**IDS 314 010**

**Vikings: History, Literature, and Mythology**

**Spring 2024**

**TR 2:00-3:15 pm**

**Tarpley 211**

**Professor: Dr. G. Johnson**

Email: GPJ@reinhardt.edu

Office Phone: (770) 720-5627

Office: Lawson 124-C

Office Hours: **MW** 11:30-12:00, 2:45-3:45 pm, **TR** 12:00-12:30,3:15-4:15 pm, and by appointment

**Course Description**

This course examines the Vikings—the infamous Scandinavian raiders, explorers, and merchants of medieval Europe—from an interdisciplinary perspective. We still study their history, literature, and mythology, as well as their impact upon the world with a focus upon Western Europe, but we will also consider their impact upon the Mediterranean, Russia, Iceland, Greenland, and North America. We will be using the Icelandic Sagas, the *Prose Edda*, selections from the *Poetic Edda* and, and the historical and archeological evidence. As time allows, towards the end of the course, we will examine the post-medieval representation of Vikings, focusing upon the material from the Victorian era to the present.

**Required Texts**

1) Roesdahl, Else***.*** *The Vikings***.** 3rd edition.  Penguin, 2018.

\*ISBN 978-0141984766

2) *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki***.**  Translated and Introduction by Jesse Byock.  Penguin Classics, 1999.

\*ISBN 978-0140435931

3) *The Sagas of Icelanders*.  Introduction by Robert Kellogg.  Penguin Classics, 2001.

\*ISBN 978-0141000039

4) Sturluson, Snorri.  *The Prose Edda*.  Translated and Introduction by Jesse Byock. Penguin Classics, 2006.

\*ISBN 978-0140447552

**Assignments and Breakdown of Grade**

Students are required to write two essays (7-8 pages each), a midterm test (essay based), and a final exam. Students will also be asked to participate regularly in class discussion, and each student is required to make several presentations (graded individually) to the class on assigned readings and questions.

Attendance and Participation: 20% (Attendance 10% and Participation 10%)

Essay 1: 20% (week 7: Feb. 22)

Mid-term Exam: 20% (week 8: Feb. 29)

Essay 2: 20% (week 15: April 18)

Final Exam: 20% (Wed., May 1, 2:30-5:30 pm)

A 90-100 B 80-89 C 70-79 D 60-69 F 59 and below

**Attendance and Participation**

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you will be unable to attend class on a given day, inform me as to the reason within 24 hours by phone or email, and I will take the excuse under advisement when compiling grades. You are required to bring the appropriate textbook(s) and have the assigned reading completed before class so that you can participate in class discussion.

Each student starts off the course with 100 points for attendance. For every unexcused class absence, a student loses 5 points. Every time a student is late to class, leaves early, or in any way disrupts class, for example by playing with his or her phone or by having his or her cell phone ring, a student loses 2 points. In addition, you will lose points if you do not come prepared to class, for example, if you do not have your books with you, or if you obviously have not done the work to prepare for the class meeting.

If you miss more than six class meetings (equivalent to three weeks of the course), you should withdraw from the class if that option is still available, as you will receive an F in the course due to lack of attendance.

For students who miss class meetings due to official Reinhardt University obligations, such as student athletes missing class to attend a tournament; these absences are excused. However, you must provide me with a team schedule as well as official documentation from your coach (usually coaches are diligent in emailing faculty about student absences). Students who miss class for such reasons must make up any missed work and keep up with the assignments.

**Class Behavior**

It is expected that students behave appropriately in class, as adults in a university setting. That is, be on time, with electronic devices are turned off and stowed away, including: cell phone, tablet, and laptop computer. Do not whisper or talk to your classmates unless we as a class are doing group work. Avoid fiddling with your bag until the class is dismissed for the day. Avoid leaving the classroom in the middle of class for anything less than an emergency. These disruptive and disrespectful behaviors will result in dismissal from the class and lowering of grade. Remember that your fellow students are making an enormous commitment in time and money to be here, so do not interfere with their ability to learn by distracting them.

**Academic Honesty**

Official RU Statement regarding Academic Integrity: “All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, and to abide by the Reinhardt Honor Code. Also, all students are expected to be familiar with the Reinhardt policy on academic dishonesty stated in the University Catalogue and in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism (Using ideas and phrases of others without crediting them, therefore, claiming those ideas and phrases as your own) will not be tolerated in this course or on this campus. To avoid such academic dishonesty, you must use a citation (footnote or in text) for all ideas drawn from your reading and research, including research in encyclopedias and online, even when you have restated those ideas in your own words.”

Additional for IDS 314 010: Plagiarism is the use of ideas or words of another writer without giving that writer proper credit for their work. In other words, you hand in an essay with ideas, written phrases, sentences, or paragraphs lifted from someone else and you do not use quotation marks or cite the fact that the material came from a source. The most egregious case is when a student hands in, as his or her own work, an entire essay taken directly from the internet.

Collusion is when two or more people write a paper together which is turned in as if it were the work of a single author. An example of this is when you have a roommate make a significant contribution to the ideas or words of your paper.

The Consequences of plagiarism or collusion are as follows: a failing grade for the assignment, a failing grade in the course, disciplinary action taken against you by the school, possibly including academic probation or even expulsion.

Spinbot:

Students who use the “synonym swap-out” websites, apps, or programs, such as Spinbot, will receive an automatic F (zero points) on the assignment in question.

ChatGPT and A.I. Tools:

Students are not allowed to use ChatGPT or any other A.I. tools for any of the IDS 314 010 assignments, whether presentations or in-class essays, unless explicitly directed to use them on a particular assignment by the professor, Dr. Johnson.

Students who are found to have used these tools for a writing assignment will receive an F (zero points) on the particular assignment, which will dramatically lower the overall grade in the course.

When these tools are used, students must make sure to use them responsibly and with transparency. In other words, include citations indicating when, where, and how such tools were used for a particular writing assignment.

See above: using ideas from a source, including A.I. tools, is plagiarism unless the source is being cited correctly.

**The Center for Student Success (CSS)**

Students are encouraged to use the Center for Student Success, located in room 313 of the Hill Freeman Library. The Center offers free peer and faculty tutoring for all subjects. For ENG assignments, students can work with the tutors there to: develop ideas about a particular assignment; receive help with a draft; receive instruction about any writing-related issue, such as how to avoid writing sentence fragments. To make an appointment, drop by room 313, or you can go to Reinhardt University’s homepage ([www.reinhardt.edu](http://www.reinhardt.edu)) and check on Academics and on the next screen, click The Center for Student Success. This next page enables students to see the tutors and times available for each subject area. At the bottom of the left column, click on Student Appointment Form. Fill in all required fields, signaled by a red dot, and submit your request. A tutor from the CSS will contact you within the same day to confirm your appointment.

**Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a documented disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Academic Support Office (ASO).

Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is located in the basement of Lawson Building. Phone is (770) 720-5567. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letters/forms.

So, students with disabilities who need extra accommodations in class, please inform and provide me with proper documentation from ASO. All such information is of course kept strictly confidential.

**COVID (official from RU)**

All students, faculty, staff and administration at Reinhardt University are subject to changes in policies if mandated by the State of Georgia. Current policies and procedures can be found at: <https://www.reinhardt.edu/back-to-campus>.

If you have any questions, please refer to the website or contact Reinhardt University at the numbers below.

Campus Nurse within the Student Health Center  
[studenthealthcenter@reinhardt.edu](mailto:studenthealthcenter@reinhardt.edu), 770-720-5542

Public Safety

**Non-Emergency Phone:** 770.720.5789  
**Emergency Phone:** 770.720.5911  
[publicsafety@reinhardt.edu](mailto:public_safety@reinhardt.edu)

Dean of Students – Dr. May

[deanofstudents@reinhardt.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@reinhardt.edu), 770-720-5540

Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs – Dr. John Miles

[VPAA@reinhardt.edu](mailto:VPAA@reinhardt.edu) or [John.Miles@reinhardt.edu](mailto:John.Miles@reinhardt.edu) .

**COVID: Specific to IDS 314 010**

We will be following the CDC recommendations regarding masking in the classroom for IDS 314 010

**COVID Transition**

High COVID incidence on campus may cause classes to be transferred to an online format. Such a transition may cause a disruption in your lives. I will work to maintain the continuity of our program, but the schedule and organization of the class may be modified to accommodate your needs and the changing condition of the university or county. (Courtesy of Leigh Zeitz)

**Technology Requirements (official from RU)**

Students should be aware of the technological requirements for engaging in class sessions delivered by online conferencing platforms. These class sessions may be accessible by smart devices (phones and tablets.) However, in some situations, a student may find that it is best to access these learning sessions through a computer (laptop or desktop.) Engaging with an online conference can be easier at a computer as it provides larger screens and easier access to chat functions.

Should the course move online, the student will need to be able to share both video and audio during online conferences, so the device chosen must support those requirements. In other words, your device must have a camera and a microphone. If the computer used to connect with an online conference does not have audio and video support, then the student may have success logging in to the conference from two sources: a computer for ease in utilizing chat functions and seeing the presentation, and a smart device to provide audio and video sharing with the conference. If logged in from two devices, please make sure to listen to the audio from the device with the microphone and mute the sound on the other device. This will prevent microphone feedback and echoes. Earphones with microphones (gaming headsets or smartphone earbuds) are recommended.

Students will likely need a computer to submit required files and file types for assignments.

**Flexibility Clause**

The instructor reserves the right to modify the course requirements and other policies as circumstances may dictate, and with sufficient notification to all students. Even the professor can have an unanticipated emergency, and the university—or the community at large—may experience an emergency that requires changing the class schedule or requirements. If I need to invoke this clause you will be notified as soon as possible via email. (Courtesy of Sally Hadden)

**RU’s Credit Hour Policy**

Over 15 weeks, students will spend 150 minutes per week in lectures, class discussion, and examinations (37.5 hours for the semester). Instructional time includes a 3-hour final exam. Out-of-class work includes homework and preparation for exams and quizzes and is estimated at around 300 minutes per week (75 hours for the semester).

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

**RU SLOs**

In IDS 314 010, we will be directly developing students’ knowledge and skills of SLOs #1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7 as seen by the above **Course Description** and **Assignments and Grade Structure** on pp. 1-2 of the syllabus.

**Reinhardt University Student Learning Outcomes**

**Communication**

Students will demonstrate:

1. Effective expression of ideas through writing, speech, and visual media.

**Critical Thinking and Inquiry**

Students will demonstrate:

1. Integrative, critical thinking and inquiry-based learning using evidence, logic, reasoning, and calculation.
2. Knowledge of various research methodologies, information, technological, and scientific literacy.
3. Independent thought and imagination; preparation for lifelong learning.

**Self, Society and Culture**

Students will demonstrate:

1. Knowledge of the traditions of Western civilization and their global context.
2. Knowledge of the diversity of societies and cultures; the ability to view themselves and the world from cultural and historical perspectives other than their own.

**Values and Ethics**

Students will demonstrate:

1. Integrity and ethical responsibility.
2. Understanding of and commitment to physical, emotional, and spiritual wellness.
3. Stewardship and civic engagement, coupled with the ability to work with others both collaboratively and in leadership roles.

**Tentative Schedule**

Week Topics and Assignments

1 Introduction to Vikings, examining and discussing key concepts including: godi, feud-culture, honor-culture, Althing, compensation, outlawry, dueling

Kellogg’s “Introduction” pp. xv-liv

Handouts including maps, chronology, etc.

“The Tale of Thorstein Staff-Struck” pp. 677-84

2

*Hrafnkel’s Saga*, pp. 436-50

Detailed discussion of analyzing Viking literature: its style, narration, dialogue, understatement, as well as themes, depiction of values (including family loyalty, power), violence (including torture), superstition, use of setting

3 *Hrafnkel’s Saga* pp. 450-62

“The Tale of Auden from the West Fjords” pp. 717-22

4 Roesdahl’s *The Vikings*, pp. 1-107; topics include: the Viking Age, geography, culture including clothing, jewelry, language, society, slavery, gender roles, children; speculation about Viking psychology and world view

Student presentations

5 Roesdahl’s *The Vikings*, pp. 108-186; topics include: Viking tactics (land and sea), weapons and equipment, trade and towns, art and poetry

Student presentations

6 Roesdahl’s *The Vikings*, pp. 187-276; topics include: Normandy, Scotland, Ireland (esp Dublin), place names, England (the great army, Danelaw), colonization (Iceland, Greenland, North America)

Student presentations

7 **Essay 1 due** **(Feb. 22)**

Roesdahl’s *The Vikings*, pp. 277 to end; topics include: rise of Christianity, rise of kingdoms, archeology (graves, coins, ships), pagan beliefs and burial practices

Handout: Ibn Fadlan’s “A Rus Ship-Burial on the Volga”

Student presentations

8 **Midterm Exam (Feb. 29)**

Introduction to Old Norse Mythology; “Introduction” to *The Prose Edda,* pp. ix-xxx

Selections from Simek’s *Dictionary of Northern Mythology* and Davidson’s Gods and *Myths of Northern Europe*

*The Prose Edda’s Prologue*

9 Spring Break

10 *The Prose Edda’s Gylfaginning*

11 *The Prose Edda’s Gylfaginning and Skaldskarparmal*

Selections from *The Poetic Edda*, including “Fafnismal”

12 *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*, beginnings up to chapter 18

Student presentations

13 *The Saga of King Hrolf Kraki*, pp. 36 to end (or chapters 19 to end):

Student presentations

Handout: selected passages from *The Saga of the Jomsvikings* (especially the execution

scene)

14 *Gisli’s Saga*, pp. 500-29; discussing the saga from combined perspectives of literature, culture, belief and superstition

Student presentations

15 **Essay 2 due (April 18)**

*Gisli’s Saga*, pp. 529 to end;

Student presentations

Historical background to Vinland Sagas

16 Vinland Sagas: *The Saga of the Greenlanders*, pp. 626-35, and *Eirik the Red’s Saga*,

pp. 653-7

17 **Final Exam, Wednesday, May 1from 2:30-5:30 pm**