Dr. Anthony di Battista  
adibatti@nac.net

Course Description –

The Harvest of the Middle Ages hopes to provide students with an understanding of the key aspects of the history of Europe from the time of the First Crusade to the beginnings of the Renaissance. Special attention will be paid to the growth of feudal institutions, the rise of centralized states, and the late medieval crisis.

Required Texts –

Maurice Keen, The Pelican Medieval History of Europe (Penguin, 1968)  
Jean Froissart, Chronicles (Penguin, 1968)

All texts have been ordered through the Rutgers University BookStore.

Assignments –

Grades will be assigned on the basis of one mid-term examination, one final examination, and one analytic book review. The midterm and final examinations will test your knowledge of both lecture material and assigned readings from the texts. They will be divided into two sections. The first section will require you to identify and describe the historical significance of a selection of people, places, dates or concepts. This section is designed to test the level of detailed knowledge you have acquired in the course. The second part of the examination will require you to answer a mandatory essay question that deals with a general theme in the course. In asking such a question, you should be able to display independent, analytic thought about broad historical developments in the period covered by the course. You should also be able to integrate material from lectures and assigned readings and develop a consistent argument that addresses the issues raised in the essay question. The analytic book review is designed to allow you to analyze
historical arguments in a systematic fashion. This will require a critical perspective of the book you are reading that focuses both on the strengths and weaknesses of the text.

Attendance-

Because of the unique nature of the course schedule, regular and punctual attendance is required. Missing more than one class will result in the loss of one full grade. Exceptions will be made only for extended medical or personal problems that can be satisfactorily documented.

Schedule of Lectures and Required Reading

January 19  An introduction to medieval society.

January 26- The Growth of Towns and Trade
Reading: Hollister (Chapter 7), Economic Takeoff and Social Change; Keen (Chapter 6), The Expansion of Europe.

February 2- The Rise of the Gothic
Reading: Hollister (Chapter 12), Literature, Art and Thought.

February 9- The Rise of the new Religious Orders & the Crisis of the Church
Reading: Hollister (Chapter 8) New Paths to God; Keen (Chapter 7) New Movements in Thought and Letters.

February 16- High and Low Culture: Palio and Carnival
Reading: article handouts

February 23– Medieval Love and Medieval Marriage
Reading: article handouts

March 1- The Black Death and medieval disease.
Reading: Hollister (Chapter 13) Famine, Plague, and Recovery.

March 8- mid term examination
March 15 - Spring Break.

March 22 - Popular Rebellions
   Reading: Keen (Chapter 18) Politics and Political Society in an Age of Wars; Froissart, selections.

March 29 - Heresy and the Medieval Inquisition
   – Analytical Book Review due: Carlos Ginzburg’s The Cheese and the Worms.

April 5 - reading period

April 12 - The Development of England and France
   Reading: Hollister (Chapter 11) States in the Making; (Chapter 14) Towards the Sovereign State

April 19 - The Hundred Years’ War
   Reading: Keen (Chapter 17) The Hundred Years’ War; Froissart, selections.

April 26 - Intimations of the Renaissance
   Reading: Hollister (Chapter 15) Diversity and Dynamism in Late Medieval Culture; Keen (Chapter 21) The Break with Traditional Attitudes.

Final Examination