This course will examine the period known as the Early Middle Ages. In the course of the semester we will take a look at the process by which the Roman Empire came to an end, to be replaced by fractured kingdoms carved out by tribes of people that emerged from Central Europe and Asia. In the same time period, Christianity, released from the persecution that had impeded much of its growth under the pagan, Roman emperors used its newfound freedom to expand from its Mediterranean cradle to Britain, the Balkans, the northern reaches of Europe, Scandinavia, and deep into Eastern Europe. Embryonic kingdoms that would form the basis of modern European states had also started to form and to acquire some of their modern boundaries. By the time the early Middle Ages came to an end (around 1000 A.D.), Europe was a radically different place than it had been 700 years earlier.

This course meets Segment III Requirements for those students who have completed their Segment I requirements and are Juniors and Seniors only. Additional information may be found in the SFSU Bulletin.

Required Books

Additional readings may be found online and can be accessed through the syllabus in the class website.

Grades
Class Participation: 10%
First Exam: 20%
Second Exam: 20%
Final Exam: 20%
Research Paper Abstract: 5%
Research Paper: 25%

Class Participation
Class participation makes up a full 10% of your grade—the equivalent of one letter grade. It is measured by your comments on the days that we have class discussions and
by your overall engagement in the class. I expect everyone to show up having read the assignments and ready to speak up. If you are fatally shy or believe that you cannot make useful comments, now is the time to get over it. Do not risk your grade by not speaking up.

**Exams**

There will be two exams and a final. They will not be cumulative and all will follow the same format. Each will include 15 multiple-choice questions, 15 identifications, and one essay. I will provide the essay questions in advance for you to prepare before the test. Do not be late for exams. You will not be allowed to start exams if another student has already finished and left. Missed exams can only be made up in case of a documented emergency.

**Research Paper (10 pages)**

The research paper will be on a topic of your own choosing that relies mostly on primary sources—in other words, do not go and read a couple of books on your topic and tell me what they say. Instead, put together a group of primary sources that address your particular topic, develop a thesis/argument and create a work of original scholarship. You are required to turn in an abstract that describes your paper topic along with a brief bibliography of sources and secondary material you are thinking about using. This is due on Oct. 22nd. The research paper is due Nov 29th. Late papers and abstracts will be accepted up to one week late (if it is more, do not ask), but they will be penalized 5 points a day—not a class, a day. There is more information on the website under “Research Paper.” Please make sure and read it.

**A Note on Cheating and Plagiarism**

Cheating is the actual or attempted practice of fraudulent or deceptive acts for the purpose of improving one’s grade or obtaining course credit; such acts also include assisting another to do so. Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating which consists of the misuse of the published and/or unpublished works of others by misrepresenting the material so used as one’s own work. Cheating and/or plagiarism will result in a 0 in the assignment and could result in expulsion from the University. For more on the University’s policy regarding cheating and plagiarism, refer to the University Catalog (Student Code of Conduct). A lot of apparent plagiarism occurs when students are not sure exactly how or when to credit their sources. If in doubt, double check with me.

**Graduate Students**

Graduate students will be required to turn in a 15-page research paper.

**Escape Clause**

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in case of unforeseen circumstances. If you are absent from class, it is your responsibility to check on announcements made while you were absent.
Readings

**Week 1 (8/25 – 8/27)**
Class Introduction and the Roman Empire  
Collins, ch. 1

**Week 2 (8/30 – 9/03)**
The Late Empire  
Collins, ch. 2

**Week 3 (9/06 – 9/10)**
Constantine and the End of the Persecution  
*The Passion of St. Perpetua* [online]  
*The Passion of St. Maurice and the Theban Legion* [online]  
*The Passion of St. George* [online]  
*The Acts of the Martyr Habib* [online]  
9/10: In-Class Discussion on Martyrs

**Week 4 (9/13 – 9/17)**
The Collapse of the Roman Empire  
Collins, chs. 3-4, 6  
Begin Reading Procopius’ *Secret History*, 37-195

**Week 5 (9/20 – 9/24)**
Byzantium  
Collins, ch. 8  
9/20: In-Class Discussion on Procopius’ *Secret History*, pp. 37-195  
9/24: FIRST EXAM

**Week 6 (9/27 – 10/1)**
The Early Christian Church  
Collins, ch. 5  
Begin Reading *Beowulf* pp. 3-213

**Week 7 (10/4 – 10/8)**
The Germanic Tribes  
Collins, ch. 7  
10/8: In-class discussion on *Beowulf* pp. 3-213

**Week 8 (10/11 – 10/15)**
France and Italy  
Collins, ch. 12
Begin Reading *The Age of Bede*, pp. 41-184

**Week 9 (10/18 – 10/22)**
Anglo Saxon England  
Collins, ch. 11  
**10/22: Abstracts Due**

**Week 10 (10/25 – 10/29)**
England (continued) and Spain  
Collins, ch. 9-10  
**10/25: In-Class Discussion on The Age of Bede, 41-184**

**Week 11 (11/01 – 11/05)**
Muslim Spain  
Collins, ch. 17  
**11/05: SECOND EXAM**

**Week 12 (11/8 – 11/12)**
Monks and Carolingians  
Collins, chs. 13-14  
Begin Reading *Two Lives of Charlemagne*, pp. 49-174

**Week 13 (11/15 – 11/19)**
The Carolingian World  
Collins, ch. 15-16  
**11/15: In Class Discussion on Two Lives of Charlemagne, pp. 49-174**

**Week 14 (11/22 – 11/24)**
Invasions and Instability  
Collins, ch. 18-19

**Week 15 (11/29 – 12/3)**
Women and Feudalism  
Collins, chs. 18-19  
**11/29: Research Papers Due in Class.**

**Week 16 (12/06 – 12/10)**
The Medieval World on the Brink of the Millennium  
Collins, ch. 20  
**FINAL EXAM: FRI. DEC. 17, 10:45-1:15**