recovery that set France on the road to royal absolutism.

REQUIRED TEXTS (in order of use):

Gregory of Tours. The History of the Franks
Einhard and Notker the Stammerer. Two Lives of Charlemagne
Abelard. The Letters of Abelard and Heloise
Archambault, A Monk’s Confession
Galbert of Bruges. The Murder of Charles the Good
Joinville and Villehardouin. Chronicles of the Crusades
Froissart. Chronicles
Regine Pernoud. Joan of Arc: By Herself and Her Witnesses

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

*Some classes will be conducted in lecture format, using PowerPoint, but others will involve a more general discussion of the assigned topic. All students will be expected to contribute to these discussion sessions and to demonstrate that they have read assigned materials. I also strongly recommend that you make arrangements to come in to see me in my office at least once during the semester, preferably early in the term. I can
do a better job of guiding the class if I know you as individuals and have a chance to explore your personal interests and concerns. If our schedules conflict, I will be happy to set up appointments for times before or after my regular hours.

*Members of the class should familiarize themselves with the resources available to them electronically. This class has its own website, located at: http://webct.cc.rhodes.edu. Here you will find a list of Rhodes courses. Click on the title of this course and enter your 5-letter Rhodes ID for both your name and your password. (After the drop/add period, you will be able to change your password to reflect the one assigned to you by the computer center.) On the website you will find a copy of this syllabus, a Rhodes calendar, review materials, writing guides, and additional materials that will make your coursework more meaningful. A bulletin board will serve as a 24 hour way for members of the class to communicate with me and with each other.

*Each student in the class will be responsible for leading one class session based on an assigned text that supplements the reading done by the entire class. In addition, you will be expected to provide a brief summary of the book under discussion, which will then be posted to the class distribution list. Topics and books are listed below in the day-by-day class schedule. Performance as discussion leader will count for 20% of the course grade.

*The writing requirement will be a research paper, approximately 15-20 pages long, on some aspect of the development of medieval France. You will find a list of suggested subjects attached to this syllabus. The paper should include analysis of primary source material, if possible, as well as an extensive bibliography of secondary works. The purpose of your research is not merely to collect information; you must devote much of your effort to interpreting it. For example, you should not simply write a paper on medieval women, describing their status and experiences. Your paper should discuss, instead, why their status changed, for better or worse, over the entire period under investigation. The research project is to be an ongoing one, with three progress reports. Your research efforts and the finished project will make up 25% of the course grade.

*There will be two exams during the semester: a midterm and a final exam that will cover the entire course. All exams will be in essay format, and students will be expected to include material gathered from assigned reading and from lecture and discussion sessions. Essays will be graded on both content and composition.

*Attendance is mandatory; if you must miss class because of illness, please notify me immediately, either by phone or by e-mail. Final grades will reflect performance, participation and attendance. You may assume that your final grade in this class will be no higher than the percentage of classes you attend. (This class meets 42 times. If you miss 4 classes, your attendance is 90%, which would be an A-) Assuming that your attendance is regular, final grades will be based on the following scale:
Midterm exam.................................................20%
Discussion leader.............................................20%
Research paper................................................25%
Class participation..........................................15%
Final Exam....................................................20%

DAILY ASSIGNMENTS

DATE:
TOPIC:
ASSIGNMENTS:

Aug. 23
Introduction to Class

Aug. 25
Theories of History

Aug. 28
Lecture: “Gallia Romana”
Gregory of Tours:
1:28-48

Aug. 30
Lecture: “Clovis as the Master Blender”
Gregory of Tours: 2 (all)

Sept. 1
Lecture: “The Long-Haired Kings”
Gregory of Tours:
4: 1,4,11,19,26-28, 35  6, 49;
Sept. 6
Discussion: “Gallia Christiana”
Leader__________________;
based on Severus Sulpicius, The Life of Martin, Bishop of Tours

Sept. 8
Discussion: “Politics Under the Merovingian Kings”
Leader__________________;
based on:
*The Laws of the Salian Franks, trans., K. F. Drew

Gregory of Tours:
6: 10, 27, 29, 32, 45-6;
7: 4-5, 12-13, 15, 19, 20, 24, 42, 47;
8: 15-16, 28-29, 33, 40

Sept. 11
Discussion: “Society Under the Merovingian Kings”
Leader__________________;
based on:
*Suzanne Wemple, Women in Frankish Society

Gregory of Tours:
9: 2, 9, 18-19, 30, 34, 39-43;
10: 5, 9, 15-17, 20, 27, 30-31

Sept. 13
Lecture: “The Dynamics of Merovingian Decadence”

Sept. 15
Lecture: “The Carolingians Cut a Deal”
Sept. 18
Lecture: “Carolingian Reforms”
Einhard, The Life of Charlemagne

Sept. 20
Discussion: “Society Under the Carolingians”
Leader_____________________; based on:
*Pierre Riché, Daily Life in the Age of Charlemagne

Sept. 22
Lecture: “Grandeur Gives Way to Decline”
Notker the Stammerer, Charlemagne

First progress report due; choose your specific topic.

Sept. 25
Lecture: “The Capetians as an Answer to the Viking Threat”
Andreas Capellanus, The Art of Courtly Love; selection available on class website.

Sept. 27
Discussion: “A New Dynasty Adapts to Its Environment”
Leader_____________________
based on:
*Elizabeth Hallam, Capetian France, 987–1328

Sept. 29
Discussion: “Do the Capetians Have a Political Policy?”
Leader_____________________
based on:
*J. R. Strayer, On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State
Oct. 2
MIDTERM EXAM

Oct. 4
Lecture: “Capetian France in the High Middle Ages”
The Letters of Abelard and Heloise

Oct. 6
Discussion: “Cultural Attitudes During the Twelfth-Century Renaissance”
Leader_____________________; based on:
*Georges Duby, The Chivalrous Society

Oct. 9
Lecture: “The Role of Religion”
Archembault, A Monk’s Confession

Oct. 11
Discussion: “Religion Meets Art” Leader_____________________; based on:
*Abbot Suger, On the Abbey Church of St. Denis and Its Art Treasures

Oct. 13
Lecture: “The Urban Explosion”
Galbert of Bruges, The Murder of Charles the Good

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*********FALL BREAK********

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Oct. 18
Discussion: “Flanders As the Key to Medieval Economy”
Leader:_____________________
based on:
*David Nicholas, Medieval Flanders

Oct. 20
Discussion: “Social Life in the High Middle Ages”
Leader_____________________
based on:
*Joan Evans, Life in Medieval France

Oct. 23
Lecture: “The Road to the Holy Land”
Villehardouin, The Conquest of Constantinople

Second progress report due; a preliminary 5-item bibliography, including at least one primary source and 1 journal article

Oct. 25
Discussion: “The Crusade in the Eyes of the Church”
Leader_____________________
based on:
Steven Runciman, The First Crusade

Oct. 27
Discussion: “The Crusade in the Eyes of Arabs and Jews”
Leader_____________________

Oct. 30
Lecture: “The Extremes of Capetian Monarchy: sanctitas and hubris”
Joinville, The Life of St. Louis

Nov. 1
Discussion: “The Holiness of St. Louis”
Leader___________________

based on:
*R. C. Finucane, Soldiers of the Faith

Nov. 3
Lecture: “The Conflict Between Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII
Froissart, Chronicles, Bks. 1 and 2

Nov. 6
Discussion: “The Collapse of Papal Monarchy”
Leader___________________

based on”
Walter Ullmann, The Origins of the Great Schism

Nov. 8
Lecture: “The Great Schism and the Cure of Conciliarism”

Nov. 10
Discussion: “Cultural Changes: Losing the Old or Gaining the New?”
Leader___________________
based on:
*J. Huizinga, the Waning of the Middle Ages

Nov. 13
Lecture: “The Causes of The Hundred Years’ War”
Froissart, Chronicles, Bks. 3 4.

Third progress report due: Thesis Statement. Also, your last chance to give me a rough draft of your paper.

Nov. 15
Discussion: “The Decisive Battles of the Hundred Years’ War”
Leader___________________________
based on:
*Christopher Hibbert, Agincourt

Nov. 17
Lecture: “The Social and Economic Results of the Hundred Years’ War”

Nov. 20
Lecture: “The Young Joan of Arc and Her Mystical Experiences”

*** THANKSGIVING BREAK ***
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Nov. 27

Lecture: “The Political Impact of Joan of Arc”

Papers Due!
Regine Pernoud: Joan of Arc, By Herself and Her Witnesses

Nov. 29
Discussion: “Joan As the Savior of France”
Leader_____________________
based on:
*Marina Warner, Joan of Arc: The Image of Female Heroism

Dec. 1

Lecture: “The Trial and Martyrdom of Joan”

Dec. 4
Lecture: “France on the Brink of a New Age of Absolutism”

Dec. 6
A day for review and reflection

Dec. 9
SUGGESTED PAPER TOPICS

Your term paper (approximately 15-20 pages) must cover the span of French history that we study in this course.

Impersonal Forces at Work:
- geography
- climate change
- disease
- disasters such as floods, fires, and famines
- invasions

The Formation of Institutions:
- monarchy
- papacy
- monasticism
- education
- trade and industry

The Changing Status of Groups of People:
- kings
- queens
- bishops
- teachers
- monks
- dukes
- mystics
- nuns
- theologians
- children
- peasants
- traders
- travellers
SUGGESTED ADDITIONAL READINGS

For those looking for additional information, I recommend the following books, almost all of which are available either in my office or in the library:

Fernand Braudel, The Identity of France
Patrick Geary, Before France and Germany
Peter Lasko, The Kingdom of the Franks
Jacques Boussard, The Civilization of Charlemagne
Suger, Life of Louis the Fat
Robert Fawtier, The Capetian Kings of France
C. H. Haskins, The Normans in European History
Georges Duby, Medieval Marriage: Two Models from 12th-century France
Amy Kelly, Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings
Georges Duby, The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined
Sidney Painter, French Chivalry
Eudes Rigaud, The Register of Eudes of Rouen
Charles T. Wood, Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII
Desmond Seward, The Hundred Years’ War
Edward James, Origins of France
Edward James, The Franks
Pierre Riché, The Carolingians
Rosamond McKitterick, Frankish Kingdoms
Marc Bloch, Feudal Society.
Georges Duby, The Knight, the Lady and the Priest
Tom Head and Richard Landes, The Peace of God
Susan Reynolds, Feiefs and Vassals
R. H. Hilton, English and French Towns in Feudal Society
Jean Dunbabin, France in the Making, 843-1180
Ian Wood, The Merovingian Kingdoms, 450-751
Fouracre and Gerberding, Late Merovingian France
Thomas Evergates, Feudal Society in Medieval France: Documents
Anne Curry, The Hundred Years War

Internet Texts

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gregtours1.html>
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/einhard1.html>
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/abelard-histcal.html>
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/villehardouin.html>
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/froissart-full.html>