

Kingdom of Heaven: the First Crusade and the conquest of Jerusalem

HIST 2325

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New College of Florida

Autumn 2022, Tuesday/Thursday 0900–1020

Course description

In the autumn of 1095, at Clermont in central France, Pope Urban II preached an armed pilgrimage to help the churches of the East. This novel idea quickly caught the imagination of Western European society at all levels and resulted in what historians call the First Crusade. Soon large armies composed of nobles and knights as well as ordinary men and women gathered for their journey to the East: after defeating numerous Turkish and Arab armies, negotiating the alien political situation of the Middle East and fighting off hunger and disease, the remnants captured Jerusalem in July 1099.

This introductory course studies the early crusading movement from two perspectives. First, it follows the history of the First Crusade, its progress to Palestine, the military and logistical challenges faced by the crusaders, Byzantine and Arab attitudes to the crusaders, and the less well known follow-up Crusade of 1101. Secondly, it studies the origins of the crusading movement in eleventh-century European society by focusing on the backgrounds of the early crusaders, the ideas behind the crusade and the ways in which various social, political and religious movements contributed to the idea of crusade.

This is a lower-level history course that fulfils the Premodern History AOC requirement; it also counts as a history course for the Medieval and Renaissance Studies AOC. As a CYC course, it focuses on the skills of Intercultural knowledge and competence, Critical thinking and Written communication.

Required books and course bibliography

T. J. H. McCarthy, *Chronicles of the Investiture Contest: Frutolf of Michelsberg and his continuators* (Manchester, 2014).

J. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the idea of crusading*, (Philadelphia, 1991).

Other reading will be found on the course bibliography. All items on the bibliography are available on library reserve or through the library's electronic resources. Students are expected to make full use of the course bibliography in their formal written work.

Goals and objectives

This course has a number of different objectives covering content knowledge, critical thinking and communications skills. By the end of the semester successful and engaged students should be able to:

- ¶ Read strategically, synthesize and articulate what they have read.

- ¶ Demonstrate familiarity with the history of the early crusading movement, its spiritual origins in the Latin West and its interaction with the Byzantine, Jewish and Muslim worlds.
- ¶ Evaluate synthesize and interpret multiple types of evidence.
- ¶ Navigate, explain, and assess various methods of presenting historical evidence for urban life, with an emphasis on digital methodologies and spatial approaches. (2, 3)
- ¶ Understand and articulate that our knowledge of the crusading movement is shaped by the primary sources and that the priorities of their authors differ from our own and limit what we can know of the past.
- ¶ Display college-level research and writing skills, including the ability to construct a coherent argument with a thesis and supporting evidence, and to present their writing in a polished, professional form.

Expectations

This course works extensively with primary sources in English translation and students will have plenty of opportunity to discuss the material in class. Hand in hand with this, the document commentaries will train students in the analysis of historical primary sources and to allow them to connect those sources with the lecture material.

Active student participation is both encouraged and expected. Students are required to attend and participate in all class meetings, to complete weekly readings, to take three short in-class quizzes, to write three short commentaries (of about 500 words) on primary sources, to submit one research essay of 2,000 words and to sit the final exam, which will take place at the end of term.

Evaluation

Evaluations are based on the following criteria: attendance, participation in class, document commentaries, quizzes, research essay and the final exam.

Students are expected to behave professionally. This involves both collegiality (mature behaviour and constructive interaction with me and your peers) and participation (consistent involvement in all aspects of class, meaningful oral and written contributions to its examination of course concepts and engaged investigation that involves questions as necessary). This is meant to remind you that your evaluation is not simply based on your formal submitted work and that your performance in class has ramifications for your evaluation. All assignments must be completed and handed in on time in order to receive a satisfactory evaluation for the course.

Schedule of classes

Week 1	Europe in the eleventh century The structure of Western society
Week 2	Pope Urban II and the preaching of the First Crusade What made people go on crusade?

Week 3	The leadership of the expedition and the ‘Peoples’ crusade’ The armies of the princes	
		<i>Document commentary 1 due</i>
Week 4	Byzantium in the eleventh century Turks, mercenaries and Alexius Comnenus	
		<i>Quiz 1</i>
Week 5	Islamic powers: Sunnis, Shi’ites and Seljuk Turks Researching and writing your essay	
		<i>Document commentary 2 due</i>
Week 6	The siege of Nicaea (1097) The Battle of Dorylaeum	
Week 7	The Latin primary sources 1 The Latin primary sources 2	
		<i>Research essay due</i>
	Fall Break	
Week 8	The march to Antioch and an Edessan adventure The long nine months: the siege of Antioch	
		<i>Quiz 2</i>
Week 9	Turkish attempts to lift the siege The fall of Antioch	
Week 10	The road to Jerusalem The siege of Jerusalem	
Week 11	Defending newly won possessions: the Battle of Ascalon	
		<i>Document commentary 3</i>
	The fruits of victory: the Crusade of 1101	
Week 12	The failure of the Crusade of 1101 Thanksgiving Day–no class	
Week 13	The idea of crusade 1: the Peace and Truce of God	
		<i>Quiz 3</i>
	The idea of crusade 2: pilgrimage	
Week 14	The idea of crusade 3: eleventh-century proto-crusades	