

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2016-2017 SCAND 342 B1: Vikings and Sagas
(Winter Term)

Time: TR 11:00am-12:20pm

Place: T BW 1

Instructor: Dr Natalie Van Deusen
Office: Arts 316-D
Telephone: (no office phones)

E-mail: vandeuse@ualberta.ca
Office Hours: TR 10:00am-11:00am or by appt.
Fax: 780-492-9106

TA: Haiyan Xie

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Course Prerequisite: None

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed, no such projects approved.

Community Service Learning component

Required Optional None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

This course gives an introduction to the sociopolitical, literary, and cultural worlds of Viking Age and medieval Scandinavia. Through an analysis of relevant primary and secondary literature, as well as the viewing of several films, the course gives students a clear idea of not only how Vikings explored, fought, and ruled, but also how they viewed the world. As such, all key aspects of life in the Viking Age (ca. 700 – ca. 1100) will be discussed, i.e. the homeland, weapons and transportation, military action and raids, political life, expansion and settlement, religion, oral tradition, and literary production. Also considered are modern

representations of the Viking Age, and the way in which they shape our view of the Vikings and their world.

At the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- define and classify key figures, places, events in Viking Age Scandinavia
- discuss the historical and cultural contexts of the primary sources covered in the course (ranging from archaeological finds to the Sagas of Icelanders)
- describe and critically analyze the sources of information for the Viking Age
- identify and analyze portrayals of the Viking Age in modern popular culture

Texts:

V = Angus A. Somerville and R. Andrew McDonald, *The Vikings and their Age*, Second Edition (University of Toronto Press, 2014). **Note: Second Edition must be used.**

R = *The Viking Age: A Reader*, ed. Angus A. Somerville and R. Andrew McDonald (University of Toronto Press, 2010)

S = *The Sagas of Icelanders* (Penguin, 2001)

N = *Njal's Saga*, trans. Robert Cook (Penguin, 2002)

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Attendance and participation	10%
Exam 1 (February 14)	30%
Exam 2 (March 21)	30%
Final exam (April 19, 9:00am)	30%

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): Friday, May 22, 9:00a

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

* To ensure consistent student attendance, preparedness, and participation, there may be unannounced pop quizzes throughout the semester. The lowest quiz score will be dropped.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.governance.ualberta.ca/en/CodesofConductandResidenceCommunityStandards/CodeofStudentBehaviour.aspx>) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or

participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Office of Judicial Affairs](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the content author(s) or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in any course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections

[Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course attendance is required in order for the student to get full benefit from the course, and counts for 10% of the final grade. Attendance will be monitored by a daily sign-up sheet, and by unannounced pop quizzes.

Out of respect for the instructor and other students wanting to learn, texting and other cell phone use is not allowed in the classroom.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Students who consult **in advance** with an instructor regarding contingencies preventing the timely completion of an assignment may, at the discretion of the instructor, be granted an extension just one time throughout the course with no penalty. However, if a second excuse will be granted for late assignments, half of the mark assigned for this particular work will be deducted. Otherwise, all assignments should be handed in on the stated deadline. Any assignment not handed-in in time or unexcused late assignments will not be given any marks. Late excuses will **not** be accepted for any reason.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72
Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
Failure.	F	0.0	0-59

Note: Bursaries of \$150.00 will be provided by the Norwegian service club *Sons of Norway-Torskeklubben* to students who have successfully completed a Scandinavian course (incl. SCAND 399) with a minimum grade of A-.

Course Schedule

	Topic	Readings
Jan. 10	Introduction	(No reading assignment)
Jan. 12	Scandinavian homeland	V, pp. 1-8, 85-128 (“Who Were the Vikings?,” “When and What Was the Viking Age?,” “How Do We Know About the Vikings?”); R, pp. 1-15 (Chapter 1) (Second Edition: pp. 1-14 [Chapter 1])
Jan. 17	Viking Age society	V, pp. 39-42, 45-47 (“Rank,” “Slavery,” “Law”); R, pp. 17-40 (Chapter 2) (Second edition: pp. 15-38 [Chapter 2])
Jan. 19	Viking Age religion and belief	V, pp. 56-62 (“Early Religion and Belief”), R, pp. 75-113 (Chapter 4) (Second edition: pp. 39-84 [Chapter 3]).

Jan. 24	Weapons	<i>R</i> , pp. 159-192 (Chapter 6) (Second edition: pp. 117-149 [Chapter 5])
Jan. 26	Ships and seafaring	<i>V</i> , pp. 10-15 (“Viking Ships: A Catalyst of the Viking Age”); <i>R</i> , pp. 193-225 (Chapter 7) (Second edition: pp. 151-180 [Chapter 6])
Jan. 31	Viking expansion	<i>V</i> , pp. 8-10, 16-24 (“Causes of the Viking Expansion,” “Sudden and Unforeseen Attacks of Northmen: The First Viking Age”); <i>R</i> , pp. 227-271 (Chapter 8) (Second edition: pp. 181-227 [Chapter 7])
Feb. 2	Vikings in England and Normandy	<i>V</i> , pp. 25-29 (“The heathens stayed: The Second Viking Age”); <i>R</i> , pp. 273-300 (Chapter 9) (Second edition: pp. 229-258 [Chapter 8])
Feb. 7	Eastern exploration	<i>V</i> , pp. 29-30, 32-34 (“The Viking Road to the East,” “Merchants and Mercenaries”); <i>R</i> , pp. 301-327 (Chapter 10) (Second edition: pp. 259-290 [Chapter 9])
Feb. 9		--
Feb. 14	EXAM 1	--
Feb. 16	Origins of the Icelandic saga	<i>S</i> , pp. 677-684 (The Tale of Thorstein Staff-Struck)
Feb. 21-23	(Reading week—no class)	(Reading week—no class)
Feb. 28	Vikings in North America	<i>V</i> , pp. 31-32 (“Into the Western Ocean”); <i>S</i> , pp. 636-674 (The Saga of the Greenlanders and Eirik the Red’s saga)
Mar. 2	The outlaw	<i>S</i> , pp. 496-557 (Gisli’s saga); Film, <i>The Outlaw</i> (in class)
Mar. 7	The outlaw	Film, <i>The Outlaw</i> (in class)
Mar. 9	The warrior poet	<i>V</i> , pp. 68-70 (“Egil Skallagrimsson”); <i>S</i> , pp. 3-108 (Egil’s saga)
Mar. 14	The warrior poet	<i>S</i> , pp. 108-184 (Egil’s saga)
Mar. 16	Vikings in love	<i>S</i> , pp. 558-594 (The Saga of Gunnlaug Serpent-Tongue)
Mar. 21	EXAM 2	--

Mar. 23	Blood feud	<i>N</i> , pp. 1-97 (chs. 1-56)
Mar. 28	Blood feud	<i>N</i> , pp. 98-198 (chs. 57-118)
Mar. 30		<i>N</i> , pp. 198-310 (chs. 119-159)
Apr. 4	Gender in the Viking Age	<i>V</i> , pp. 42-45, 80-81 (“Women,” “Families,” “Children,” “Unn the Deep-Minded”); <i>S</i> , pp. 276-357 (The Saga of the People of Laxardal)
Apr. 6		<i>S</i> , pp. 358-421 (The Saga of the People of Laxardal)
Apr. 11	The end of the Viking Age; the Viking legacy; exam review	<i>V</i> , pp. 34-35, 62-66 (“The End of the Viking Age,” “Conversion”); <i>R</i> , pp. 463-489 (Chapter 15) (Second edition: pp. 455-481 [Chapter 14])

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, April 19, 9:00a