

# ARTH 334: Western Medieval Art

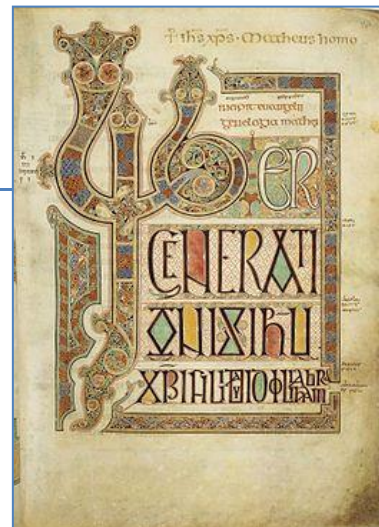
---

Instructor: Laura McCloskey

Term: Fall 2018

Email: [lmcclosk@gmu.edu](mailto:lmcclosk@gmu.edu)

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30-11:30am,  
ROB B 373A or by appointment



## Description and Goals

---

This course explores western medieval art from roughly the fall of the Roman Empire to the beginning of the Gothic period. We will focus specifically on three key regions of artistic development during this period: France, Ireland, and Britain. While seemingly disparate in geographic location, these three regions represented the unification and innovation of European continental and Insular art during the Middle Ages. Due to extensive trade routes stretching back to the Roman period and continued collaboration from the early Christian, Norman, and Gothic periods, these areas had a shared religious and social history that allowed for a unique synthesis of artistic styles. We begin the course with an overview of the Middle Ages, broadly, and then focus our attention on the development of Christianity in France: exploring the world of the Carolingians and celebrating the architectural achievements of Gothic cathedrals. Next we move to Ireland and discover the links between pre-Christian and Christian art styles and motifs in manuscript illumination via the *Book of Kells*. Finally, we land in Britain and reflect on the Irish, French, and native artistic styles that lead to cathedral building and the creation of the *Lindisfarne Gospels*. Our course ends with a discussion of the transfer and translation of Christianity, artistic styles, and socio-political influence between the continental European and Insular realms.

This course meets the General Education Fine Arts requirement.

## Texts and Readings

---

There are three required texts for our course as well as numerous online articles and book chapters available on our Blackboard page.

### REQUIRED:

- 1) Luttkhuizen, Henry and Dorothy Verkerk. *Snyder's Medieval Art*. Second Edition. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2006. ISBN 0-13-192970-4
- 2) Rosenwein, Barbara. *Reading the Middle Ages: Sources from Europe, Byzantium, and the Islamic World*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014. ISBN 978-1-4426-0602-9.
- 3) Kessler, Herbert. *Seeing Medieval Art*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011. ISBN 978-1-55111-535-1

## Assignments

---

The following assignments will be due throughout the course. The reflections and discussions constitute your attendance and class participation grades: these assignments allow you to interact with your fellow classmates and make deep connections with the course content. I will provide detailed personalized feedback to your quizzes and papers.

### Here is how your grade will be calculated:

Quizzes- 20% (2 quizzes x 10% each)

Final exam- 20%

In-class reflections- 10% (5 posts x 2% each)

Research paper - 20%

In-class discussions- 10% (5 discussions x 2% each)

Online Introduction post- 5%

Optional extra credit assignment- 5%

Research Paper Abstract - 15%

### **Introductory Post**

For your introductory post, post a paragraph about yourself in the appropriate forum on our discussion board. You may want to include information such as your year at Mason (freshman, sophomore, etc.), major, future goals, and why you are interested in our course.

### **Research Paper and Abstract**

For the research paper you will need to develop and execute an original thesis proposal related to one of the three geographic regions studied in our class. You may choose to research an art object, stylistic period, monument, or religious building such as a cathedral or monastic complex. Your paper should provide a detailed analysis of your chosen subject and clearly demonstrate how your topic is representative of medieval art. Further details will be provided in the coming weeks. Your paper should be 8-10 pages in length, 12 point font, double-spaced. You should include at least five scholarly sources. The abstract will be due roughly mid-way through the semester and provides a chance for detailed feedback on your proposed topic.

### **Quizzes**

There will be two quizzes: one quiz midway through the class and one before the final exam to make sure you are following the chronology, terms, and themes of the course. Quizzes will consist of ten multiple choice questions and two short answer responses. I often also include a vocabulary matching section or map.

### **Final Exam**

The exam will be a combination of multiple choice questions, term matching, and essays. You **may not** consult notes, books, classmates, the Internet, etc.

### **In-Class Reflection Assignments**

Prompts for individual comments related to the previous or current week's lecture, readings, or course progress will be provided in class each week listed on the syllabus. You must complete all 5 reflections to receive full grade points for this category. Reflections should be at least one paragraph in length (5-7 well-planned, cohesive sentences) and clearly demonstrate to me that you are actively engaging with course lectures, themes, and readings.

### **Discussion Participation**

Prompts for discussions will be provided each week listed in the syllabus. The topics in our course build on each other; taking content week-by-week helps you break it into manageable chunks. There is a good deal of complicated vocabulary in the course – engaging with others while practicing the terms is a great way to build fluency. (It also ensures that you're on target for what will be tested on the quizzes and final.)

### **Late Work**

- Any paper abstracts received after the due date will incur a 10% penalty for each day it is late.
- Discussions and Reflections must be completed in class. You will not earn points if you are absent.
- Quizzes can only be completed on the dates assigned. If you will be absent from a quiz please let me know beforehand so that we can reschedule a time for you to complete the assessment.
- Your research paper can be submitted for full points any time until midnight on Saturday, December 8. No papers will be accepted after that date.
- The final exam will take place according to the University calendar. Extensions will only be granted if you have a legitimate and documentable excuse (doctor note, note from an employer, etc.).

## ***Grading***

---

I use a 100 total point system for the entire semester.

*Gentle warning:* It is easy to let things slip. I strongly urge you to make a solid plan for each week and follow it to the best of your ability.

### **Grading Scale**

A+ = 101 and above  
A = 95-100  
A- = 91-94

B+ = 87-90  
B = 84-86  
B- = 81-83

C+ = 77-80  
C = 73-76  
C- = 69-72

D = 65-68  
F = 64 and below

IN = incomplete (You must request  
an IN no later than two weeks  
before the end of the semester and

be passing the course at the time of  
your request; deadlines for IN work  
follow the Registrar's calendar.)

### **Extra Credit**

The Washington D.C area is host to numerous Irish festivals and events throughout the year. If you attend one of these events during the fall semester, please write a review of the event and discuss any cultural or historical links you noted that are relevant to the themes of the course. Please include your ticket or a program as proof of your attendance. Additional on-campus self-enrichment opportunities are also provided on our Blackboard page. You are welcome to find other Ireland-related events on your own; please email me for approval. Your experience does not have to be limited to the Medieval period.

Alternately, you may attend an on-campus Learning Services Workshop at any point during the semester.

This review is due by the last day of class and should be 1-2 pages in length.

What I need in your synopsis:

- What did you do/see and when was it?
- How was it related to images, ideas, or themes we have discussed? OR, if you attended a campus event, what was your impression of the event?
- What are your "take-aways" from the event - how has it impacted you?

### **Class Policies**

---

**Participation/Attendance-** I have built in numerous participation checkpoints for you in the curriculum: it shows me that you are following the course themes and truly comprehending material. The Mason online catalog states: "Students are expected to attend class periods of the courses for which they register. In-class participation is important not only to the individual student, but also the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of nonparticipation." Patterns of non-participation in self-reflection or group work will be noted and points deducted accordingly. If you are ill for two weeks or more (consecutively) or you have other personal matters that will require you to frequently miss participation deadlines, you should let me know immediately and provide a doctor note or other acceptable documentation.

**Disability Assistance-** Mason has a wonderful Office of Disability Services on the main floor of SUB I; if you have a documentable learning disability, I urge you to pay the ODS a visit early in the semester. I am happy to work with you to accommodate your needs, but I will need written documentation from the ODS. <http://ods.gmu.edu/>

**Writing Center-** If you need some assistance in writing your paper or would like to attend study skills workshops, please do not hesitate to take advantage of the resources on campus. The Writing Center is in Robinson Hall B room 213. <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>

**Academic Workshops -** Academic Workshop schedules can be found in Learning Services within Counseling and Psychological Services on the 3rd floor of SUB I. <http://caps.gmu.edu/>

**Office Hours -** I will be available on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:30-11:30. If that time does not work for you, I am flexible – just let me know a day ahead of time when you would like to chat via back-and-forth email. If you have a request for an incomplete or an assignment extension, I will only address those matters via Mason email.

**Email and Course Communication -** It is critical that you have a reliable way to obtain course information. Please be sure that you check your GMU email account regularly or have your GMU email messages forwarded to your preferred email account. If I need to send a message to you individually, I will send it to your GMU email account. Please note that if you have trouble with your GMU email, you can also use the messaging feature in Blackboard if necessary.

### **Honor Code**

Abiding by the Mason Honor Code is essential if you plan on passing this course:

***"Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work."***

<b><u>Important Mason Dates</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Last day to add classes: 9/4. <i>Check PatriotWeb to be sure that you are registered for this class.</i></li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Last day to drop classes: 9/30.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Selective withdrawal period (undergraduates): 10/1-10/28.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Labor Day break: 9/3.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Columbus break: 10/8.</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Thanksgiving break: 11/21-11/25.</li> </ul>

<b><u>Class Schedule and Readings</u></b>	
Units will be incrementally released to help you pace yourself. Additional readings may be added. Each quiz and the final exam have comprehensive study guides: plan ahead to do your best.	
<b>UNIT 1: MEDIEVAL ART OF FRANCE</b>	
<b>WEEK 1: August 27 - September 2</b>	
<b>Introduction to the Course; the Pre-Christian Period and the Fall of the Roman Empire</b>	
<b>Readings:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Syllabus</li> <li>2. Snyder: Late Antiquity (pgs. 3-31)</li> </ol>	<b>Assignments:</b> Individual Reflection 1 Introductory Post (online)
<b>WEEK 2: September 4 - September 9 (September 3 is Labor Day break)</b>	
<b>Celtic and Early Medieval France</b>	
<b>Readings:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Snyder: Northern Traditions and Synthesis (pgs. 135-137, 154-161)</li> <li>2. Rosenwein: 1.10 The active life: Sulpicius Severus, <i>The Life of St. Martin of Tours</i> and 1.15 Merovingian Gaul's bishop-historian: Gregory of Tours, <i>History</i></li> <li>3. Kessler: Chapter 3, Spirit</li> </ol>	<b>Assignments:</b> Discussion 1
<b>WEEK 3: September 10 - September 16</b>	
<b>Carolingian Art and Architecture</b>	
<b>Readings:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Snyder: Carolingian Art and Architecture (pgs. 164-192)</li> <li>2. Rosenwein: 3.10 The pope and the Carolingians: Pope Stephen II, <i>Letters to King Pippin III</i> and 3.11 Charlemagne as Roman emperor: <i>Life of Charlemagne</i></li> <li>3. Stokstad: The Carolingian Empire (Blackboard)</li> </ol>	<b>Assignments:</b> Individual Reflection 2
<b>WEEK 4: September 17 - September 23</b>	
<b>French Gothic Art</b>	
<b>Readings:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Snyder: French Gothic Art (pgs. 323-363)</li> <li>2. Rosenwein: 6.25 Devotion through mysticism: Jacques de Vitry, <i>The Life of Mary of Oignies</i></li> <li>3. Kessler: Chapter 5, Church</li> </ol>	<b>Assignments:</b> Discussion 2
<b>UNIT 2: MEDIEVAL ART OF IRELAND</b>	
<b>WEEK 5: September 24 - September 30</b>	
<b>Celtic and Early Medieval Ireland</b>	
<b>Readings:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Harding: An Art with No Genesis (Blackboard)</li> <li>2. Harding: La Tène and non-La Tène in Ireland (Blackboard)</li> </ol>	<b>Assignments:</b> QUIZ 1 (Tuesday, September 25)

<b>WEEK 6: October 1 - October 7</b>	
<b>Irish Monasticism and the Development of Book Culture</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shapiro: III: Image and Ornament (Blackboard)</li> <li>Brown: Early Christian Ireland and the Growth of Monasticism (on Blackboard)</li> <li>Green: Symbolism and Spirituality: From Paganism to Christianity (Blackboard)</li> </ol>	<u>Assignments:</u> <b>Discussion 3</b>
<b>WEEK 7: October 9 - October 14 (October 8 is the Columbus Day break; our class meets Thursday ONLY)</b>	
<b>Insular Art in Ireland</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snyder: Insular Art (pgs. 138-149)</li> <li>Kessler: Chapter 4, Book</li> </ol>	<u>Assignment:</u> <b>Individual Reflection 3</b> <b>Paper Abstract Due</b>
<b>WEEK 8: October 15 - October 21</b>	
<b>Anglo-Saxon and Viking Influence in Ireland</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kessler: Chapter 6, Life (and Death)</li> <li>Cróinín: Chapter 8: The Golden Age (Blackboard)</li> <li>Rosenwein: 5.15 The Conquest Depicted: <i>The Bayeux Tapestry</i></li> </ol>	<u>Assignments:</u> <b>Discussion 4</b>
<b>WEEK 9: October 22 - October 28</b>	
<b>Gothic Ireland</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Richter: The End of the Middle Ages (Blackboard)</li> <li>Stokstad: The Emergence of the Gothic Style (Blackboard)</li> </ol>	<u>Assignment:</u> This is a lighter week - use this time to catch up or work on your paper.
<b>UNIT 3: MEDIEVAL ART OF BRITAIN</b>	
<b>WEEK 10: October 29 - November 4</b>	
<b>Celtic and Early Christian Britain</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brown: The Art of the Lindisfarne Gospels (Blackboard)</li> <li>Kessler: Chapter 1, Matter</li> </ol>	<u>Assignment:</u> <b>QUIZ 2 (Tuesday, October 30)</b>
<b>WEEK 11: November 5 - November 11</b>	
<b>Anglo-Saxon and Norman Art</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snyder: Diffusion and Diversity (pgs. 193-200)</li> <li>Brown: Epilogue- Thor's Hammer and Christ's Cross: The Impact of the Vikings (Blackboard)</li> <li>Kessler: Chapter 2, Making</li> </ol>	<u>Assignment:</u> <b>Individual Reflection 4</b>
<b>WEEK 12: November 12 - November 18</b>	
<b>Gothic England</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snyder: Gothic Arts in England (pgs. 386-409)</li> <li>Kessler: Chapter 7, Performance</li> <li>Rosenwein: 5.20 The Cistercian View: St. Bernard, <i>Apologia</i></li> </ol>	<u>Assignment:</u> <b>Individual Reflection 5</b>
<b>WEEK 13: November 21 - 25</b> <b>NO CLASS - THANKSGIVING BREAK</b>	
<b>WEEK 14: November 26 - December 2</b>	
<b>Synthesis, Similarity, and Innovation in the Western Medieval World</b>	
<u>Readings:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Snyder: Coda: Inventing the Middle Ages (pgs 462-472)</li> <li>Kessler: Chapter 8, Seeing</li> <li>Rosenwein: 7.22 Scholasticism: Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Against the Gentiles</i></li> </ol>	<u>Assignment:</u> <b>Discussion 5</b>

<b>WEEK 15: December 3 - December 8</b>	
<b>Course Conclusions and Final Exam Review</b>	
<p><i>Readings:</i> Catch up on past readings, re-read chapters as needed to help you complete the study guide for the final exam.</p>	<p><i>Assignments DUE by Dec. 6:</i> <b>RESEARCH PAPER DUE</b> <b>EXTRA CREDIT DUE</b> <b>Complete the course evaluation.</b></p>
<b>WEEK 16: Final Exam</b>	
<b><u>THE FINAL EXAM WILL BE HELD THURSDAY, DECEMBER 13 FROM 1:30-4:15 IN OUR USUAL CLASSROOM.</u></b> *No extensions will be allowed unless you have a legitimate, documentable emergency that precludes you from taking the exam during the scheduled time period.	

**Useful links:**

- **GMU Registrar Semester Calendar:** <https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall-2018/>
- **Gateways to Art: Student Resources:** <http://books.wwnorton.com/books/students/>