Course Description:
As the Roman Empire decayed and collapsed, the lands which had once been part of the unified Empire split and had to find new ways to govern themselves and their people. The people had to find new ways to define themselves and understand their world. This period after the fall of Rome used to be called the “Dark Ages,” but as we will learn in this class, these centuries were not dark after all. This very period witnessed events which still affect our world until today: the emergence of Christianity as a universal religion, the birth of Islam, the development of new and sophisticated legal, political, and social systems, and the writing of important religious and cultural texts.

In this course we will explore the ways in which authors who wrote in this period thought of their world, how they related to the idea of Rome even centuries after its decline, and the roles that religion played in the shaping of new post-Roman identities. We will study the so-called “Barbarian” kingdoms of western Europe, but we will also spend a bit of time considering the eastern lands of the Roman Empire (Byzantium) and the Middle East. We will meet famous historical figures—Constantine, Charlemagne, Muhammad, St. Benedict—and lots of everyday people, women and men, whose names have not become bywords.

These not-so-dark ages (which we will call Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages) form an essential part of the history of western civilization, and together we will dig through their layers to uncover a brighter—and more interesting—story. We will also focus on the fundamental skills of the historian: careful reading, critical analysis, and sharp argumentation.

Reading: One of the primary goals of this class is to improve your close reading and critical analysis skills. As such, you will be asked to read a significant amount of text, take notes on important themes, words, and passages as you read, and to come to class prepared to discuss it. For each class you will be asked to read a secondary source for background, and a set of primary sources. Our main textbook is: Norman Cantor, The Civilization of the Middle Ages, which you can purchase at the Beaver Store. A second book, Two Lives of Charlemagne (Penguin), is also required and available at the Beaver
Store. You will also need to purchase a Course Packet there, readings from which are marked as (CP) on your reading list. Since it is essential that you get these materials ASAP, please let me know if you have any problems getting them.

Assignments
Here are the due dates and methods of assessment in this class:
- 10/6: Response Paper #1 due (1 single-spaced page)
- 10/13: Map + ID quiz (15 minutes)
- 10/22: Response Paper #2 due (1 single-spaced page)
- 11/7: Midterm Paper due
- 11/17: Map + ID quiz (15 minutes)
- 12/2: Blog assignment due
- TBA: Final Paper due

Grading:
Your final grade will be calculated according to the following rubric:
- Quizzes (2): 22%
- Response Papers (2): 22%
- Midterm Paper: 16%
- Final Paper: 20%
- Blog exercise: 5%
- Participation: 15%

Numeric scores relate to letter grades in the following manner:
97-100 = A+; 93-96 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+ etc.

*Policy on Late Papers:* Late papers will be marked down one grade (for example from an A- to a B+) for each day they are late past the specified deadline. If you think you are going to have a problem turning in a paper on time, consult with me as soon as possible about a deadline extension.

Attendance Policy:
I do not take attendance. However, as responsible adults, you are expected to attend every lecture unless you have an extremely good reason for missing (i.e., health emergencies and religious holidays). You must let me know in advance if you will not be in class. Not everything you need to know for this class is available in the assigned readings; you must listen to lecture in order to get all of the key concepts. In addition, we work together to create an atmosphere which enables exciting and thoughtful discussion—a group analysis of primary sources will take place during almost every lecture. Therefore, you must attend, you must come prepared to discuss the readings, and you must actively and respectfully engage in discussion with me and, just as importantly, with your classmates. Attendance and participation (which are inextricably linked, in my book) are worth 15% of your grade, but showing up in body AND mind will also facilitate better papers as well as better exam and quiz grades.
Technology Policy:
To create a safe environment for learning together, cell phones must be shut off during class. If your phone rings, I reserve the right to pick it up and speak to whomever is calling you. Texting, IM, Facebook, or other personal electronic communications are not allowed during class. In general, laptops are strongly discouraged in this class; they stifle discussion. Recent studies show that note-taking on a computer is also less effective for student learning.1 Grab a notebook and a pen and put away ESPN/Etsy/Cakewrecks.com for a few hours: your brain and your grade will greatly benefit from it.

Accommodations: Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Disability Access Services (DAS). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting me prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. I am happy to work with you as we attempt to find solutions which meet your needs within the needs of this course environment. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at (541) 737-4098.

Ethics Policy:
Student conduct is governed by the university’s policies in the Office of Student Conduct. Information and Regulations are located at http://oregonstate.edu/studentconduct/offenses-0.

It should be obvious that all work turned in or written on exams must be your own, thought up and developed by you. All ideas which come from a primary or secondary source must be properly footnoted (you may use any accepted form, albeit consistently: i.e. Chicago Style, MLA). Feel free to utilize Wikipedia for your own clarification (“What’s a Visigoth anyway?”), but do not quote from it or cite it as a source. If you are confused about the rules related to citations, paraphrasing, and plagiarism, don’t hesitate to come talk to me! Plagiarism in any form will be treated with the utmost seriousness, and reported. *Do not forget: even if cheating would work (which it won’t!), it is still disgusting and shameful.

Student Learning Outcomes
1. Identify key events, people, and ideas that shaped Europe from the fall of the Roman Empire through the year 1000 CE.
2. Examine changing modes of secular and religious rule across Europe in the wake of the fall of Rome.
3. Contextualize the rise of key Latin Christian institutions—doctrinal creeds, monasticism, and the papacy—in their larger historical settings.
4. Analyze primary sources from the period in order to understand the perspectives, assumptions, and biases of authors who wrote between the late Roman Empire and the year 1000 CE.

A final note: I am available to you to discuss ideas, review confusing course material, or help you improve within you wider academic goals. I want to get to know you. Do come to my office hours, or if you cannot make the scheduled time slot, email me and we can always find a separate time to meet.

Class Schedule:

Unit 1: The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire...Or Not

Week 1:
- M 9/29: Introduction: Late Rome and its Struggles
  - Read together in class: The Passion of Perpetua (to be handed out)
- W 10/1: The New Roman Empire: Constantine and the Creation of the Christian West
  - Reading for Today:
    - Cantor, 47-63
    - Two versions of Constantine’s Conversion: Eusebius and Lactantius (on Bb)
    - Edicts on Christianity (on Bb)

Week 2:
- M 10/6: An Evolving Empire: Huns, Goths, and Internal Change
  - Due at the beginning of class in hard copy: Response Paper #1
  - Reading for Today:
    - Cantor, 89-104
    - Tacitus, “Germany and its Tribes” (CP)
    - Ammianus Marcellinus Describes the Huns and Other Barbarians (CP)
    - Sidonius Apollinaris’s Letters (CP)
- W 10/8: The “Barbarian” West, or New Romans? Visigoths and Franks Take Power
  - Reading for Today:
    - Cantor, 104-121
    - “The Visigothic Conversion to Catholicism” (CP)
    - Gregory of Tours on Clovis (CP)

Week 3:
- M 10/13: Byzantium: Where Rome Did Not Fall
  - QUIZ #1 TODAY: Map and ID quiz at the beginning of class
  - Reading for Today:
    - Cantor, 123-131
    - Corpus Iuris Civilis (CP)
    - Procopius: On Justinian and on the Plague of 542 CE (CP)
- W 10/15: The Church Fathers and the Classical Tradition
  *How did Christianity adapt to the Roman worldview and literary tradition? When Rome became Christian, how did Christianity become Roman?*
  - Reading for today:
    - Cantor, 66-88
    - Augustine, City of God (CP)
    - St. Jerome, Letters (CP)
Unit 2: The Rise of Western Christendom

Week 4:
- M 10/20: The Rise of Monasticism and the Growth of the Papacy
  *What was revolutionary about the monastic drive? How did the Pope become a central figure of the western Middle Ages?*
  - Readings for Today:
    - Cantor, 63-66, 145-160
    - The Rule of St. Benedict (CP)
    - Defining the Ascendant Papacy: Leo the Great and Gregory the Great (CP)

- W 10/22: The Rise of Islam
  *What are the origins of Islam, and how did Islam affect the course of western medieval history?*
  - Due at the beginning of class in hard copy: Response Paper #2
  - Reading for Today:
    - Cantor, 131-143
    - Koran, surahs 1, 47 (access on www.quran.com; further instruction to come)
    - The Pact of Umar (CP)
    - Ibn Ishaq: Selections from the Life of Muhammad (CP)

Week 5:
- M 10/27: Muslim Spain and the Beginnings of the Reconquista
  *How did Spain come under Muslim rule? What was life like for those who lived there? How did Muslim Spain become a center for the creation of western Christian identity?*
  - Reading for Today:
    - “Frontiers” (CP)
    - “Two Accounts of the Muslim Conquest (711)” (CP)
    - “Christian Resistance in the North (ca. 718)” (CP)
    - “A Christian Account of the Life of Muhammad” (CP)

- W 10/29: Bede, Beowulf, and the Making of Anglo-Saxon England
  *Where does England fit into the narrative of the fall of Rome? How did England become (and then re-become) a Christian land? What does the literary tradition of Anglo-Saxon England tell us about its connections and disconnects with other parts of Christendom?*
  - Reading for Today:
    - Cantor, 161-171
    - Selections from Beowulf (to be handed out)
    - The Conversion of England (CP)

Week 6:
*This week, we will be considering the ways that historians think about history and looking at some big debates in medieval history.*
- M 11/3: Trade and Economics
  - Readings for Today:
- Background reading to be handed out.
- Evidence for Trade and Economic Life (CP)

- **W 11/5: Early Medieval Jewish Life**
  *As Europe became increasingly Christian, how did Jews fit in? How about Jews in Muslim Spain? How were they treated in law and society, and how did they envision their world? What does the study of Jews teach us about the idea of the “Middle Ages” as a concept?*
  - Readings for Today:
    - Selections from Ben-Sasson, *History of the Jewish People* (CP)
    - Augustine on the Jews (to be handed out in class)
    - “Visigothic Legislation Concerning the Jews” (CP)
    - “The Medieval Jewish Kingdom of the Chazars” (CP)

- **DUE FRIDAY BY 8 PM, submitted via email: Midterm Paper**

**Unit 3: Empire and Decline, Redux**

**Week 7:**
- **M 11/10: Charlemagne I: The Politics of Centralization**
  - Readings for today:
    - Cantor, 171-183
    - Selections from *Two Lives of Charlemagne* [Einhard: “The Early Carolingians” and “The Wars and Political Affairs of Charlemagne”; Notker: “The Wars and the Military Exploits of Charlemagne” (pp. 135-149)]
- **W 11/12 Charlemagne II: The Carolingian Renaissance**
  - Readings for today:
    - Cantor, 185-195
    - Selections from *Two Lives of Charlemagne* [Einhard: “The Emperor’s Private Life”; Notker the Stammerer: “The Piety of Charlemagne and His Care of the Church”]
    - “Five Poems of Alcuin” (CP)

*Meet with me this week to discuss final paper topics!*

**Week 8:**
- **M 11/17: Civil War, Vikings, Magyars: The Decline of the Carolingian Empire and an Expanding Christendom**
  - **QUIZ #2 TODAY:** Map and ID quiz at the beginning of class
  - Reading for Today:
    - “The Desolation of the Pagans” (CP)
    - Liudprand of Cremona: War with the Magyars (CP)
    - “Havamal: The Words of Odin the High One” (CP)

- **W 11/19: The Rise of a “Feudal” World?**
The Middle Ages is often described as an age of knights and feudalism. What is feudalism anyway? How did Christendom’s political structure change during and after the Carolingians?

- Reading for Today:
  - Cantor, 195-204
  - “Cartulary of Saint Trond, 938” (CP)

**Week 9:**
- M 11/24: Byzantium and the Eastern Mediterranean to 1000
  - Reading for Today:
    - Rosenwein, A Short History, 61-70; 139-147 (CP)
    - John of Damascus on Icons (CP)
    - Liudprand of Cremona, “The Embassy to Constantinople” (CP)

- W 11/26 NO CLASS – Happy Thanksgiving!

**Week 10:**
- M 12/1: Where are the Women in the Early Middle Ages?
  - Reading for Today:
    - Julia H. Smith, “Did Women Have a Transformation of the Roman World?,” Gender and History 12 (2000): 552-571. [*Find this through the library website, print and bring to class. NOTE: This is not available through Jstor.*]
    - Dhuoda, Liber Manualis (CP)
    - The Life of St. Liutberga (CP)

- W 12/3 Final Lecture: In the Year 1000(ish)
  - Reading for Today:
    - Cantor, 225-240
    - Ralph Glaber on the Year 1000 (CP)

*By Tuesday night (12/2) at 8 pm: Blog (about 250 words) about your final paper + respond to 2 other students’ blog posts.

*Final Paper Due: TBA*