

HIST231: Revolutions and Misbehaving Monarchs in Pre-Modern England
University of Nebraska-Lincoln: Fall 2018
Burnett Hall 118 | MWF 10:30am-11:20am

Instructor: Courtney Herber

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****Please do NOT message me via Canvas.**

Email me. If you message through Canvas, I will most likely NOT see it.

Office: 903 Oldfather (on the left after you leave the elevators)

Office Hours: MW 11:30-12:30 & by appointment



Overview

History did not have to go the way that it did. There is always a precarious nature to its course, filled with opportunity, loss, and the messy nuance and unpredictability that people inherently bring to the table. By focusing our scholarship on names, dates, and events, especially on the memorization of those key pieces of data, we often create the impression that the course of history was inevitable. That is exactly what I do not want to do in this course. We will learn about names, dates, and events because how else can you give structure to or make sense of a story? However, while the details are necessary to set the stage, the *story*, the messy and complicated *story* is what's most important.

In our semester long exploration of English history, we will see trace the process of how so many kingdoms coalesced and meet some interesting characters along the way. How did England get from Magna Carta to Henry V's victory at Agincourt to the regicide of Charles I? How did England's monarchs go from excommunication to *Defender of the Faith* and back again? How were the lives of everyday people impacted by the choices of their monarchs? We will explore these questions and others as we go through our semester together.

Required Texts:

For purchase:

- C. Warren Hollister, *The Making of England, 55BC to 1399* (8th ed)
- Lacey Baldwin Smith, *This Realm of England, 1399-1688* (8th ed)

Other texts as assigned in Canvas.

Also needed: A packet of note cards



Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

Successful students will be able to:

1. Analyze and interpret written primary and secondary source evidence
2. Think critically about how religion, social class, gender, and race intersected in the lives of everyday and exceptional historical actors, and be able to explain how those factors contributed to the history of England as we know it today
3. Participate successfully in classroom discussions on all readings and activities

ACE 5

This course fulfills ACE Outcome 5: use knowledge, historical perspectives, analysis, interpretation, critical evaluation, and the standards of evidence appropriate to the humanities to address problems and issues.



Assignments

Full versions of all assignments will be posted to Canvas as the due dates approach, along with the rubric. Descriptions below are a sketch. Due dates for all assignments are provided in the course schedule.

Reading Responses:

You will be expected to be prepared for class, and as such, doing the assigned reading is a key to your success. Each week you will have a set of assigned readings that are designed to raise questions and open up new ideas on the topics we are discussing. As a productive member of this community, you are expected to prepare for class by fully reading the texts assigned, and then carefully considering and responding to those texts. To help in you in that process: each class session, you will be expected to turn in a note card on each reading.

These responses will be due to me at the end of every class that there is reading assigned. Please see below for recommended instructions on how to complete these. There are no right or wrong answers that I will be looking for as I read them. They will be graded solely on how deeply you have worked with the texts. If you struggled with a text, tell me. Use these responses to ask questions, to challenge the authors, or to highlight what you discovered or thought of while you were reading. I do NOT want a paragraph of summary of the text.

Because you'll be turning these in – *please make sure your handwriting is legible*. If I can't read it, I can't grade it.

Example Note Card Format:

Name	Reading Assignment (book, pages)
General subjects covered by the reading – key words, concepts, events, etc	
Main Thesis of the Reading – what is the big idea/argument that is in the text?	
• Main idea	
• Main idea	
• Main idea	
Important details to remember	
• Detail	
• Detail	
Something interesting or surprising from the text/questions you have	



Commitment

15% of the grade this semester will be based your “commitment,” which represents your commitment to improving the learning environment for yourself and other students, during the discussions and any other class interactions; the instructor will keep track of each student’s participation and professionalism. Included in this assessment will be such behaviors as:

1. Reading all class discussions and materials on a weekly basis;
2. Participating in class discussions;
3. Providing thought-provoking, original, and high-quality comments;
4. Submitting assignments on time and in the proper formats;
5. Treating your fellow classmates and the professor with respect;
6. Participating with enthusiasm and interest;
7. Not flaming or disrespecting fellow classmates or the instructor, either online or face-to- face.
8. Being Fully Present: Not using a cellphone in class and using a tablet or laptop for only class-related reasons.



Learning Ensembles

I only have one real rule for my classroom:

Members of this class will treat each other with respect.

This means I expect you:

- To arrive to class on time with all the required work and readings completed.
- To involve yourself in classroom discussions and activities.
- Will listen to your classmates and their ideas and contribute your own in a constructive and active manner even when you find yourself confronted with ideas with which you may disagree.

If that level of respect is not given and your classroom behavior becomes an issue, you may be asked to leave, marked as absent, and should plan to meet with me privately in order to resolve the conflict.

Your presence in class is important not only for your learning and for the learning of your peers but also because our goal is to create a *Learning Ensemble* this semester—a group of learners who support, trust, and share in the learning process.

An ensemble implies that there is a group of people who are all committed to achieving a similar goal and who support each other in pursuit of that goal. An ensemble implies a whole: A group of people collaborating to produce something. Everyone plays an important role in getting the group toward the goal.

Learning works best in an ensemble, it is a team sport.

- Learning in this class is not about the professor dumping information for you to regurgitate.
- It's about all the participants engaging in an ongoing conversation and working together to explore new knowledge and to move that conversation forward and make connections to our individual and collective experiences.
- We are not in competition with one another.
- Learning is not a scarce resource that we have to divide between ourselves—there is plenty of learning for all of us
- We aren't trying to defeat anyone in the class or out-perform one another.
- We should all strive to help everyone get to the end of the course successfully.

In an ensemble, each person benefits and grows because they interact with other people who bring different ideas and skill sets. An ensemble is about learning from others and making each other shine.

ASSIGNMENT	% of Grade
Bayeux Tapestry	05
Mid-Term Exam	10
Richard III Essay	10
Book Review #1	05
Book Review #2	10
History Stand-Up Routine	10
Final Project/Essay	15
Final Exam	10
Reading Responses	10
Commitment	15
Total	100

The final grade in this class will be determined accordingly:

- A+ 97 points and above
- A at least 93 points
- A- at least 90 points
- B+ at least 87 points
- B at least 83 points
- B- at least 80 points
- C+ at least 77 points
- C at least 73 points
- C- at least 70 points
- D+ at least 67 points
- D at least 63 points
- D- at least 60 points
- F below 60 points

Assignments:

Bayeux Tapestry Description:

The Bayeux Tapestry is an amazing, but problematic, primary source for the events leading up to and during the Norman Conquest of England. In this assignment, you will be assigned one of the numbered sections of the Tapestry (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bayeux_Tapestry_titles) and write a couple of paragraphs on what is happening in the section you're assigned. Look at the border and the background, as well as the text and foreground, to describe what you're seeing.

A helpful link for understanding more about the Bayeux Tapestry is below. Watch the five minute video (and explore more if you wish!) to find out about the Tapestry, as it will be helpful for this and the next assignment.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/ap-art-history/early-europe-and-colonial->

[americas/medieval-europe-islamic-world/a/bayeux-tapestry](#)

Bayeux Tapestry Section:

Your job for this assignment is to think about your life as a tapestry. How does it tell your story? Pick an important event in your life (that you feel comfortable sharing myself and members of the class) and draw it (ala the Bayeux Tapestry). Minimal words, concentrate on the pictures. Write up a short (1-2 pages) description, talking about what you chose, how you depicted it, and why you chose to do it that way.

In class, we will exchange our pictures with a classmate who will then work to figure out what event you've depicted in your Tapestry. They will write up a short note card on your section. You will turn that in, along with the picture and your description, to me by the end of class.

Richard III Essay:

Write a 3-5 page essay answering this question:
Did Richard III kill his nephews? Why or why not?

Use citations and sources – include endnotes or a bibliography. Your job in this essay is to *make a compelling argument*. You want to convince me that you've got the right answer *for the right reasons*.

To do so, you will want to think about exactly how you want to answer this and find at least 3 main points that back up your thesis (or argument). You can use sources other than our textbooks for this – in fact I encourage it. There have been books, movies, TV series, all made about this one question. As historians, we all have our own theories, but we back them up with verifiable evidence, just like a detective.

Think of:

Sherlock Holmes - “When you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.”

Hercule Poirot – “I can only see the world as it should be. It makes an imperfection stick out like the nose on your face.”

Jessica Fletcher – “I’m nosy.”

or **Conan Edogawa** – “Zero is where everything starts!”

Use the prompt to inspire you to *investigate* and come to your own conclusion. Convince me!

Mid-Term Exam:

This will cover all material from the beginning of the semester until exam date. Anything from the texts we have read or from lecture is fair game. This exam is a take home, open book/note essay exam. I will give you the prompts and rubric at least a week before the exam is due.

Book Reviews (x2):

In a survey course there is only so much that can be covered – and not much that we can do in depth. Doing book reviews is a way for you to explore something that is personally interesting to you that we may or may not get to touch on in class.

These book reviews should be 500-800 words and do more than just tell me what's in the book. What is its argument? What sources did the author use? How does reading this book change your understanding of the topic?

We will talk more about these in class.

History Standup:

Historians are not (necessarily) stuffy bookworms. Sometimes we're *funny* stuffy bookworms. History is made by people. And people, by nature, are funny and odd creatures.

Your job is to work with a group to come up with a history stand-up routine/skit.

Aim for accuracy and humor. While in an actual stand-up situation vulgar language would be encouraged, swearing will not be acceptable in the classroom. Plan for 5-8 minutes for your routine. Your group will think of one particular topic to create your routine to teach your classmates about, research it, and create your presentation.

Be creative!

Make sure, though, that you document what you're doing and why – I'll expect your group to turn in a bibliography of sources you used as well as notes/scripts for the presentation. Oh, and make sure it's relevant to what we've covered in class.

Here's a great example of a historical standup routine from historian Dr. Joanne Paul on Thomas More's Head (note: there is some vulgar language in this video <https://youtu.be/n8aoPkERaSI>).

Final Project/Essay:

This is your chance to shine! Over the course of the semester, you will be creating a well-researched interpretation of our course materials. This can be a creative project or an essay, your choice! Plan to meet with me at least twice over the course of the semester to talk about your project or paper. This class is structured to help you succeed with this project by having deadlines through the semester as well as conferences for you to meet with me to discuss the class and your project.

Final Exam:

This will be of the same format as the Mid-Term Exam. It will NOT be cumulative.

Possibilities for Extra Credit:

- 2 points for an additional book review (same guidelines as the assignment)
- 1 point each for a maximum of 2 points if you attend a lecture, play, or other event that is related to the course and you turn in a 1-2 page reflection of the

event. This should include a summary of what you saw, how it adds to the knowledge you've learned during class, and what you thought about it.

If you do all of the extra credit, this is almost half a letter-grade's worth of points... so take advantage of it. I do not ration grades! If you do the work, you can get an A. All extra credit *must* be turned in by 5pm on the final day of classes, December 7th.

Other Necessary Policies:

As borrowed from Dr. Gorman's syllabi

Academic Dishonesty:

If you are found guilty of any kind of academic dishonesty, you will automatically fail the course and a letter will be sent to the University's Academic Officer. Academic dishonesty as described in the UNL Faculty Handbook includes, but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication or falsification, plagiarism, abuse of academic materials, complicity in academic dishonesty, falsifying grade reports, and misrepresentation to avoid academic work.

Distractions:

You are welcome to use laptops to take notes, but if I find that you are doing anything other than taking notes, you will lose your laptop privileges for the remainder of the semester.

Likewise, if I see phone activity of any sort, including texting, or other distractions (reading the paper, doing a puzzle), you will be asked to sit in the front of the room for the remainder of the semester. Any additional offenses will result in a penalty ranging from a 3 point reduction in your final grade to expulsion from the class.

Notice:

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

This is a living syllabus and it may change over the course of the semester. Any changes to the printed text will be communicated in class and via Canvas.