MDVL 201  **Medieval Lit and Culture**  credit: 3 hours.
Same as CWL 253 and ENGL 202. See ENGL 202.
This course satisfies the General Education Criteria for a:
- Humanities – Lit & Arts
- Cultural Studies - Western

Humanities - Lit & Arts, and Cultural Studies - Western course.
In this class we’ll traverse the medieval globe, with layovers in Ireland, England, and Germany; China and Japan; and Persia and West Africa, sampling as we go great literary works (all in English translation) from each civilization during the period corresponding to the European “Middle Ages.” Starting out in Ireland we’ll read the outrageous epic The Táin, about a cattle-raid led by the warrior-queen Medb of Connacht against the Ulstermen and their boy-hero Cuchulainn (whose weirdest super-power is his grotesque “warp-spasm”). We’ll then cross the Irish Sea to read the Lais of Marie de France (who lived in England, actually), in which desperate housewives and courtly lovers inhabit a medieval fantasy world at once naïve and sophisticated. On our tour of East Asia we’ll take up Chinese Tang Dynasty poems, exquisitely concise observations of nature, culture, and human emotion; the Tale of Genji, a leisurely narrative about the affairs (and marriages) of the “shining prince” of the Japanese imperial court; and The Confessions of Lady Nijo, a scandalous memoir of the affairs (and travels) of an imperial concubine who became a Buddhist nun and whose favorite book was—the Tale of Genji! Passing through medieval Iran on our way back to Europe, we’ll read Vis and Ramin, a Persian romance about a queen’s affair with her husband’s brother. Then we’ll make for Germany to compare Vis and Ramin with Tristan and Isolde, a European variation on the same basic story, but in a very different setting and with a very different ending. And finally we’ll venture south into medieval and modern Africa to attend a recitation of The Epic of Sunjata (preserved in twentieth-century oral versions but with roots reaching back to the thirteenth century), whose hero overcomes a physical disability as well as the enmity of the queen stepmother and her own son. Our fifteen-week mission: to explore strange old worlds—to seek out medieval life and medieval civilizations!

MDVL 345  **Medieval Civilization**  credit: 3 hours.
Same as HIST 345 and REL 345. See HIST 345.

Description: This is an introduction to the cultural history of Western Europe during a pivotal millennium, from the fifth to the fifteenth century. It is this (“medi-eval”) era that generated today’s forms of education, identity, law, government, language, literature, architecture, art, and religious belief. We will study some of the key texts and artifacts plus cutting-edge historical scholarship on crucial developments. Readings include the Rule of St. Benedict, the Song of Roland, the letters of Heloise and Abelard, select medieval romances and fables, the Inferno of Dante, and new interpretations of the Black Death as the first global pandemic. Throughout the semester, we will focus on three main sites of interaction and energy: the monastic cloister, the princely court, and the medieval city. There are no prerequisites; students will be required to participate actively and thoughtfully in class discussions and exercises, complete all readings and assignments, two take-home exams and write two short papers.
**MDVL 413  Dante**  credit: 3 OR 4 hours.
Same as CWL 413 and ITAL 413. See ITAL 413.

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Credit Hours: 4 hours
Restricted to Graduate - Urbana-Champaign.
This section for Graduate students

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Credit Hours: 3 hours
Restricted to Undergrad - Urbana-Champaign.
This section is for Undergraduate students.

**MDVL 500  Seminar in Medieval Studies**  credit: 4 hours.
Team-taught, interdisciplinary seminar on varying topics in Medieval Studies drawing on faculty from UIUC and invited scholars from other universities. Approved for letter and S/U grading. May be repeated to a maximum of 12 hours.

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Medieval Animals
Medieval Animals Description: This seminar explores the boundaries between humans and animals. The categories we will use to investigate the distinctions between animals and humans include metamorphosis, contagion, education, taxonomy, subjugation, hunting, representation, anthropomorphism and zoomorphism, wilderness, misogyny, and promiscuity. To probe these categories and distinctions, we will make use of a series of critical approaches, from critical animal studies to posthumanism. A series of guest speakers, from Illinois and other Universities, will participate in the seminar. Meets with ITAL510.