This course is a survey of British and Irish history from the Neolithic Age to the 17th century. It explores how various cultures (Celtic, Pictish, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Scandinavian, and Norman-French) struggled for supremacy and survival over several thousand years culminating in the ascendancy of England. Major topics include Celtic culture, Roman imperialism, Viking impact, Norman conquest and the reigns of the Tudors and Stuarts.
CSU GE Area C: Arts, Literature, Philosophy and Foreign Languages  
  C2 - Humanities  
CSU GE Area D: Social, Political, and Economic Institutions  
  D6 - History

PROGRAM LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:

describe the structure, pace, and causal agents of changing historical contexts.

employ interpretative skills to reach reasoned conclusions from historical evidence.

evaluate cultural, socio-political, and economic contexts through historical time.

COURSE LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:

1. Exhibit knowledge and understanding of the course content by major areas through written work and/or other forms of testing consistent with college level expectations. (Application of knowledge SLO).

2. Appraise the value of historical knowledge for understanding more recent and/or comparable issues, events, and trends. (Relevance of History SLO).

3. Demonstrate proficiency in research, analytical, and communication skills necessary to present compelling and original arguments displaying a critical understanding of historical context, cause/effect, and/or change and continuity. Analysis should draw on both primary and secondary historical sources. (Critical thinking skills SLO).

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify, define, and differentiate between various cultures, societies, and states inhabiting ancient and medieval Britain and Ireland.

2. Appraise historic events and individuals and deduce cause-and-effect relationships to explain dynamics of change and continuity from the Neolithic era to the Tudor period.

3. Display investigatory and deductive skills analyzing a variety of source materials, including archaeological evidence, documentation in both primary and secondary sources, oral history, cartographic, diagrammatic and other visual evidence.

4. Apply comprehension of the historical record and British Isles developments in order to analyze and interpret historical primary and secondary sources.

5. Formulate essential questions, pose new interpretations, and conduct research using historical evidence.

6. Recognize the importance of conflicting interpretations and contextualize the past on its own terms.

7. Analyze the dynamics of change over time in order to explain historical causality and preserve contingency in the past.

COURSE CONTENT:

LECTURE CONTENT:

1. Insular origins of Britain and Ireland and earliest settlements (to 2000s BCE)
   A. Ice, sea, and islands
   B. The first farmers
   C. Stone Age technology, trade, and villages
   D. Ritual landscape--megaliths
E. Chambered tombs and stone circles
F. Stonehenge analysis

2. Bronze Age Revolution
   A. Metallurgy: bronze and gold
   B. Round barrow evidence
   C. Beaker people
   D. Climate catastrophe, c. 1200 BCE
   E. Recovery--crannogs and brochs
   F. Urnfield culture and end of the megaliths

3. Iron Age and the Celts
   A. The Iron Age phenomenon
   B. Ancient scholars and the Keltoi
   C. Archaeological evidence: Hallstatt and La Tene artistic styles
   D. Historical linguistics--Celtic languages
   E. Celtic mythology: ancient Irish and Welsh literature
   F. Sacred objects and beliefs
   G. Druids, society and settlements
   H. Tribal government and law (brehon laws)

4. Roman conquest and colonization
   A. Julius Caesar and the Catuvellauni, 55/54 BCE
   B. Proto-Romanization of Southern Britain
   C. Emperor Claudius and invasion of 43 CE
   D. Resistance of King Caractacus
   E. The Queen Boudicca rebellion
   F. Julius Agricola and the battle of Mon Graupius

5. Roman imperial rule and impact/legacy
   A. Administration and law
   B. Civil engineering achievements
   C. Hadrian's Wall, 120s CE
   D. Religion and culture
   E. Evidence of Roman Bath
   F. From forts and camps to towns and cities
   G. Urban and rural life
   H. Introduction of Christianity
I. Limitations of Roman impact--Scotland and Ireland

6. Lost Centuries in Britain (5th to 7th century)
   A. Roman withdrawal from Britain
   B. Migrations and massacres
   C. The Picts
   D. The Scots (Irish) and origins of Scotland
   E. Germanic invasions
   F. King Arthur: fact and fiction
   G. The Welsh and the survival of Celtic Britain
   H. Calamities of the 6th century--climate and plague

7. Ireland: "The Isle of Saints and Scholars" (5th to 7th century)
   A. The "Dark Ages" in Europe
   B. Political and socio-economic profile of ancient Ireland
   C. Irish invasions of Britain
   D. St. Patrick: fact and fiction
   E. The Celtic Church
   F. Calligraphy arts: illuminated manuscripts and Irish literature
   G. Decorative arts: Tara Brooch, Ardagh Chalice

8. Anglo-Saxon Britain (5th to 8th Century)
   A. Germanic migrations of 5th and 6th centuries
   B. Germanic Britain: the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy
   C. Government and justice
   D. Beliefs and culture
   E. Economic life and society
   F. Language and writing
   G. *Beowulf*
   H. Bede and the origins of England

9. Scandinavian Britain and Ireland (8th to 11th Century)
   A. Viking misunderstandings of history
   B. Migrations and Atlantic Europe
   C. Shipbuilding, navigation, and trade
   D. Political impact on Britain and Ireland
   E. Economic impact on Britain and Ireland
   F. Cultural impact on Britain and Ireland
G. Brian Boru and the High Kingship of Ireland
H. Changed Norse: Vikings and Christianity

10. Reorientation: Norman-French Ascendancy (11th to 12th century)
   A. William the Conqueror, 1066 CE
   B. Norman Conquest of England and Wales
   C. Domesday Book, 1087 CE
   D. The fief and the feudal state
   E. Castles
   F. Cathedrals
   G. Feudalization and Normanization of Ireland
   H. Feudalization and Normanization of Scotland

11. The Making of English Law (12th to 14th century)
   A. The Crown: the Plantagenet dynasty
   B. Church vs. Crown: Thomas Becket and Henry II
   C. Origins of English Common Law
   D. Vassals vs. Crown: the making of Magna Carta, 1215 CE
   E. Parliament: Lords and Commons
   F. The Model Parliament, 1295 CE
   G. The Good Parliament, 1376 CE

12. Medieval Wales (10th to 15th century)
   A. Law codes of Hywel Dda
   B. Norman conquest and settlement
   C. Native resilience
   D. Last independent kingdom of Gwynedd
   E. Llewelyn II and Edward I
   F. Statute of Rhuddlan and Principality
   G. Owain Gwndwr

13. Medieval Ireland (12th to 15th century)
   A. Henry II and the medieval lordship of Ireland
   B. Romanization of the Celtic Church
   C. Norman and Gael
   D. Statutes of Kilkenny, 1366 CE
   E. Trade and commerce in medieval Ireland
   F. Celtic Renaissance, 1400s CE
14. Medieval Scotland (11th to 15th century)
   A. Macbeth, tribal king of the Scots
   B. David I and the feudal kingdom of Scotland
   C. Romanization of the Celtic Church
   D. Scotland's Heroic Age: William Wallace and Robert Bruce
   E. Declaration of Arbroath and Treaty of Northampton
   F. Stewart and Douglas
   G. Trade and commerce
   H. The clans of the Highlands and Islands

15. Community of the English Realm (13th to 15th century)
   A. Towns and commerce
   B. The landholding aristocracy
   C. Life in a medieval village
   D. The Great Revolt of 1381 BCE
   E. Women in medieval society
   F. The Black Death
   G. Religious ferment

16. Decline of the Norman-French Ascendancy (14th to 15th centuries)
   A. The rise of market society (capitalism)
   B. Merchant guilds
   C. Black Death and impact on feudalism
   D. Evolution of the English language
   E. The Hundred Years' War
   F. The birth of an English national spirit
   G. The War of the Roses
   H. End of the Plantagenet dynasty at Battle of Bosworth Field, 1485 CE

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
   A. Lecture:
   B. Online:
   C. Independent Study:

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES:
COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading Assignments

General works with a British and Irish approach, encompassing the chronological period for study. Compilation texts using primary (i.e. contemporary) documents plus extracts from literary works reflecting the breadth of English, Celtic, Norse, Norman expression like Beowulf, The Mabinogion and the Orkneyinga Saga. Historical atlases to emphasize relationships between time and place.

Out-of-class Assignments

At least one significant research writing assignment will be given requiring self-initiated, self-directed learning. It is also hoped that this course will serve as a briefing or a debriefing for students taking advantage of CCCD’s current semester and summer abroad programs in Cambridge and/or Dublin.

Writing Assignments

Reading and writing skills are central to this course. Students must demonstrate, at the least, powers of understanding historical narrative, and, ideally, the ability to analyze and conceptualize events. These skills should be expressed throughout the course through essays and reports. Research skills are integral: whether through library indexes or web site search engines. The ability to transcribe primary sources - inscriptions, chronicles, epistles, land grants, treaties, letters, charters, law codes, and vernacular literature - will also be encouraged on a regular basis throughout the course.

METHODS OF STUDENT EVALUATION:

Midterm Exam
Final Exam
Short Quizzes
Written Assignments
Essay Examinations
Objective Examinations
Report
Projects (ind/group)
Problem Solving Exercises

Demonstration of Critical Thinking:

A major course objective is to develop cognitive powers through the use of primary source material - in the context of this course, namely ancient and medieval documents. Study of primary sources improves empathy and by comparison with secondary sources (i.e. History books) helps students understand how History is composed. Students will learn how to recognize the thesis, assess the reliability of evidence, recognize author bias and prejudice, reconcile conflicting and contradictory accounts, and extract the essential from the superfluous. Exercises on primary sources, both in class and take-home, will be pace regularly throughout the course.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration:

Reading and writing skills are central to this course. Students must demonstrate, at the least, powers of understanding historical narrative, and, ideally, the ability to analyze and conceptualize events. These skills should be expressed throughout the course through essays and reports. Research skills are integral: whether through library indexes or web site search engines. The ability to transcribe primary sources - inscriptions, chronicles, epistles, land grants, treaties, letters, charters, law codes, and vernacular literature - will also be encouraged on a regular basis throughout the course.

TEXTS, READINGS, AND RESOURCES:

TextBooks:


**Other:**
1. Syllabus detailing week-by-week learning objectives and course grading criteria.
2. Extensive handout material on specialized topics.
3. Extensive primary source materials as indicated in Part III (b) above in handout format.
4. Use of video and audio (where appropriate).
5. Use of slide sequences.

**LIBRARY:**

- Adequate library resources include: Print Materials
- Non-Print Materials
- Online Materials
- Services

**Comments:**

**Attachments:**

- [Attached Files](#)