

**01:510:255:90 DRACULA — FACTS & FICTIONS**  
**Winter Session 2018**  
**Professor Stephen W. Reinert (History)**

*COURSE FORMAT*

The course content and assessment components (discussion forums, examinations) are fully delivered online.

*COURSE OVERVIEW & GOALS*

Everyone's heard of "Dracula" and knows who he was (or is!), right? Well ... While it's true that "Dracula" — aka "Vlad III Dracula" and "Vlad the Impaler" — are household words throughout the planet, surprisingly few have any detailed comprehension of his life and times, or comprehend how and why this particular historical figure came to be the most celebrated vampire in history. Throughout this class we'll track those themes, and our guiding aims will be to understand: (1) "what exactly happened" in the course of Dracula's life, and three reigns as prince (voivode) of Wallachia (1448; 1456-62; 1476); (2) how serious historians can (and sometimes cannot!) uncover and interpret the life and career of "The Impaler" on the basis of surviving narratives, documents, pictures, and monuments; (3) how and why contemporaries of Vlad Dracula launched a project of vilifying his character and deeds, in the early decades of the printed book; (4) to what extent Vlad Dracula was known and remembered from the late 15th century down to the 1890s, when Bram Stoker was writing his famous novel ultimately entitled *Dracula*; (5) how, and with what sources, Stoker constructed his version of Dracula, and why this image became and remains the standard popular notion of Dracula throughout the world; and (6) how Dracula evolved as an icon of 20th century popular culture, particularly in the media of film and the novel.

Such will be the key ingredients for this particular course, and at the end you'll hopefully have learned basic techniques for dissecting famous historical images, sifting and evaluating historical evidence, and establishing the difference between "historical facts" and "inspired fictions." You'll also have developed a sound beginning understanding of the dynamics of Balkan and early Ottoman political and military history, at the dawn of the early modern period.

*BOOKS & MATERIALS*

All readings and materials for this course are delivered online in the course Sakai site, or are accessible elsewhere on the internet.

Core readings from books in print will come from the following five items, which fall into the "required reading" category. Students wishing hard copies of these should obtain them from whatever vendor they choose. But for convenience, the items currently in print are on order through the Rutgers New Brunswick Barnes & Noble Bookstore:

- > Bruce A. McClelland, *Slayers and their Vampires: A Cultural History of Killing the Dead* (2006). ISBN 0-472-06923-3.
- > Raymond T. McNally and Radu Florescu, *In Search of Dracula: The History of Dracula and Vampires*, rev. ed. (1994). ISBN 0-395-65783-0.
- > David Skal, *Hollywood Gothic*, rev. ed. (2004). ISBN 0-571-21158-5.
- > Stoker, Bram, *Dracula*. Any edition will do, but the Penguin Classics edition has been ordered through the Rutgers Barnes & Noble Bookstore.
- > Kostova, Elizabeth, *The Historian: A Novel* (2005). ISBN 0-316-07063-7.

We will be studying parts of three additional books which are no longer in print, as follows. Relevant chapters will be made available for students online. Stated otherwise, students need not attempt to find copies of these books.

- > Radu Florescu and Raymond T. McNally, *Dracula: A Biography of Vlad the Impaler, 1431-1476* (1973). Amazon has used copies available through their associate sellers at reasonable prices, for those wanting to purchase one.
- > Kurt Treptow, *Vlad III Dracula: The Life and Times of the Historical Dracula* (2000). Difficult to find and expensive.
- > M. J. Trow, *Vlad the Impaler: In Search of the Real Dracula* (2003). Amazon has used copies available through their associate sellers at reasonable prices, for those wanting to purchase one.

We will study two “Dracula films” as part of the course:

- > Todd Browning's *Dracula* (1931), with Bela Lugosi playing Dracula.
  - > Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula*, with Gary Oldman playing Dracula.
- Students may access these films however they wish. Inexpensive purchases (under \$10) are available through Amazon Instant Video.

Additional readings and materials (e.g., essays, maps, chronologies) will be provided online.

### WEEKLY AGENDA

“Weekly Agenda” refers to the learning and assessment activities that make up the course, over the normal winter semester of four weeks. The specific agenda for each work day (including all readings, assignments, advisories, etc.) is outlined within the Sakai tool “Lessons,” and is made available to students the week in which this agenda is explored. Students will be prompted, on a weekly basis, where they should be focusing via an announcement from the instructor.

The “Weekly Agenda” is currently envisioned as follows:

#### WEEK 1

- > Lesson 1: Introduction & Navigating the Course Online

#### WEEK 2

- > Lesson 2: Images of Dracula

- > Lesson 3: Vlad II Dracul, Part 1 — 1395-1436
- > Lesson 4: Vlad II Dracul, Part 2 — 1436-1447
- > Lesson 5: Vlad III Dracula, Part 1 — 1448-1460
- > Lesson 6: Vlad III Dracula, Part 2 — 1460-1476

### WEEK 3

- > Lesson 7: The Vilification of Vlad III Dracula in Early Modern Media
- > Lesson 8: The Saxons & Their Legacy in Transylvania
- > Lesson 9: The Medieval & Early Modern Folkloric Vampire
- > **First Exam & First Forum Discussion**

### WEEK 4

- > Lesson 10: Lurching into Modernity — Bram Stoker & His Creation of Count Dracula
- > Lesson 11: The Earliest American Dracula Film — Tod Browning's Dracula (1931)
- > Lesson 12: Francis Ford Coppola's Bram Stoker's Dracula (1992)
- > Lesson 13: Elizabeth Kostova's The Historian
- > **Second Exam & Second Forum Discussion**

### *REQUIREMENTS & GRADING WEIGHTS*

Students are expected to work through the assigned reading etc., in each weekly lesson, on a regular and disciplined basis. Students should recognize that successfully navigating an online course is academically challenging, since they will accomplish virtually all of their work on an independent basis. The challenge is particularly intense in a winter session course, since the available time is so compacted. Thus, successfully completing the course will require a significant time commitment, involving digesting of assigned materials, becoming familiar with Sakai protocols and tools, engaging in two online forum discussions, and taking two online examinations.

The components of the course grade are as follows:

- > 30% = Examination #1
- > 30% = Examination #2
- > 20% = Discussion Forum #1
- > 20% = Discussion Forum #2

In the Sakai Gradebook Tool, letter grades are calculated by default on the following scale:

- > A = 90-100%
- > B+ = 85-89.99%
- > B = 80-84.99%
- > C+ = 75-79.99%
- > C = 70-74.99%
- > D = 60-69.99%
- > F = 0-59.99%

The instructor reserves the right, however, to adjust the percentage breaks (and hence grades) according to a curve better reflecting overall class performance, in relationship to the complexity and difficulty of the assessment.

### *DISCUSSION FORUMS*

All students are expected to participate in a total of two Sakai Discussion Forums. Students will be assigned to participate in a numbered group, of approximately ten participants each. The exact discussion topics will be directly related to readings, online presentations, and resources or media assigned as part of the “Weekly Agenda.”

In participating in the forums, students are expected to enter at least three posts — one stating their position on the proposed discussion topic (around 500 words), and two more in response to what others in their Forum group are posting (around 100 words each). Presentation in the main posting is expected to include references to relevant assigned reading, and if this is missing, points will be deducted. Work in the discussion forums is worth 40% of the overall course grade. Stated otherwise, each discussion forum counts for 20% of the total course grade.

### *ONLINE EXAMINATIONS (ASSESSMENTS)*

This course will have two assessment or exam periods, in which students will be required to take an online test, via our Sakai course website. These assessments comprehensively test students' understanding of material covered throughout the lessons preceding the test date. An advisory on the content of these exams will be posted, highlighting factual information that will be important to review and master. In the assessment periods, students may take the online exam, within the specified three day exam period, at their convenience. For each exam, students are allowed eighty (80) minutes to answer the questions. Students are allowed to take each exam twice, the highest score being recorded in the Sakai Gradebook record.

### *ONLINE & ON TIME*

Some online courses offer substantial flexibility regarding completion dates for assignments, but "Dracula: Facts & Fictions" does not. The deadlines for participation in the discussion forums and online exams are not negotiable. If, for whatever reason, this policy does not suit your needs, you should not take this course.

### *SPECIAL NEEDS*

Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, abides by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments (ADAA) of 2008, and Sections 504 and 508 which mandate reasonable accommodations be provided for qualified students with disabilities and accessibility of online information. If any student has a disability and may require some type of instructional accommodation, please

contact the instructor early in the semester so that he can provide or facilitate in providing accommodations needed. Students with disabilities will need to register with the Office of Disability Services, the designated office on campus to provide services for students with disabilities. The Office of Disability Services is located in the Lucy Stone Hall, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Ave., Suite A145. For further information and contact numbers visit the website <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu> .

### *PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC INTEGRITY*

Cheating on tests or plagiarizing in assigned work deprives you of the educational benefits of preparing these materials appropriately. It is also personally dishonest and unfair because it gives you an undeserved advantage over your fellow students who are graded on the basis of their own work. Following the Rutgers History Department policy on these matters, cheating and plagiarism will be treated as the serious offenses they are. Suspected cases will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs and will be punished with penalties that are appropriate to the gravity of the infraction. For comprehending this policy, please visit the website of the Rutgers Office of Student Conduct, in particular the pages under "Academic Integrity": <http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu> .