

**Department of History,
University of Manitoba
Fall-Winter 2013-14
Hist. 2930 W**

History of the British Isles, 412-1485

Instructor: Dr. Paul Jenkins

Time: Tues/Thurs. 8:30-9:45 am

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Location: 313 Tier

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10-11:00 am, or by appointment.

Course description: Covering the period between the withdrawal of the Roman Empire and the rise of the Tudors, this class charts the dramatic course of religious, political, and cultural events that helped shape the British Isles into the four nations we recognize today: England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales. Britain's diverse cultural, racial, and national composition has always made its history contentious and complex, and never, perhaps, was this more true than during the medieval era, when the seas acted as highways that repeatedly brought new and competing peoples to its shores. The shadowy Picts, the Celtic Irish, Scots, Welsh, and Cornish, the Anglo-Saxons, Vikings, and Normans all left their mark on the history of medieval Britain. This course will explore the broad contours of their various influences. Particular attention will be focused on the crucial development of Christianity across the Isles, the nature and character of medieval life, social and political organization, and evolving conceptions of lordship and kingship. Along the way we will look at the powerful and influential role of the Vikings, the emergence of the Anglo-Saxons and Scots, the fabled exploits of St. Patrick, the conquest of the Normans, the Crusades, the real Macbeth and the real William Wallace, the Wars of the Roses, and the rise of one of the most famous European dynasties, the Tudors.

Readings: The assigned readings are an essential part of this course. They are intended to complement the lectures and written assignments, as well as help you develop critical reading skills. It should be noted, however, that they serve as an additional source of information and will often provide different interpretations of our subject than those provided in the lectures. You skip readings (and lectures) at your peril. On examinations you are responsible for all the material covered in the readings and lectures. The required books are available in the University Book Store.

Required Texts:

Edward James, *Britain in the First Millennium: From Romans to Normans* (2000).
R.R. Davies, *The First English Empire: Power and Identities in the British Isles, 1093-1343* (2000).

Beowulf, trans Roy Liuzza.

Sir Walter Scot, *Ivanhoe*.

In addition to the above books, a selection of shorter readings will be periodically assigned throughout the term.

Evaluations and Assignments:

Participation & class assignments (5%)

This portion of your grade is a cumulative one made by your participation in informal class discussions, as well as a number of short and similarly informal assignments designed to help you master course material, while also developing valuable analytical and writing skills. They will be periodically assigned throughout the semester. Five percent might seem insignificant, but it can make a real difference. It is an easy way to boost your mark.

Midterm (20%) in class **November 7**

This exam will be comprised of a combination of short answer, map questions, and shorter essay style questions.

Beowulf Essay (1,500 words), (20%), due in class **November 21**

Anyone who studies narrative accounts of the medieval world will quickly discover how difficult it is to clearly distinguish between poetry and history in the age's representations of the past. In this assignment you will be asked to examine the value of *Beowulf* as an historical source.

Research Essay (2,000 words), (25%), due in class **April 8**

This assignment can be on any topic covered in this course. Your essay must draw on both primary and secondary sources and present a clear, well-organized, and persuasive analysis of the topic. All sources must be cited properly using footnotes or endnotes and listed in a formal bibliography. Your essay will be evaluated on the strength of its research, analysis, and composition. Spelling, grammar, cogency and style will all be taken into consideration. So too, will the format of your citations and bibliography.

Final Examination held during University Exam Period, (30%), **TBA**.

Students are responsible for completing assignments on time. Extensions will only be granted 48 hours prior to the due date, except in exceptional circumstances. Late papers will be penalized 2% per day, including weekends. No allowance will be given for technical difficulties. Back up your work often.

The format of the in-term test and final examination will be clearly explained in class. Since this is a course that meets the University Senate's "W" requirement, students must complete all essay assignments with a passing grade to pass the course.

If you wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the term work has been made available to them. Uncollected term work will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and will be subject to confidential destruction.

Grade Scale:

A+	90-100%, Exceptional	C+	65-69%, Satisfactory
A	80-90%, Excellent	C	60-64%, Adequate
B+	75-79%, Very Good	D	50-59%, Marginal
B	70-74%, Good	F	49% or below, Failing

Evaluative feedback will be provided prior to the Voluntary Withdrawal deadline of March 19, 2014.

A note on plagiarism: The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism on a written assignment is a grade of F on the paper and a final grade of F (DISC) (for Disciplinary Action) for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as purchase of an essay and repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five (5) years from registration in courses taught in a particular department/program in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty. The Faculty also reserves the right to submit student work that is suspected of being plagiarized to Internet sites designed to detect plagiarism or to other experts for authentication.

The common penalty in Arts for academic dishonesty on a test or examination is F for the paper, F (DISC) for the course, and a one-year suspension from courses acceptable for credit in the Faculty. For more serious acts of academic dishonesty on a test or examination, such as repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five years from registration in courses taught in a particular department or program in Arts or from all courses taught in or accepted for credit by this Faculty.

A note on technology: Technology can be a powerful tool, but it can also be distracting. I welcome the use of computers for taking notes during class. However, this is not license to surf the Internet or chat with your friends on Facebook or similar social media. Also, cell phones, iPods, and other such personal devices must be turned off or silenced for the duration of the class.

Lectures & Themes

First Term

- 1 Introduction: Medieval Britain and All That
- 2 Edge of Empire: Rome and the Britons
- 3 Imperial Possession: Britain in the Roman Empire
- 4 The Peoples and Cultures of Britain
- 5 After Rome: Life Among the Ruins
- 6 The Migration Period
- 7 New Order: The Post-Roman Kingdoms
- 8 Missionaries and Converts
- 9 Renewed Stability: Christianity and the West Saxon Kings
- 10 Water World: Viking Raiders
- 11 Norse and Natives: Conquest and Integration
- 12 Clerics, Monks, and the Laity
- 13 Living and Dying in Early Medieval Britain: The 5th to 11th Century

Second Term

- 1 The French Connection: The Normans
- 2 The 1070s
- 3 Empires, Continental and British: The Norman and Angevin Kings
- 4 The Aristocratic Nexus
- 5 The British Isles in an Age of War
- 6 The Medieval Church
- 7 Famine and Plague
- 8 The Peasants' Revolt
- 9 Water World II: Scotland's Western Seaboard
- 10 Medieval Ireland: From Norman Settlement to Gaelic Revival
- 11 Wars of the Roses
- 12 The Tudors