

Medieval France



Time and Location

M, W, F between 10:40 and 11:30

Anderson Hall 019

Description

The Middle Ages were a formative period in the history of France. Irrespective of whether people in the 10th or 11th centuries thought of their land(s) as France, France existed, as did the political obligations to the French king. There has been a recent scholarly effort to dismantle the idea that France existed as such at an early date. Some have dismissed the idea as the product of the 19th-century nationalism, others have focused on regions of France, in an attempt to show how different various parts of the future France were in relation to each other. However, France was clearly a political concept (at the very least) during the reign of Louis VII. Louis's title

nonetheless still made reference to the Franks, for he was a *rex Francorum*. Suger, who wrote a biography of the king's father, called the country *regnum Franciae*, the kingdom of France. Territory, not ethnicity was what mattered in the 12th century. A clear distinction between the French and the other peoples of Europe came with the Second Crusade, in which there was an opportunity to meet Germans in large numbers, who, though still perceived as *Franci*, were not French. With Breton, Basque, and Flemish pushed to the peripheries, a sense of linguistic commonality (if not yet uniformity) is expressed in the literary explosion of the 12th century. To look back from that century means therefore to understand how the basic elements of Frankish history became French. To look forward for another century or so, is to see how France began to be built.

This course is designed as a chronological and topical introduction to the history of medieval France, from the abandonment of the Roman province of Gaul to the beginning of the Hundred Years War. Since this is a survey, it is impossible to cover everything. Instead, the course will offer a selection of representative topics from a much larger possible list. We will examine some of the key political, economic, and social developments that had historical significance, the growth of the Church and its relation to the State, and the growth of urban culture in medieval France. Anyone with enough curiosity and desire to learn is welcome.

Textbooks

- Marios Costambeys, Matthew Innes, and Simon MacLean. *The Carolingian World*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. [hereafter *Costambeys*]; ISBN 9780521564946; on two-hour reserve in [Library West \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- Paul Edward Dutton (ed.). *Carolingian Civilization. A Reader*. 2nd edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004. [hereafter *Dutton*]; ISBN 1551114925
- Alexander Callander Murray (ed.). *From Roman to Merovingian Gaul*. North York/Tonawanda: University of Toronto Press, 2008. [hereafter *Murray*]; ISBN 9781442600959.
- Elizabeth M. Hallam and Charles West. *Capetian France, 987-1328*. 3rd edition. Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2020. [hereafter *Hallam*]; ISBN: 9780429289828; available as e-book through [Library West \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

Assignments and grading policies

There is no attendance policy, but you are responsible for attending all lectures and reading the required texts. Class participation may be taken into account to determine

the overall grade. The basis for evaluation of performance will be four quizzes and two exams (Midterm and Final). The unannounced quizzes are exclusively based on primary source readings from your *Dutton* and *Murray* books and will consist only of multiple-choice questions (no essay). A careful study of these texts is necessary for a good performance at the quiz. The Midterm and Final exams will cover everything from lectures and readings. Both Midterm and Final will consist of two parts: an identification and/or multiple-choice part, and a short essay, in which you will be asked to synthesize your knowledge of the topic, dropping in facts to show that you understand the concrete aspects of that topic. Only the Midterm will be cumulative. In other words, the Final examination will cover only the material since the Midterm examination. Make-up Midterm and Final exam will be given for very serious reasons, in which case you will have to produce some official proof. There is no make-up for quizzes. Extra-credit work will be accepted only for students with active participation in class discussions. The format of the extra-credit option shall be discussed with the instructor during regular office hours. The following point system will be used in determining the final grade:

Quizzes: 40 points
 Midterm: 30 points
 Final exam: 30 points
 Total: 100 points

The following scale will be used in determining your final grade.

<i>Points</i>	<i>Grade</i>
97-100	A
93-96	A-
88-92	B+
81-87	B
75-80	B-
68-74	C+
61-67	C
55-60	C-
48-54	D+
41-47	D
35-40	D-
under 30	E

Weekly Topics

Monday, August 23: Introduction.

Wednesday, August 25 : Late Roman Gaul and the barbarians (*Murray* 3-14, 20-47, 48-54, 59-60, 100-108, 207-218)

Friday, August 27: The Franks before 537 (*Murray* 153, 157-159, 166-169, 259-263, 267-286)

Monday, August 30: Many kingdoms, one Church (*Murray* 109-137, 169-171, 179-181, 289-301)

Wednesday, September 1: Civil wars and legislation (*Murray* 302-313, 315-428, 533-556)

Friday, September 3: Merovingians and their neighbors in the 7th century (*Murray* 453-490, 492-498, 565-568)

Monday, September 6: Labor Day (no classes)

Wednesday, September 8 and Friday, September 10: Land, wealth, and the economy (*Murray* 576-587)

Monday, September 13: Royal women, cultured churchmen (*Murray* 313-315, 499-504, 569-575)

Wednesday, September 15 and Friday, September 17: From Pippin II to Pippin III (*Costambeys* 31-65; *Murray* 633-637, 652-655)

Monday, September 20: Mission and Church during the first half of the 8th century (*Murray* 637-651)

Wednesday, September 22 and Friday, September 24: The dawn of the Carolingian age (*Costambeys* 1-30; *Dutton* 12-22)

Monday, September 27: Charlemagne (*Costambeys* 65-79; *Dutton* 26-51, 65-69)

Wednesday, September 29 and Friday, October 1: The Empire (*Costambeys* 154-194; *Dutton* 69-85)

Monday, October 4 and Wednesday, October 6: Church and culture (*Costambeys* 80-152; *Dutton* 95-120, 139-146)

Friday, October 8: Homecoming (no classes)

Monday, October 11 and Wednesday, October 13: After Charlemagne (*Costambeys* 194-222, 379-427; *Dutton* 146-154, 159-176, 199-203, 256-265, 334-336)

Friday, October 15: Midterm

Monday, October 18 and Wednesday, October 20: Carolingian economy and society (*Costambeys* 223-323, 324-378; *Dutton* 85-89, 207-220)

Friday, October 22: The society in western Francia (*Hallam* 1-32); read Fulbert of Chartres, *On feudal obligations* ([Links to an external site.](#))

Monday October 25, Wednesday, October 27, and Friday, October 29: Principalities around AD 1000 (*Hallam* 33-79); read the [Chronicle of the Counts of Anjou](#) ([Links to an external site.](#))

Monday, November 1 and Wednesday, November 3: Early Capetians (*Hallam* 80-138); read [Richer of Reims](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)), on the coronation of Hugh Capet; read a [letter](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) of Ivo of Chartres to Adele, countess of Blois; read Duke of William of Aquitaine's foundation [charter](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) for the abbey of Cluny

Friday, November 5: France in the making, from Louis VI to Louis VIII (*Hallam* 139-172, 192-232); read a fragment from Suger, *Life of Louis VI* ([Links to an external site.](#)); read fragments of Rigord's *Deeds of Philip Augustus* ([introduction](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)), years [6](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)), [7](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)), and [8](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)))

Monday, November 8: French society in the 11th and 12th centuries (*Hallam* 172-180, 188-192); read Guibert of Nogent on the [revolt in Laon](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)); read a [charter](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) of Philip II suppressing the commune of Etampes; read Suger's *On the Administration* ([Links to an external site.](#))

Wednesday, November 10 and Friday, November 12: The Church in 11th- and 12th-century France (*Hallam* 232-246); read Guibert of Nogent on [relics](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) and [Carthusians](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)); read an account of the [conversion of Peter Waldo](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) and a description of [Waldensian beliefs](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)); read an excerpt from the [Cathar Gospel](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)), a description of Cathar [society](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)), and a description of Cathar [rituals](#) ([Links to an external site.](#))

Monday, November 15: Louis IX (*Hallam* 247-281, 302-353); read Jean de Joinville's *Life of St. Louis* ([Links to an external site.](#))

Wednesday, November 17 and Friday, November 19: French society in the 13th century (*Hallam* 281-292)

Monday, November 22: The Church in 13th-century France (*Hallam* 302-353); read Pope Innocent III's letters to the [French clergy](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) and to [King Philip II](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)); read an account of the 1210 [riot in Chartres](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)); read the *Testament* ([Links to an external site.](#)) of St. Francis of Assisi

November 24-27: Thanksgiving (no classes)

Monday, November 29: The last Capetians, from Philip III to Charles IV (*Hallam* 354-372, 384-409); read an [account](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) of the events at Agnani

Wednesday, December 1 and Friday, December 3: Economy and society in late 13th- and 14th-century France (*Hallam* 372-384); read the [Inquisition records](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)) of Jacques Fournier, Bishop of Pamiers

Monday, December 6: The Church in 14th-century France (*Hallam* 409-432); read Pope Boniface VIII's bulls of [1296 \(Links to an external site.\)](#) and [1302 \(Links to an external site.\)](#); read a troubadour [poem \(Links to an external site.\)](#) criticizing the Avignon papacy

Wednesday, December 8: Into the Hundred Years War (*Hallam* 433-440); read Jean Froissart's [account \(Links to an external site.\)](#) of the battles of Crecy and Poitiers

Friday, December 17, 7:30-9:30 pm: Final exam.