SCHOOL OF DIVINITY, HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMIC SESSION 2017-2018

HI1526 : Vikings!

15 credits: 11 weeks

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:
The full set of School regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen Organisation page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure. You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR/COURSE TEAM
Course co-ordinator
Dr Lisa Collinson l.a.collinson@abdn.ac.uk

Course team
Professor Stefan Brink s.brink@abdn.ac.uk
Professor David Dumville d.n.dumville@abdn.ac.uk
Dr Frederik Pedersen f.pedersen@abdn.ac.uk

Discipline Administration:
Mrs Barbara McGillivray/Mrs Gillian Brown
50-52 College Bounds
Room CBLG01
01224 272199/272454
history-ug@abdn.ac.uk
COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course analyses the so-called ‘Viking Age’. It invites students to critically consider whether the concept of the ‘viking’ can be usefully applied in order to understand the history of Europe and beyond in the period c. 800-1200. This was a period of warfare and pillage, political turmoil and social transformation, but also economic expansion and cultural innovation. In 795 raiders attacked the Christian monastic community on Iona in the Scottish western isles. Their activities extended from Denmark, Norway and Sweden out to Continental Europe, North America, Russia, and the Mediterranean Basin. Over time they accepted Christian beliefs and gradually integrated into European society. In Iceland they created a republic which has remained Scandinavian in culture; elsewhere, for instance Britain, Ireland, and Russia, they adopted and modified the host culture. By the twelfth century, Christian national kingdoms had been created in Scandinavia. ‘Viking’ cultures became fully integrated into the wider project of European Christianization, including active involvement in the Crusades. The Viking Age had come to an end.

The course will introduce students to a broad range of methods and approaches to primary sources, from archaeological remains and rune-stones to ships and bridges, and from legal texts and chronicles to praise-poetry and sagas. Scandinavian expansionism will be presented in the wider political context of Dark-Age Europe, rooted in the late-antique breakdown of Roman rule and the accompanying ‘barbarian’ incursions. Alongside the political developments students will be introduced to key aspects of so-called ‘Viking-Age’ culture and society, which in turn helped shape the politics of the period. These include religions old and new, the relationship between law and blood-feud, the transition from oral to textual modes of commemoration and learning, the development of new maritime technologies, and the roles of women in society.

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

Aim: The aim of the course is to introduce you to vikings, their culture, and their impact on the history of Europe (and even America) between around 800 and 1200 AD.
Outcomes: By the end of the course the student should be able to:

• describe the major political, social, economic, and cultural interactions between vikings and Europe around 800–1200 AD
• explain how and why the northern world became assimilated into medieval Europe
• use both non-written and textual primary sources related to Vikings, their victims and their contacts
• evaluate the dynamics of cultural interchange during this period
• gain access to and use computerized information on the subject

LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME

The following schedule is provisional, and may change slightly from time to time. Make sure you read MyAberdeen announcements every weekday for up-to-date information.

Week 1
16th Jan Course introduction: essential practical information (LAC)
18th Jan Survey of the viking world: places, dates and ideas (LAC)

Week 2
23rd Jan What was a viking? (SB)
25th Jan Scandinavia before the vikings (SB)

Week 3
30th Jan Types of evidence I (SB)
1st Feb Types of evidence II (SB)

Week 4
6th Feb Society in the homelands (SB)
8th Feb Law in the homelands (SB)

Week 5
13th Feb Religion and belief I (SB)
15th Feb Religion and belief II (SB)

Week 6
20th Feb Gender (LAC)
22nd Feb Diversities (LAC)
Week 7
27th Feb  Ships and travel (FP)
1st March  Journeys south and east (FP)

Week 8
6th March  Iceland and Icelandic culture (LAC)
8th March  Greenland and North America (LAC)

Week 9
13th March  Warfare, kingship and governance (DND)
15th March  Vikings in Great Britain (other than Gaeldom) (DND)

Week 10
20th March  Vikings in Gaeldom (DND)
22nd March  Normandy and Brittany (DND)

Week 11
27th March  After the vikings (LAC)
29th March  Vikings in modern culture (LAC)

TUTORIALS

*Tutorial attendance is strictly compulsory in History*, so do make sure you attend *every week* once tutorials start. The exception is ‘reading week’ — a week when there are lectures but no tutorial for your group, so you can catch up on course reading. Different tutorial groups may have reading weeks at different times, so make sure you *check the date of the reading week for your group* on MyAberdeen.

*Tutorial activities* may vary slightly from group to group. Details will be posted on MyAberdeen, in announcements, and in the ‘Course Materials’ area, so do *check MyAberdeen very regularly*.

Because tutorial attendance is compulsory, you will need to know what to do if you have good cause for absence (such as illness), or if you have to deal with a monitoring notice (C6 or C7). If unsure, check the *Attendance Explainer* document on MyAberdeen.
READING LIST

Highly recommended

Other useful starting-points

Basic

More detailed

ASSESSMENT
First attempt:
• One two-hour written examination (60%)
• One 2000-word essay exercise (40%)

Resit:
• One two-hour written examination (100%)

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to MyAberdeen- Organisations- Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

If you submit your work on time, you can expect that feedback will normally be provided within three working weeks (excluding vacation periods) of the submission deadline.
ESSAY EXERCISE

The essay exercise is intended to help you develop your knowledge and understanding of two course topics, as well as your ability to write as a historian, with scholarly referencing.

Students will complete a 2000-word essay exercise, consisting of two essays of 1000 words each. (10% variation above or below the standard word count is fine.)

Each of the essays must include footnotes and a bibliography, as outlined in the History Referencing Guide posted on MyAberdeen. Footnotes are included in the word count, but the bibliography is not.

If you need an extension, submit a request through MyAberdeen so this can be considered by the course co-ordinator (Dr Collinson l.a.collinson@abdn.ac.uk).

LIST OF ESSAY/EXERCISE TOPICS

Questions for the essay exercise will be posted on MyAberdeen.

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES

Essay exercise deadline: 3pm Friday 30 March 2018

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

When uploading assignments, please do the following:

1. Submit a .doc or .docx and include the word count.

2. Submit by the due date. No hard copy will be required unless directly requested by the Course Coordinator through MyAberdeen.

3. In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student ID number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 HI1526 Essay 1.
4. When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 59999999 HI1526 Essay 1.

**Please note:** Failure to submit by the due date (unless a prior arrangement has been made) will result in a deduction of marks. Where no submission is received, this will result in a mark of zero.

Please note: *Safeassign* text-matching software will be used. However the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy reserves the right also to submit material to *TurnitinUK* when deemed necessary.

**EXAMINATION**

In the **two-hour examination**, you will write:

- **ONE commentary on an extract** from a document (‘gobbet’) **20%**
- **TWO essay-type answers** to questions 2 x 40% = **80%**

General exam guidance will be given in the Student Handbook.

*Past exam papers can be viewed at [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/).*

**PLEASE NOTE:** Candidates whose first language is not English may refer to English/native tongue dictionaries, when permitted by their Schools to do so. Electronic dictionaries are not permitted in the examination venue. Invigilators are entitled to request inspection of dictionaries prior to the examination, thumbing through them to check that there is no extra written material present.