

ACADEMIC SESSION 2018-2019

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

Dr Frederik Pedersen f.pedersen@abdn.ac.uk
(Office Hours – Wednesday 9am-11am)

Course Team

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TIMETABLE

For time and place of classes, please see [MyAberdeen](#)

Students can view their university timetable at

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course analyses the so-called 'Viking-Age'. It invites students to consider critically whether the concept of 'The Viking' can be applied usefully in order to understand the history of Europe and beyond in the period *circa* 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 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 important aspects of so-called 'Viking-Age' culture and society, which in turn helped to shape the politics of the period.

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 between around AD 800 and AD 1200.

Outcomes: By the end of the course the student should be able to:

- analyse the major political, social, economic, and cultural interactions of vikings around Europe, AD 800–AD 1200
- explain how and why the northern world became assimilated into mediaeval Europe

- use both non-written and textual primary sources
- evaluate the dynamics of cultural interchange during this period
- gain access to and use computerised information on the subject

LECTURE PROGRAMME

Week 1

15 Jan Introductory: the Word <i>Viking</i>	FP
17 Jan Viking Prehistory the Battle of Teutoburg and its Repercussions	FP

Week 2

22 Jan Southern Scandinavia and its Dynasties, I	FP
24 Jan Southern Scandinavia and its Dynasties, II	FP

Week 3

29 Jan Arabs, Trade, and the Re-alignment of Europe	FP
31 Jan The North Sea before the Viking-Age	DND

Week 4

5 Feb Viking Ships: Types and Technologies	FP
7 Feb The Viking-Age(s)	DND

Week 5

12 Feb The Range of viking-activity	DND
14 Feb Raiding and Settlement	DND

Week 6

19 Feb Vikings in Frankia	DND
21 Feb Vikings in England	DND

Week 7

26 Feb Vikings in Gaeldom	DND
28 Feb Vikings and Picts	DND

Week 8

5 Mar Vikings and the Origins of Russia?	DND
7 Mar Colonisation in the North-Atlantic region	DND

Week 9

12 Mar Clash of religions in the Viking-Age	DND
14 Mar Cultural Intercourse: Ibn Fadlan and Al Ghazal	FP

Week 10

19 Mar The Margins of Civilisation? The North-Atlantic Experience	DND
21 Mar Scandinavian Nation-building? (circa 960-1120)	DND

Week 11

26 Mar Scandinavia, the Church, and European Integration	FP
28 Mar Unfinished Business	DND

TUTORIALS

Tutorial attendance is strictly compulsory in History: so do make sure that you attend *every week* once tutorials start. **Tutorials run from Week 3 (28 Jan – 1 Feb) to Week 11 (25 – 29 Mar) of teaching (University Weeks 27 to 35 on My Timetable),** with the exception of ‘reading week’ — a week when there are lectures but no tutorial for your group, so that you can catch up on course-reading. **Reading Week is Week 7 of Teaching (Week 31 on My Timetable: 25 Feb – 1 Mar).**

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

Brink, S., Price, N. (ed.), *The Viking World* (Oxford, 2008)
Pulsiano, P. (ed.), *Medieval Scandinavia: An Encyclopedia* (New York, 1993)

Other useful starting-points

Basic

Richards, J., *The Vikings: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2005)

More detailed

Forte, A., Oram, R., and Pedersen, F., *Viking Empires* (Cambridge, 2005)
Helle, K. (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Scandinavia I: Prehistory to 1520* (Cambridge, 2003)

Jesch, J., *Women in the Viking Age* (Woodbridge, 1991)

Jesch, J., *The Viking Diaspora* (Abingdon, 2015)

ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on:

- One degree examination, worth 50% of the final mark.
- One 2,000-word essay-exercise worth 40% of the final mark.
- Tutorial preparation and participation worth 10% of the final mark.

Should you fail the course and still retain your class certificate, you may register for a re-sit. Assessment in the re-sit is by examination only (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 no less than E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of 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.

ESSAYS

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

LIST OF ESSAY/EXERCISE TOPICS

Questions for the essay exercise will be posted on MyAberdeen.

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES

Essay-exercise deadline: 3pm Friday 29 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 [My Aberdeen](#).
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%**

Past exam papers can be viewed at <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. 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.