This course is not intended for specialists in the middle ages or medieval science. Nor will it by itself turn you into a specialist, if you even had the intention of becoming one. Rather, its goal is to expose you to some of the (hopefully significant) literature in the field, both so that in the short term you can begin to prepare for Masters comprehensive examinations or Ph.D. qualifying examinations, and in the long term you can begin to see some characteristics of medieval science that are either different from or similar to whatever field becomes your special focus. And if, by chance, your eventual interest becomes the middle ages, you will have some foundation on which to build.

The topics and the readings I have selected for this course may appear to be somewhat broadly conceived. This choice springs from my belief that it is difficult in any period, but perhaps especially so in premodern ones, to grasp the nature of science without understanding the culture in which it developed. And so we will have occasion to explore topics in the social structure of the middle ages, the evolution of legal and political entities, medieval presuppositions and ideals of nature, man and society, and several other topics while we examine their relationship to medieval developments in the sciences.

**Books for the Course**


**Schedule of Topics**

**January 23**

*Introduction to the Course; Science in the Patristic Period; Medieval Society*


**January 30**

*Medieval Technology.*


February 6

Renaissance of the Twelfth Century.


February 13

Universities in the Middle Ages.


February 20

Curriculum of Science; Books, Scriptoria and Libraries.

February 27

*Condemnations of 1277.*


*Articuli reprobati parisiensis (1277)*
Klosterneuburg, Stiftsbibl. 813, fol. 115r

March 6

*God and Mammon: the Interface of Economics and Analysis of Nature*


March 13-19

Spring Break

March 20

*Analytical Languages, Nominalism, Novelties in Late-Medieval Science.*

March 27  
**Mathematics and Optics.**

*Ibn al-Haytham, *Tractatus de visu et visione*  
*Opticae thesaurus*  
Saint-Omer, BASO 605, fol. 3ra


April 3  
**Medicine and Natural History.**


April 10  
**Cosmology and Astronomy.**

*Diagram of the Heavens, in Germanici Caesaris Aratea phaenomena*  
Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibliothèque des Annonciades, MS 188, fol. 30r

the 14th Century,” *Manuscripta* 20(1976) 197-217; selections from Grant, *Sourcebook.*

April 17, 24

*Motion in the Middle Ages.*


May 1

*The End of the Middle Ages.*


Special Note

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities.

Requirements

1. The most important requirement is, of course, the completion of the readings as assigned. Because the course will not be a traditional lecture, but rather discussion punctuated by and occasional brief presentation by one of us, it is imperative that everyone be able to contribute.

2. Each student will prepare a substantial historiographical review focused on a topic chosen by mutual agreement, to be submitted on May 1.

3. On May 1, I will distribute an essay topic structured around issues within the course. Completed essays will be due May 8.