

**Wilfrid Laurier University
Waterloo, Ontario**

**History 215
Anglo-Saxon England, c. 450-1066
Fall 2009**

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Description of Course

This course examines the political, social, intellectual, cultural and economic development of England from the withdrawal of Rome and the Anglo-Saxon invasions to the Norman Conquest.

Course Goals

The main objective of this course is to help students explore the complex political, social and cultural history of the Anglo-Saxon period. By the end of the course, students should have an understanding of how the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms developed, how they related to their neighbors, what forces (both internal and external) shaped Anglo-Saxon institutions, and what contributions the Anglo-Saxons made to European culture.

Required Texts

James Campbell (editor), *The Anglo-Saxons*
Kevin Crossley-Holland (editor), *The Anglo-Saxon World: An Anthology*
Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* edited by Judith McClure and Roger Collins
Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge (editors), *Alfred The Great*
Additional documents from online sources and in-class handouts.

Marking scheme

Midterm	15%
Essay proposal	10%
Research paper	30%
Attendance/participation	15%
Final exam	30%

Midterm

An in-class midterm will be held on October 21st, worth 15% of your mark. You will answer one essay question in 45 minutes.

Essay proposal

An essay proposal consisting of a 500-word proposal and an annotated bibliography of at least five scholarly sources will be due November 2nd. Your proposal must discuss both the topic you've selected and the specific question your paper will be considering. Annotations must be around 50 words, briefly summarizing the source and explaining how you expect to use it in the paper. (Note: You will be required to register your topic with me two weeks prior to the due date of the proposal to ensure that you're working on something suitable.)

Research paper

A 2500-3000 word (10-12 page) research paper on a relevant topic of your choice will be due November 27th. The paper must be argumentative, not narrative. It must also utilize a minimum of eight to ten academic sources (which can be both primary documents and scholarly books/articles published post-1970). The essay must be submitted in hard copy to me on the due date and electronically to TurnItIn.Com. No essay mark will be registered unless you submit your essay in both formats.

Attendance/participation

15% will be allotted for attendance at lecture and participation in discussions. Daily attendance will be taken; excessive absences without documentation/explanation will result in a reduction of this portion of your grade.

Final exam

There will be a final exam during the December exam period. Format TBD, although it will include essay questions and some form of short answer.

Late Penalties and Extensions

Essay proposal and research papers submitted after the due date will be penalized 2% per day including weekends. The submission of the paper to TurnItIn.Com does not count as a submission.

Extensions may be granted for serious medical or personal issues only. Proper documentation must be supplied, and except in case of catastrophic circumstances, extensions must be negotiated in advance of the due date.

Accessible Learning

Students with disabilities or special needs are advised to contact Laurier's Accessible Learning Office for information regarding its services and resources. Students are encouraged to review the Calendar for information regarding all services available on campus.

Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Please see the Undergraduate Calendar for a complete definition of plagiarism. Wilfrid Laurier uses software that can check for plagiarism, TurnItIn.Com. Students in this course are required to submit their written work in electronic form and have it checked for plagiarism.

Electronic Devices

Electronic devices such as mp3 players, cell phones and pagers must be turned off during class. Laptop computers can be used in class, provided that they are used legitimately to take notes and for no other purposes; failure to comply will result in the suspension of laptop privileges.

Lecture Schedule

Sept 14 Introduction

Background (Sept 16, 18, 21)

Topics:

Celtic Britain

The Roman Conquest

Britain under the Empire

The End of Roman Britain

Readings:

Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, book I, chapters 1-6 (pg 9-16), 8-14 (pg 19-26)

Campbell, pg 8-19

Sub-Roman Britain (Sept 23, 25, 28, 30)

Topics:

Sources and Problems

'Invasion' and 'Settlement'

The Age of Arthur

Early Christianization

Origin Legends and Kingdom Formation

Readings:

Bede, book I, chapters 15-22 (pg 26-36); book III, chapter 4 (pg 114-116)

'Vortigern's Invitation' from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Crossley-Holland, pg 37)

Gildas, *Concerning the Ruin of Britain* (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/gildas.html>)

Nennius, *Historia Brittonum* (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/nennius.html>)

Campbell, pg 20-31, 34-44

New Kingdoms and New Challenges (Oct 2, 5, 7, 9)

Topics:

Beyond the 'Heptarchy'

Kent

The Augustinian Mission

Northumbria

Roman versus Celtic Christianity

The *Bretwalda*

Readings:

Bede, book I, chapters 23-33 (pg 37-61); book II, chapters 2 (pg 73-74), 5 (pg 77-80), 9-17 (pg 84-102), 19 (pg 103-105); book III, chapters 3 (pg 113-114), 5-6 (pg 116-119), 25-26 (pg 152-161); book V, chapter 22 (pg 286-288)

Campbell, pg 45-54, 58-69, 99

The Mercian Hegemony (Oct 14, 16)

Topics:

Penda, Aethelbald and Offa

Mercia and Wales

The Rise of Wessex

Readings:

Bede, book II, chapter 20 (pg 105-107); book III, chapters 21 (pg 144-145), 24 (pg 149-152).

Charlemagne's letter to Offa (Crossley-Holland, pg 189-191)

Asser, *Life of King Alfred* 14 (Keynes, pg 71-71)

Campbell, pg 70-78, 93-95, 101-114, 118-128

Medieval Day - Oct 19th - No class, but attendance at Medieval Day during class hours is expected.

Midterm - Oct 21st

The Vikings (Oct 23, 26, 28, 30)

Topics:

Lindisfarne

The Vikings and Ireland

The Great Army

The Danelaw

Alfred and the Resistance

Readings:

Bede, book IV, chapter 27-29 (pg 223-229).

The Battle of Maldon (Crossley-Holland, pg 19)

'Ashdown and Other Engagements' and 'King Alfred and Guthrum', *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Crossley-Holland, pg 39-41).

Letter from Alcuin to Ethelred of Northumbria (Crossley-Holland, pg 185-188)

The Passion of St. Edmund (Crossley-Holland, pg 228-233)

Asser, *Life of King Alfred* 1-13 (Keynes, pg 67-71), 18-21 (pg 73-74), 30-72 (pg 77-88), 82-84 (pg 97-98).

'Annals 888-92', 'Annals 893-896', 'Annals 897-900', *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Keynes, pg 113-120)

'The treaty between Alfred and Guthrum' (Keynes, pg 171-172)

Campbell, pg 76, 80-81, 132-155

Alfred the Great (Nov 2, 4)

Topics:

Reconstruction and Reform

Alfred's Renaissance

Readings:

Asser, 22-25 (Keynes, pg 74-76), 73-81 (pg 88-97).

King Alfred, preface to translation of *Pastoral Care* (Keynes, pg 124-130)

Extracts from the laws of King Alfred (Keynes, pg 163-170)

Letter from Fulco to King Alfred (Keynes, pg 182-186)

Campbell, pg 155-157, 158-159

Essay Proposal due - November 2nd

The Emergence of England (Nov 6, 9, 11, 13)

Topics:

The Conquest of the Danelaw

Consolidation under Athelstan

England and its Neighbors

English Feudalism

Readings:

The Battle of Brunanburh (Crossley-Holland, pg 19-21)

The Laws of King Athelstan (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/560-975dooms.html#The%20Laws%20of%20King%20Athelstan>)

Campbell, pg 160-181

The Late Anglo-Saxon Church (Nov 16, 18)

Topics:

Minister Culture

The 'Reform Party'

Readings:

Aelfric, *A Colloquy* (Crossley-Holland, pg 220-227)

Wulfstan, *The Sermon of the Wolf to the English* (Crossley-Holland, pg 294-299)

Campbell, pg 181-191, 201-206

Anglo-Saxon Culture (Nov 20, 23, 25)

Topics:

Beowulf and Anglo-Saxon poetry

Insular Art

Sutton Hoo

Readings:

Beowulf (Crossley-Holland, pg 70-154)

The Wanderer, The Seafarer, The Wife's Lament, The Husband's Message, Wulf, The Ruin (Crossley-Holland, pg 46-60)

The Dream of the Rood (Crossley-Holland, pg 200-204)

Campbell, pg 32-33, 92-93, 104-105, 108-109, 129, 133, 136-137, 178-179, 182-183, 186-187, 190-191, 196-197, 210-211, 218-219 (do not panic; these are all picture essays and images!)

The End of the Anglo-Saxon World (Nov 27, 30, Dec 2, 4)

Topics:

Aethelred the Unready and the Viking 'Second Wave'

Canute and the Empire of the North

The Norman Conquest

Norman Consolidation and Anglo-Saxon Resistance

Robin Hood

Readings:

Canute's letter to the people of England (Crossley-Holland, pg 29-31)

'Stamford Bridge and Hastings', *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Crossley-Holland, pg 41-43)

'Assessment of William I', *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/1186ASChron-William1.html>)

Campbell, pg 192-195, 198-201, 207-212, 214-246.

Research paper due - November 27th