The “Viking Age” was a period of raiding and trading, settlement and conquest. From the eighth to the eleventh century, there was a massive movement of people from their Scandinavian homelands across the Baltic and the North Seas, into Ireland, the British Isles, Western Europe and the Slavic lands. This course focuses on the art and material culture of the Viking Age: jewelry, coins, weapons, precious metalwork, and longships, as well as sculpture, architecture, and painting, across a wide geographical area. We will also consider the historical and literary contexts of Viking Age culture, including Norse and Icelandic sagas, and the accounts of Arab travelers.

Learning Objectives

- Become familiar with the art and architecture of the early Middle Ages in Northern Europe
- Learn to analyze, interpret, and write about material culture
- Contextualize the cultural and historical significance of objects, art works, and architecture

No prerequisite in art history is required.

Course Requirements

The course will include an 8-page paper, two in-class quizzes, a final test, and an ongoing collaborative geo-reference project. For that project, each student will contribute approximately 10 individual entries and write two short papers (1-page and 3-page). Guidelines for all assignments will be posted on the course site on Trunk. Attendance for all class meetings is expected. Lectures and class discussions will not cover the same material as course readings.

Texts and Materials

Required readings from Vikings: Life and Legend, ed. G Williams (print; bookstore), The Viking Age: A Reader, ed. A Somerville (print; bookstore), and other essays, texts, and resources posted or linked on Trunk. Regular use of the course Trunk site is required.
Grade Distribution

- Attendance and participation 10%
- Two quizzes (in-class on 2/12 and 3/24) 20% (10% each)
- Final test (exam week, 5/4) 20%
- Term paper (due 4/23) 20%
- Map Project 30%

A failing grade on any requirement, or failure to complete any requirement, may result in a failing grade for the course.

Attendance & Participation: 10% of course grade
Attendance and engaged participation are expected at all class meetings.

Quizzes (2): 20% of course grade (10% each)
Identification of terms; comparisons and short discussions of images. Not cumulative.

Final Test: 20% of course grade
Covers major objects/sites and ideas from the course. Format will be similar to that of quizzes.

Term Paper: 20% of course grade
8 pages, combining secondary-source research with analysis of objects. Topics must be approved by Prof. Overbey by 3/26. An optional draft may be submitted by 4/10.

Map Project: 30% of final grade
This collaborative class project will use an online mapping and annotation program to create an interactive map of Viking art. There are five topics to map, each with 1-3 posts per student. Each post will include an image and a 50-100 word entry on the visual and/or historical features of the site or artwork. The topics and posts will be the basis for several class discussions. Posts are due by class time on 2/5 and by 6 pm on 2/23, 3/10, 3/30, and 4/15 (note these are evenings before class meetings).

The project also includes two short papers: a 1-page paper (due 2/10) describing a work of art using methods of art historical analysis, and a 3-page paper (due 4/7) on the historical context of a work of art. Both papers will focus on objects from the Map, and both will be preparatory steps for the Term Paper.
Course Policies and Additional Information

ADA and Disabilities
Tufts University is committed to full inclusion of all students. Students who, by nature of a documented disability, require academic accommodations should contact the professor during office hours as soon as possible. Students may also speak with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (x 75571) to discuss the process for requesting accommodations.

Assignments and Absences
• All work is due as noted on the course calendar and/or Trunk.
• Work turned in late will be downgraded one-third letter grade per day.
• Any arrangements for extensions are at the instructor’s discretion, and may include a grade reduction.
• Computer and/or printer failure will not be considered a valid excuse for late or missing assignments. Most assignments will be turned in through Trunk.
• Keep a copy of all assignments until you receive your final grade for the course.
• Unless specifically requested, do not submit assignments as email attachments.
• If you are absent from class, for whatever reason, be prepared for the next class meeting by following the syllabus.
• Please notify me in advance of any scheduled absences. More than two unexcused absences, or frequent lateness, will lower your course grade. Excused absences must be documented in writing by your Dean, your academic advisor, or Health Services.

Academic Integrity
You will receive an F (zero) on any paper, exam or assignment (print or electronic) you turn in that is plagiarized in any way; plagiarism may result in a failing grade for the course and/or in disciplinary action by the University.

Plagiarism is intellectual theft, using someone else’s words and/or ideas as if they were your own; plagiarism is dishonorable, and a violation of Tufts’ policies on academic ethics and integrity. You are responsible for educating yourself about what constitutes plagiarism; please read the policies on Academic Integrity, and speak with me if you have any questions. Tufts’ Academic Integrity policy and other writing resources are available online here:
http://uss.tufts.edu/arc/writingresources/plagiarism.asp

Assignments for this course may be filtered through TurnItIn, an anti-plagiarism software program.

This syllabus subject to change. See Trunk for updates
Required Readings & Assignments

All readings should be completed before the class for which they are listed (with the exception of the first class). Additional readings may be assigned; optional readings and suggestions for further research will be listed on Trunk. Assignments are listed on the day they are due or will be discussed in class.

VLL = Vikings: Life and Legend (heavily illustrated!)
VNAS = Vikings: The North Atlantic Saga
VR = Viking Age: A Reader
(H) = Hneftafl

Week 1
R 01.15 Introduction to Vikings!
VLL 13-27

Week 2
T 01.20 The Viking Age: Mapping, Geography, Timelines
intro assignment due in class (see Trunk)
VLL 29-35
R 01.22 Viking Homelands: Settlements and Artifacts
VNAS 72-85 (PDF)
VR #1 “Voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan”

Week 3
T 01.27 Viking Homelands: Dress, Jewelry and Objects (H)
VNAS 55-71 (PDF)
Hneftafl assignment due
R 01.29 Viking Homelands: film screening

Week 4
T 02.03 Raiding and Trading: Coins and Commodities
VLL 49-62, 70-71
VR #63 “A Muslim Diplomat”
R 02.05 no class meeting MAP 1 due
Optional: meet for Hneftafl

Week 5
T 02.10 Raiding and Trading: Crossing Cultures
VLL 62-69, 72-75
1-page paper due
R 02.12 Quiz 1 (H)
Week 6
T 02.17  Warrior Culture: Viking Ships
VLL 92-96, 203-233

R 02.19  no class meeting: Monday schedule

Week 7
T 02.24  Warrior Culture: Battle Gear
VLL 77-91, 97-106, 116-117
VR #29 “Viking Warrior” and #31 “Weapons” (sections A and C)
MAP 2 due by 6 pm 2.23

R 02.26  Warrior Culture: Power and Kingship (H)
VLL 35-middle of 38, 123-150

Week 8
T 03.03  Settlements: Ireland and Scotland
VLL 97-101,120-121, and VNAS 127-141 (PDF)
VR #45 “Irish Resistance to the Norsemen”

R 03.05  Settlements: Vikings in England (H)
See Trunk for reading assignment

Week 9
T 03.10  Settlements: East and West
VLL 38-49, 72-73 and VNAS 143-145, 169-174 (PDF)
MAP 3 due by 6 pm 3.09

R 03.12  Settlements: The Scandinavian Kingdoms (H)
VLL 150-155, 158-159
VR 423 + #100 “Unification of Norway”

Week 10
T 03.17  no class meeting: Spring Break

R 03.19  no class meeting: Spring Break

Week 11
T 03.24  Quiz 2 (H)

R 03.26  Ritual and Belief: Myth, Magic, and Burial
VLL 163-182
VR #7 “Norse Creation Myth”
Paper topic due

Week 12
T 03.31  Ritual and Belief: Ritual Objects

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MAP 4 due by 6 pm 3.30

R 04.02 Ritual and Belief: Religions in Viking Britain (H)
See Trunk for reading assignment

Week 13
T 04.07 Ritual and Belief: Christianity in Scandinavia
VLL 183-201
VR 371 + # 90 “Olaf Tryggvason and the Conversion of Norway”
3-page paper due

R 04.09 Art and Narrative: Rune Stones (H)
See Trunk for reading assignment
optional draft of term paper due

Week 14
T 04.14 Art and Narrative: Sagas and Manuscripts
VNAS 186-187
Selected primary sources (see Trunk)

R 04.16 Art and Narrative: Objects with Stories
MAP 5 due

Week 15
T 04.21 Art and Narrative: Vikings in the Modern Imagination
VNAS 354-373 (PDF) + Thor (see Trunk)

R 04.23 Conclusions; Hneftafl Tournament
Term paper due

Monday May 4, 7-9 pm: Final Exam
Location TBA

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