

University of Regina

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Medievalism at the University of Regina is characterised by strong student interest at the mid-undergraduate level, but also by limited student interest at the graduate level and limited faculty resources. The faculty in the medieval area are mostly in the Departments of History and English, as well as the Faculty of Fine Arts.

The only faculty member who can be said to be devoted exclusively to teaching and research in the Middle Ages is Allison Fizzard of the History Department of Campion College, the Roman Catholic federated college at Regina. Allison manages to rotate a bewildering array of classes on the Middle Ages, including HIST 265 Early Middle Ages 300-1100, HIST 266 Western Europe in the Later Middle Ages 1100-1400, HIST 366 Cultural History of the Middle Ages, HIST 367 Women in Medieval Europe, HIST 467 Marriage and Family in the Middle Ages, in addition to HIST 100 classes that focus on medieval themes, such as the first crusade and the Black Death. She has also expressed an interest in teaching another course in the calendar, RLST 243 Medieval Christianity. The institutional interest of Campion College is also manifested in its offering of PHIL 212 Medieval Philosophy, although the college is now in the process of recruiting a scholar to teach this class. One further History class, HIST 200 English History 1327-1536, is taught by Robin Swales, whose main research interests are in English history of the Commonwealth period.

The English Department annually offers classes in Chaucer and in Medieval English Literature at the 300-level. These classes are largely introductory and require students to read Chaucer, lyrics, and drama in Middle English, but other works such as Old English texts and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in translation. I have also offered on occasion seminars for honours and graduate students on medieval topics, such as Early English Drama, Old English, and Women in the Middle Ages. Two

tenured faculty members, Tom Chase and I, are responsible for these classes, but our teaching availability is limited by the fact that we also are the only department members who teach our courses in Linguistics (including ENGL 365 History of the English Language), and by the fact that administrative duties (for me, as English Department Head; for Tom, as Director of the Centre for Academic Technologies) restrict us both to less than half-time teaching loads. To help alleviate this problem, we have hired Stephen Moore on a limited-term contract.

The Faculty of Fine Arts does not have any faculty who are primarily medievalists, but the university calendar lists the following classes: THEA 351 Studies in Theatre of the Middle Ages and 16th Century Italy, ARTH 202 Medieval Art History, MU 210 History of Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance Periods. Unfortunately, only the Theatre course is offered regularly, taught by Mary Blackstone, whose research interests are mainly in the early modern period.

Student interest in these classes is strong at the 200 and 300 levels. The History classes regularly reach their enrolment limits (30 at the 200-level, 20 at the 300-level). The English and Theatre Department classes usually have healthy enrolments as well, but with some variation from semester to semester. The last time I taught Chaucer in 2002, the classes had 32 students. The students in these classes have a varied profile. Many are subject majors who feel they need the historical background, but others are students from other departments and even faculties who are fascinated with things medieval. Members of the Society for Creative Anachronism regularly take our courses. At the senior undergraduate and Honours levels, the enrolments are weaker. There is very limited interest amongst graduate students, although I currently supervise two M.A. students who are writing theses on Middle English texts. We have had a few students finish M.A. theses on medieval topics in the past few years.

Allison, Stephen, and I are the only faculty engaged in research on medieval topics. Allison's research interests are in the area of relations between religious houses and the lay community in Devon, in the period before the Dissolution. My current work deals with the dynamic of dialect and standardisation in fifteenth-century English, while Stephen is working on Romance and reader-response theory. Obviously, Allison and I make extensive use of primary documents in our projects, while Stephen uses canonical literary texts. Other faculty who teach medieval courses do research in other periods or areas.

The advent of the Medieval and Early Modern Studies Colloquium (MEMSC) two years ago on the initiative of Allison Fizzard has improved interdisciplinary contact immensely among University of Regina scholars in both periods. This group includes faculty and graduate students of the departments of History, English, Theatre, Visual Arts, and Philosophy. Activities include hosting visiting speakers, paper presentations by members of the colloquium, and social get-togethers to share research interests. In time it is hoped that MEMSC may propose some changes to curriculum and degree structure, such as by offering a team-taught interdisciplinary course in medieval studies and possibly a medieval studies minor.

In conclusion, medieval studies at the University of Regina continues to fulfill a role at the core of several programs, and student interest at the lower and mid-undergraduate levels continues to be solid. I think we all feel a somewhat limited understanding of what we do on the part of our colleagues, but I have no sense of outright hostility from them, and no sense that our courses are under threat. Morale amongst the medievalist faculty is strong, as is our collegial interest in each other's research.