



**English 401—Viking Studies  
Norse Raiders, Laws, & Kings:  
The Vikings in Britain**



**Course Information:**

Instructor: C. Fee  
Meeting Time: W 6:30-9:00 PM  
Meeting Place: Breidenbaugh 312  
Office: Breidenbaugh 314 E  
Office Hours: MTU 2:00-4:00 PM, W 2:00-3:00 PM, and by appointment  
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**Course Description:**

In 793 AD the first major Viking raid of England took place at the monastery at Lindisfarne, and this event marks the beginning of a presence in Britain which culminated with the crowning of a Danish king of England, Cnut, in 1016 AD. Large portions of Anglo-Saxon England were ruled under Danish law from the late ninth century onwards, and even the two great invasions of Britain in 1066, mounted by William of Normandy and Harald Hardradi, represented incursions from different branches of the same Viking family tree. The Vikings were Scandinavian (primarily Norsemen from Norway and Danes) adventurer-raiders who were first cousins to the Anglo-Saxons, who were following the same migratory patterns to Britain, and who made their way, like the Celts, to Spain and Asia Minor but even further, to North America. The etymology of the term “Viking” is uncertain; the Old English *wiking* has to do with a war band, and hence may denote a warlike pirate, while the Old Norse *vikingr* has long been thought to come from a root meaning “bay” or “inlet,” and thus may refer merely to those associated with those places and the crafts which plied them. These Scandinavian invaders still adhered to the old pagan religion, and thus their appearance in Britain reinvigorated the pre-Christian Germanic elements in the cultural melting-pot.

**Course Objectives:**

In this course we will explore the genesis, development, and dissemination of medieval Scandinavian culture, focusing on the age of the greatest impact of the Vikings upon the British Isles (roughly AD 793 through AD 1066) but surveying an overview of the entire breadth and depth of early Scandinavian Europe. The bulk of the material we read will be in Modern English, but we will learn the rudiments of the Viking tongue. To do so we will study elements of the language of medieval Iceland, specifically the West Norse of the “classical” literary period (ca. 1150-1350 AD), but many of the texts from this period deal with much earlier events, the gods of the north, and legendary figures of heroic proportions. We will also learn to read the runes the Vikings left behind; this medieval graffiti can still be found carved on bits of stone, bone, wood and metal, in a wide swath from Constantinople to Maritime Canada. This course is truly interdisciplinary: we will be interested in the history, literature, religion, and social structures of these traders, scholars, raiders, farmers, explorers, and mercenaries who first paralyzed, then conquered, then assimilated into much of Britain and the rest of Europe.

### **The Medieval North Atlantic Interactive Multimedia Project:**

Imagine visiting the imposing site of the priory at Lindisfarne, where the Viking Age began, and consider how actually being there now would help to bring the events of the past alive for you; think of the excitement of visiting archaeological digs of pagan Viking ship burials, replete with buried treasure alongside human and animal sacrifices; consider the ability to wander at will through the spectacular Viking ruins of the settlement at Jarlshof in the Shetland Islands on a glorious, windswept day in the far north. Now consider the possibility of making such a journey at the speed of light through virtual reality technology, complete with a personal electronic guide which provides maps, static images, explanatory video clips and sound bites which bring to life these ancient peoples and places. We will do all of this in this course, utilizing digital video, panoramas, and other images compiled within the *Medieval North Atlantic* multimedia resource. Moreover, students in this course work as my colleagues in constructing some new components of our interactive, multimedia virtual tour of Viking Britain.

### **Required Texts:**

- Byock, Jesse L., trans. *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*. Penguin Classics ed. New York: Penguin, 1998. (ISBN: 014043593X)
- ., trans. *The Saga of the Volsungs: The Norse Epic of Sigurd the Dragon Slayer*. Penguin Classics ed. New York: Penguin, 2000. (ISBN: 0140447385)
- Fee, Christopher with David Leeming. *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004. (ISBN: 0195174038)
- Fee, Christopher. "Chapter 1: The Norse Dragon-Slayer" in *Mythology in the Middle Ages: Heroic Tales of Monsters, Magic, and Might*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2011.
- . "Magic, Miracles, and Murder: Sifting through Sinners and Saints in the Stories and Sites of *Orkneyingasaga*." In preparation. (Draft article provided).
- . "Með lögum skal land vort byggja: 'With Law Shall the Land be Built.' Law-Speaking and Identity in the Medieval Norse Atlantic," in *Sailing the Western Sea: The Atlantic Ocean in Medieval Perspective*. B. Hudson, ed.
- Fox, Denton and Hermann Palsson, trans. *Grettir's Saga*. Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1974. (ISBN: 0802061656)
- Gordon, E.V. *An Introduction to Old Norse*. 2nd rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990. (ISBN: 0198111843)
- Hall, Richard. *Viking Age Archaeology in Britain and Ireland*. Shire archaeology, v. 60. Princes Risborough: Shire, 1990. (ISBN: 0747800634)
- Heaney, Seamus, ed. *Beowulf: A New Verse Translation*. Reprint ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001. (ISBN: 0393975800)
- Jones, Gwyn. *A History of the Vikings*. 2nd rev. ed. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001. (ISBN: 0192801341)
- Loyn, Henry. *The Vikings in Britain*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1995. [Only a few reasonably-priced copies of the hardback seem readily available (ISBN: 0631187111). Order the cheaper paperback edition, if available (ISBN: 063118712X). Also available ON RESERVE, and via pre-paid PRINT-ON-DEMAND through the Bookstore.]

Magnusson, Magnus and Hermann Palsson, trans. *King Harald's Saga*. Penguin Classics ed. New York: Viking Penguin, 1987. (ISBN: 0140441832)

Page, R.I. *Norse Myths*. The Legendary Past Series. Austin: U of Texas P, 1991. (ISBN: 0292755465)

---. *Runes*. Reading the Past Series. Berkeley: U California Press, 1989. (ISBN: 0520061144)

Palsson, Hermann and Paul Edwards, trans. *Egil's Saga*. Penguin Classics ed. New York: Viking Penguin, 1987. (ISBN: 0140443215)

---. trans. *Orkneyinga Saga: The History of the Earls of Orkney*. Penguin Classics ed. New York: Viking Penguin, 1987. (ISBN: 0140443835)

### **Reading Schedule:**

Week 1: The Dawn of the Viking Age: *A History of the Vikings* (1-54); *The Vikings in Britain* (1-20).

Week 2: Life in Early Scandinavia: *A History of the Vikings* (59-140).

Week 3: The Creation of the Vikings, the Birth of the Longship, and the Beginning of the Movement across the North Atlantic: *A History of the Vikings* (145-203).

Week 4: Britain in the Context of the Coming of the Vikings and the British Isles as Norse Stepping-Stones: *A History of the Vikings* (269-311; 334-353); *The Vikings in Britain* (21-29); "Law-Speaking and Identity" (in entirety).

Week 5: The History of the Vikings in Britain I--from Lindisfarne through the Danelaw: *A History of the Vikings* (204-240; 421-424); *The Vikings in Britain* (30-51); *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* ("Sagas of Anglo-Saxon England"--161-162; "Anglo-Saxon Historical Sagas and Heroism"--162-166); *An Introduction to Old Norse* ("The Expansion": xvii-xxix).

Week 6: The History of the Vikings in Britain II--The Northern Isles: *Orkneyinga Saga* (9-224); "Magic, Miracles, and Murder" (in entirety); *The Vikings in Britain* (64-76); *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* ("Sagas of Norse Britain"--153-155).

Week 7: Introducing the Gods of the North: *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* [N.B. Focus on Germanic--i.e. Norse and Anglo-Saxon--material.] ("Preface"--ix-xi; "Introduction"--3-9; "The Pantheons"--13-63; "Deity Types"--75-99; "Sacred Objects and Places"--111-116; "Heroes and Heroines"--117-124; "Creation and Apocalypse"--139-145).

Week 8: Interpreting the Gods of the North: *Norse Myths* (Page) (7-78); *A History of the Vikings* (315-334).

Week 9: The Archaeological Record of Viking Britain: Stones and Bones and the Riddle of Runes: *Viking Age Archaeology in Britain and Ireland* (5-59); *Runes* (6-62); *An Introduction to Old Norse* ("Runic Inscriptions": 181-193); *A History of the Vikings* (419-420); *The Vikings in Britain* (77-117).

Week 10: Beowulf and the Northern Imagination I--The Hero and the Troll: *Beowulf* ("Introduction" and II. 1-836); *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki* (vii-xxxii and 1-78); *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* ("Germanic Demigods and Spirits"--101-108; "Heroic Battles with Monsters"--127-130; "The Sagas"--147-148; "Norse Echoes of English Heroic Sagas"--155-158);

*An Introduction to Old Norse* ("The Earliest Norse Poetry", "The Poetry of the Skalds", & "The Sagas": xxxvi-lxi).

Week 11: Beowulf and the Northern Imagination II--The Hero and the Descent into the Water-Wife's Cave: *Beowulf* (ll. 837-2199); *Grettir's Saga* (viii-xiii and 3-187); *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* ("The Hero's Descent into the Otherworld"--124-127; "Norse Echoes of English Heroic Sagas"--158-161).

Week 12: Beowulf and the Northern Imagination III--The Hero and the Dragon: *Beowulf* (ll. 2200-3182); *The Saga of the Volsungs* (1-109); *Mythology in the Middle Ages* ("Chapter 1: The Norse Dragon-Slayer" in entirety); *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* ("Heroic Battles with Monsters"--130-137; "Beowulf and the Anglo-Saxon Heroic Saga as History"--166-168); *An Introduction to Old Norse* ("The Heroic Literature of the North": xxix-xxxvi and "The Preservation of Texts": lxi-lxvi).

Week 13: Egil Skallagrimsson comes to York--The Icelandic Personal Saga and the History of Britain: *Egil's Saga* (7-239); *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* ("Sagas of Norse Britain"--151-153).

Week 14: The Twilight of the Viking Age: *A History of the Vikings* (354-415); *King Harald's Saga* (9-163); *The Vikings in Britain* (52-62); *Gods, Heroes, and Kings: The Battle for Mythic Britain* ("Sagas of Norse Britain"--148-150).

### **Course Requirements:**

#### **Regular Weekly Assignments:**

There are a number of activities, in addition to your research schedule, which you are expected to complete fully and thoughtfully each week. **1)** You are expected to have completed the reading in advance of each week's seminar. **2)** You are expected to have answered the Discussion Board prompts in a timely and introspective fashion. **3)** You should be prepared to participate regularly in class discussion, especially when your comments and questions might be of value to the research of your peers. **4)** You must attempt to be a knowledgeable (but tactful!) critic of your peers' work. **5)** Finally, all of these requirements presuppose weekly attendance.

#### **Language Exercises:**

During most of the term there will be weekly language exercises; these usually will consist of the translation of a highly-glossed Old Norse passage, the identification of the parts of speech and forms of Old Norse words, and the memorization of a handful of Old Norse grammatical structures. These exercises will be supplemented by some discussion during seminar time. The purpose of these exercises is to approach a closer understanding of the Viking World through some conversance with concepts and language from that world.

#### **Formatting of Written Work:**

All formal written work (most specifically both drafts of the Site Report and all drafts of the Final Research Project) for this course must be formatted in Ariel 10 point font, single-spaced, with no indenting of paragraphs but with one blank line before each new paragraph. All works cited within a particular paper must be included in a separate document entitled "Paper Short Title Bibliography." Use only parenthetical documentation [e.g.: "(Fee 182)"] never footnotes. The upper-right header of each page should contain your last name and the page number [e.g.: "Smith 17"], while the first page should begin with the following information as formatted below:

[In the upper-left corner]  
Firstinitial. Lastname  
Professor C. Fee  
English 401-A  
Date Month 2013

[Centered]  
*Paper Title in Italics*

In all other particulars, please adhere to the most recent MLA guidelines. Musselman Library suggests the following resource for help with those guidelines:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/> These stipulations are crucial because of the need for uniform documents associated with the *Medieval North Atlantic* web project.

For ease of reference for grading as well as for posting material to the project, all formal written work must be submitted **both in hardcopy and electronic formats**; the electronic versions should be submitted both as Microsoft Word and PDF documents. In simplest terms, on each due date **email .docx and .pdf versions** of your work to me before 6:30 PM; in addition, **be sure to hand me a paper copy** before leaving class at 9:00 PM.

Due to difficulties associated with posting documents to the project, papers not adhering to these guidelines **may be penalized 10%** of the final grade they might otherwise have earned. In addition, papers containing more than 2 copy-editing or grammatical flaws **will generally fall into the “C” range or below.**

#### **Project Site Report:**

Each student will be responsible for compiling a Project Site Report of 2500 or more words on a specific Project Site; optimally, some aspects of the chosen site will have some bearing upon that student's particular Final Research Project topic. To this end, each student is expected to make relevant mention of several specific pertinent literary episodes in the Site Report, as well as to cite a number of scholarly sources. **The existing *Medieval North Atlantic* site narratives should point you in the right direction, as should your required one-hour initial research consultation with the instructor.** Please note that, **in addition to the Site Report First Draft, each student is expected to provide a summary paragraph of 125-250 words**, such as currently may be found on existing site pages. While not an abbreviated version of the Final Research Project, it is to be hoped that the Project Site Report will be closely related to the Final Research Project, and indeed might comprise as much as a third of that Final Research Project. The target audience for this work is an informed non-specialist, so the tone of the Project Site Report should be serious, but not overly scholarly: The point is to give a visitor to that particular Project Site an overview of the most important information available regarding that site, as well as to offer direction regarding further relevant reading in both research works and the literary record. **To that end, each student will also compose a relevant quiz to assess a visitor's command of the key points of the Site Report; this quiz will count towards the Final Site Report Grade.**

#### **Final Research Project:**

Each student will research one of a series of designated broad topics listed below; this research will culminate in a Final Research Project of 4000-5000 words which must be submitted in the required format and both as hardcopy and as an electronic document. The Final Research Project must engage scholarly sources (these should include history, archaeology, politics, religion, etc., as necessary and relevant) as well as several specific saga references relevant to that topic. The target audience for this work is an expert in the field, so the tone of the

Final Research Project should be scholarly, authoritative, and as exhaustive as possible. The point is to illustrate that the student can complete a thorough and readable research project of significant substance.

### Possible Research Topics

- Law, Government, and Assembly Places of Viking Britain in Norse Life and Saga
- Viking Travel, Commerce, and Raiding of Britain in Norse Life and Saga
- Marriage, Domestic Life, and the Home Front in Viking Britain
- Norse Farming and Settlement in Viking Britain
- Gods of the North: Norse Mythology and Religious Rituals in Viking Britain
- Death, Burial, and Funeral Rituals in Viking Britain
- Ghosts, Hauntings, the Spirit World, and the Afterlife in Viking Britain
- The Norse Conversion to Christianity in Viking Britain
- Lindisfarne and the Dawn of the Viking Age
- The Jarls of Orkney: Material and Saga Evidence of Viking Scotland
- Secret Writing, Magic Reading: The Riddle of Runes in Viking Britain
- Other topics as discussed with the instructor

### Interactive Fiction Group Project:

Finally, each student will be a member of a group which will devise a collaborative Interactive Fiction (IF) Project of 5000 or more words involving a creative approach which links those students' Project Sites through a narrative developed in the context of one of the sagas read for the course. We can be flexible in how the class is divided into groups, but each student is expected to collaborate with the other students whose Project Sites are located close together, and/or with those students whose Project Sites might be linked through the themes or plotlines of a given saga. Thus several students working on sites associated with Saint Magnus, for example, might well develop a game based on the life, death, and adventures of that saint as these are related in *Orkneyingasaga*. Students researching Norse burial sites, on the other hand, might well want to link a chambered cairn such as that at Maes Howe with the relevant treasure-trove of the dragon in *Beowulf*, or with the zombie-slaying episodes in *Beowulf* and *Grettir's Saga*. Students interested in life in the halls of Norse jarls and kings might link a great Norse homestead such as that at Jarlshof with the hall sequences from *Beowulf*, *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*, or *King Harald's Saga*, while those interested in the poetry of those halls might link such a place with Egil Skallgrimson's recitation of his "Head Ransom" poem, an episode related in *Egil's Saga*. Given the relationship between oral story-telling of the ancient pagan world and the literary sagas which ostensibly relate life during the Viking age, this exercise is far more than an opportunity to engage technology and to be creative and have fun (although these are all secondary goals): IF technology gives students an opportunity to construct narrative retellings of Norse sagas in an interactive way which calls to mind the ancient literary techniques of the *skalds* of the Viking Age, oral poets who tailored each recitation of adventure to the needs and desires of a given audience.

The point is to make as many connections as possible and to develop as coherent an overall collaborative IF Project as possible. The groups should feel free to be creative and to have fun; while the IF project is, by its very nature, fiction, however, each group should incorporate as much factual detail about the associated site(s) and relevant theme(s) as possible, and several relevant saga references are also expected. **The existing Otter's Ransom IF Projects should point you in the right direction, as should your interaction with the instructor during group meetings.** One might use Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code" as a primer for a kind of engaging fiction dressed up with facts. The target audience for this work is a student in an upper-level high school or lower-level college survey course, so the tone of the IF Project should be light-hearted and fun. **Each group will also compose a "cheat-sheet" Tips and Traps Paragraph outlining a successful strategy for playing that group's game. Each student in every group must also**

**select at least two (2) images from our archive associated with the relevant site or story for inclusion in the IF game.** Thus every game will have several relevant images. Students need not fear an overly harsh editorial hand, but should be reminded that under-age high school students, ancient parents and faculty members, and potential employers will have easy and permanent access to this work. The point is to engage the interest and incite the imagination of the visitor to a particular site or set of sites, thereby informing a visitor of actual pertinent information about such a site and its connection with other sites, themes, and sagas in as transparent and entertaining a way as possible. **If one envisions the Site Reports as the scholarly skeleton of an archaeological approach to Viking Britain, one might conceive of the IF Projects as the fictional flesh.**

### Specific Course Requirements:

1) Each student must participate **at least** once weekly in our on-line class **Discussion Board** (available through Moodle); such participation must include an insightful and informed discussion (250 or more words) of the issue of the week (a question or comment which I post on the Discussion Board for that week), as well as **at least** two follow-ups (50 or more words each) to the discussion of your peers. The Discussion Board provides an excellent opportunity for you to explore those issues which interest, intrigue, annoy, or confuse you; in any case, both your primary discussion and your follow-ups should show evidence that you have absorbed and digested the week's reading, as well as the ensuing class discussion. The Discussion Board is meant to supplement and to formalize casual out-of-class discussion and contact with your peers, and thus it takes on a special significance; please feel free to participate several times a week, and to post additional comments and questions as you see fit. I will read your thoughts carefully and eagerly. You must complete your primary discussion of the issue of the week **each week by Sunday at midnight**, and your follow-ups must be posted by **Tuesday at midnight**. As the Discussion Board is meant to spur and extend class discussions, the minimum required posts may not be made up. If the majority of the class consistently utilizes the Discussion Board fruitfully, there will be no need to institute a series of comprehension quizzes in its place. We will begin contributing to our Discussion Board after the first week of class. Furthermore, the unexpected crops up in all our lives from time to time, rather like a threatening sail on the horizon. For that reason, any student may fail to complete the required posts for any one (1) week with no penalty. Each student thus should submit, on time, 1 primary discussion and 2 follow-up posts for each for at least 10 weeks of class.

2) The **Project Site Report** is the main scholarly way in which the student may collaborate in the multimedia *Medieval North Atlantic* project, and promises to provide a permanent, public record of the student's research work in this course. **The first draft** of the Project Site Report is due during Week 7, on the Wednesday: ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions (sent as .docx and .pdf email attachments) are due in the grubby paws (and crowded in-box) of the instructor NO LATER than 6:30 PM on the Wednesday of that week. **The final draft** of the Project Site Report is due during Week 13: ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions (sent as .docx and .pdf email attachments) are due in the grubby paws (and crowded in-box) of the instructor NO LATER than 6:30 PM on the Wednesday of that week.

3) The **Group Interactive Fiction Project** is the main creative way in which students may collaborate in the multimedia *Medieval North Atlantic* project, and promises to provide a permanent, public record of each student's creative work in this course. **The first draft** of the Interactive Fiction Project is due during Week 12: ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND ONE (1) electronic version (sent as a .zblorb email attachment) are due in the grubby paws (and crowded in-box) of the instructor NO LATER than 6:30 PM on the Wednesday of that week. **The final draft** of the Interactive Fiction Project is due during Week 14, on the last day of class: ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions (sent as .zblorb and .gblorb [including pictures] email attachments) are due in the grubby paws (and crowded in-box) of the instructor NO LATER than 6:30 PM on the final Wednesday night of class.

4) The **Final Research Project**, while not by any means the only graded component of the course, is the single most important piece of work. The Final Research Project is due on the Wednesday (Reading Day) of Finals Week: **ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions** (sent as .docx and .pdf email attachments) are due in the grubby paws (and crowded inbox) of the instructor **NO LATER** than 6:30 PM on the Wednesday (Reading Day) of Finals Week.

5) All reading and homework assignments must be complete in entirety and on time; there will be a series of Old Norse language exercises, for example, in addition to the weekly reading assignments and the individual research project. If it becomes clear that these exercises are not being completed in a timely and satisfactory manner, a series of quizzes will be administered. These quizzes would be factored into the 20% of the final grade normally divided between Attendance & Participation and the Discussion Board.

### **Assignment Schedule:**

Week 2-Week 4: **Make Individual One-hour Appointment to Discuss Research Project and Site Report Topics with Instructor**

Week 4: **Site(s) for Report Chosen**

Week 5: **Topic for Research Project Chosen**

Week 6: **Site Report Bibliography Assembled (3-5 Items)**

Week 7: **First draft of Project Site Report DUE:** ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions (sent as .docx and .pdf email attachments) **6:30 PM on WEDNESDAY.**

Week 8: **Research Project Bibliography Assembled (10-12 Items)**

Week 8-Week 10: **Make Individual One-hour Appointment to Discuss On-going Research Project and Graded First Draft of Site Report with Instructor**

Week 8-Week 14: **Groups Arrange Weekly Scheduled Times to Develop Interactive Fiction Game; (Minimum of Two hours per Week, Times Co-ordinated with Instructor)**

Week 9: **Groups should be prepared to discuss 3-5 specific ideas for their Interactive Fiction Projects**

Week 10: **Research Project Bibliography Annotated (25-50 Word Annotations)**

Week 11: **Groups should be prepared to demonstrate 3-5 aspects of their Interactive Fiction Project**

Week 12: **First draft of Interactive Fiction Project DUE:** ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND ONE (1) electronic version (sent as a .zblorb email attachment) **NO LATER** than **6:30 PM on WEDNESDAY.**

Week 13: **Final draft of Project Site Report DUE:** ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions (sent as .docx and .pdf email attachments) **NO LATER** than **6:30 PM on WEDNESDAY.**



Week 14: **Final draft of Interactive Fiction Project DUE:** ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions (sent as .zblorb and .gblorb [including pictures] email attachments) NO LATER than **6:30 PM on WEDNESDAY.**

Finals Week: The **Final Research Project** is due on the Wednesday of **Finals Week:** ONE (1) Printed paper copy AND TWO (2) electronic versions (sent as .docx and .pdf email attachments) NO LATER than **6:30 PM on WEDNESDAY.**

### **Rough Grading Breakdown:**

The **Final Research Project** (including all the components thereof) will be worth approximately 35% of the final course grade.

The **Project Site Report** first draft (in addition to a summary paragraph of 125-250 words) will be worth approximately 10% of the final course grade.

The **Project Site Report** final draft (including an associated on-line quiz) will be worth approximately 15% of the final course grade.

The **Interactive Fiction Project** first draft will be worth approximately 10% of the final course grade.

The **Interactive Fiction Project** final draft (including the images and the "Tips and Traps" paragraph) will be worth approximately 10% of the final course grade.

The **Discussion Board** will be worth approximately 10% of the final course grade.

**Preparation, participation, and satisfactory completion of weekly reading and exercises** will be worth approximately 10% of the final course grade.

**Perfect attendance and prompt arrival is presupposed;** failure in this regard would likely result in failure of the course.

### **Learning Goals, Assessment, & Curricular Concerns:**

#### **Specific Learning Goals:**

In addition to mastering general knowledge of and gaining conversance with Medieval Scandinavia, students in this course will develop a substantial understanding of the legacy of the Viking Age in the history, language, letters, and landscape of the British Isles. Within the outline of such broad strokes students will develop some detailed knowledge of major relevant historical events of the period, the most important literary echoes of some of those events, and key Viking Age sites and objects.

Thus this course is of special interest to those with an affinity for the Medieval period, specifically the history of Scandinavia and the British Isles, as well as to those who study Germanic languages, or to those who wish to explore the confluence between literary and historical texts and material cultures. Finally, this course is especially appropriate for anyone who would care to plumb the depths of the relationship between Scandinavia and the English-speaking world, a relationship spanning more than a dozen centuries, a relationship fraught with violence in its early stages but subsequently comprised of many facets with unforeseen long-range outcomes.

Moreover, this course utilizes relevant critical readings concerning the Viking Age as a nexus of history, religion, narrative traditions, and archaeology in tandem with the on-line *Medieval North Atlantic* multimedia project in order to ground each student's understanding of Viking Britain within specific sites, structures, and artifacts which are informative and evocative.

### **Outcomes Assessment:**

How will we know that students in this course have achieved the course objectives? Students will demonstrate their growing mastery of the material in a number of ways: Literary and historical knowledge will be cultivated and illustrated through class participation and the composition of weekly response questions; retention and synthesis of the major themes of the course will be facilitated and manifested in the successful completion of final papers and projects. A much more significant measure of the success of this course, however, would be evidence of abiding student interest in and conversance with the culture of early Medieval Scandinavia, and most especially knowledge of and engagement with issues, locations, objects, and texts related to the impact of this culture upon the British Isles: This course will have been successful if students—perhaps long after the present semester—are empowered and inspired to choose to seek out and to attempt to contextualize related texts, objects, and locations. If it results in or enriches subsequent forays into the saga record & Norse Mythology, or later visits to such venues as the Viking Ship Museums in Roskilde or Oslo, or the Viking exhibits at the British Museum, or Viking Age settlements such as that at Jarlshof in Shetland, this course will have been amply successful.

### **The Fourth Credit Hour:**

In addition to our regularly scheduled class time, this course requires additional scheduled, formal meetings totaling fourteen (14) hours over the course of the semester. These hours are in addition to the usual amount of time it is to be expected that senior English majors should spend in independent research, reading, and writing activities. These hours will be scheduled at times convenient to the parties involved, and will result in specific, concrete, assessed course components. These additional hours will take two forms:

- Each student will schedule at least two (2) individual hour-long consultations with the instructor in order to develop and to refine that student's Site Report and Individual Research Project;
- Each student will participate in at least twelve (12) hours of instructor-moderated Group Work in the completion of the Group IF Project.

Please see the schedule of assignments for details regarding the timing of these meetings.

### **Course Disclaimers:**

While it is expected that, in general, each student will receive some form of publicly displayed recognition for any work of that student which appears in some recognizable form in the *Medieval North Atlantic* project, no such recognition will be awarded on C-, D+, D, D-, or F work. The student will be mentioned by name as a collaborator for C, C+, B-, or B work, while the student will receive full and due recognition in the appropriate place in the project for B+, A-, A, or A+ work. These provisos are based on the assumptions that failing work is unlikely to be used on the project at all, and thus no recognition would be due, while middling work will require substantial editing, revising, and augmenting by the instructor before it is fit for use, and thus only some acknowledgment of collaboration is due. Very good and excellent work, on the other hand, will likely pass into the project with little modification, and thus will be fully acknowledged as the student's own original work.

**Every student must sign a copyright waiver before submitting final versions of work; the student retains full rights to his or her own work: The waiver simply allows the instructor**

**to post said work on the internet. Students who have reservations in this regard should discuss them with the instructor during the initial research consultation.**

**\*ALL ASPECTS of this course must be completed in order to pass the course, regardless of the overall percentage earned.\***

**Syllabus and Schedule Subject to Change**