

**01:510:255:90 DRACULA: FACTS & FICTIONS  
PROVISIONAL SYLLABUS FOR FALL SEMESTER 2021**

### CONTACTING YOUR PROFESSOR

- > Instructor: Stephen W. Reinert (Professor)
- > Meeting Times: The course content and assessment components (discussions, examinations) are fully delivered online.
- > Instructor's Email: [sreinert@history.rutgers.edu](mailto:sreinert@history.rutgers.edu)
- > Instructor's Office: Van Dyck Hall, Room 218, College Avenue Campus
- > Consultation: Since this is a fully online asynchronous course, Professor Reinert will not hold regular office hours in Van Dyck 218. Students are welcome, however, to email him and schedule a special office or virtual meeting, as needed. In addition, opportunities for synchronous consultation and discussion via Zoom will be scheduled.

### 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 (voivod) 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; (6) how modern historians developed a credible reconstruction of Vlad III's life and career, from the 19th century to the present; (7) 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 Canvas site or are accessible elsewhere on the internet.

The core required books are as follows:

- > Matei Cazacu, edited by Stephen W. Reinert, *Dracula* (2017), ISBN 978-90-04-34725-0.
- > 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.
- > Bram Stoker, *Dracula*. Any edition will do, but the Penguin Classics edition has been ordered through the Rutgers Barnes & Noble Bookstore.
- > Elizabeth Kostova, *The Historian: A Novel* (2005). ISBN 0-316-07063-7.

Students wishing hard copies of these books should obtain them from whatever vendor they choose. But for convenience, McNally & Florescu, Skal, Stoker, and Kostova are on order through the Rutgers New Brunswick Barnes & Noble Bookstore.

The list price for Cazacu & Reinert is exorbitantly high (\$172). Students will be able to access for free the entire book in electronic format through the Rutgers Library. Also they have the option of buying an inexpensive (\$25) hard copy of this book through the "Brill MyBook" program, which "enables users to purchase a print-on-demand paperback copy of books of their choosing, provided they have access to the e-book version via their institution." Those interested, however, should be aware that the production process can be very slow. If you are interested, however, visit the Brill MyBook Page on the Alexander Library record for its ebook, and read on how to make your order.

The films we will study are available on internet. Those who wish to rent or purchase their own copies should search the items on Amazon for inexpensive possibilities:

- > Todd Browning's *Dracula* (1931), with Bela Lugosi playing Dracula. An inexpensive version is available in Universal Studio's Classic Monster Collection.
- > Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992), with Gary Oldman playing Dracula. Inexpensive versions are available via Amazon DVD, and Amazon Instant Video.

## WEEKLY AGENDA

"Weekly Agenda" refers to the learning and assessment activities that make up the course, over the normal semester sequence of sixteen weeks. The specific agenda for each week (including all readings, assignments, advisories, etc.) is outlined within the Canvas Modules, and is made available to students the week in which this agenda is explored.

The "Weekly Agenda" is currently envisioned as follows:

Week 1: Introduction & Navigating the Course Online.

Week 2: Images of Dracula.

Week 3: Vlad II Dracul, Part 1 — 1395-1436 & Non-graded "Icebreaker" Discussion.

Week 4: Vlad II Dracul, Part 2 — 1436-1447 & First Graded Discussion.

Week 5: Vlad III Dracula, Part 1 — 1448-1462.

Week 6: Vlad III Dracula, Part 2 — 1462-1476 & Second Graded Discussion.

Week 7: Quiz (Exam) #1.

Week 8: The Vilification of Vlad III Dracula in Early Modern Media Spring Break (March 14-20).

Week 9: The Saxons & Their Legacy in Transylvania & Third Graded Discussion.

Week 10: The Medieval & Early Modern Folkloric Vampire.

Week 11: Bram Stoker & His Creation of Count Dracula & Fourth Graded Discussion.

Week 12: Quiz (Exam) #2.

Week 13: The Earliest American Dracula Film — Tod Browning's *Dracula* (1931).

Week 14: Francis Ford Coppola's *Bram Stoker's Dracula* (1992). Optional Fifth Graded Discussion.

Week 15: Elizabeth Kostova's *The Historian*.

Week 16: Quiz (Exam) #3.

## REQUIREMENTS & GRADING WEIGHTS

Students are expected to work through the assigned reading etc., in each weekly Module 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. This will require a significant time commitment, involving digesting of assigned materials, becoming familiar with Canvas protocols and tools, engaging in five to six online discussions, and taking three challenging online examinations.

The components of the course grade are as follows:

- > 20% = Quiz (Exam) #1 (100 points possible)
- > 20% = Quiz (Exam) #2 (100 points possible)
- > 20% = Quiz (Exam) #3 (100 points possible)
- > 40% = Graded Discussions #1-4 (48 points possible)

In Canvas Gradebook, 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.

## DISCUSSIONS

Six Canvas Discussions will be scheduled throughout the semester. Five of these are required, four of which are graded. The final Discussion is optional, but those who participate will receive extra credit points. The exact discussion topics will be directly related to readings, online presentations, and resources or media assigned as part of the "Weekly Agenda."

Discussions will take place the following weeks of the course:

- > Week 3: ungraded practice discussion ("Icebreaker), designed to build community and ensure that everyone understands how to participate in Canvas discussions. This Discussion remains open the entire course.
- > Week 4: first of five, Tuesday-Saturday time frame, graded Discussions.
- > Week 6: second of five, Tuesday-Saturday time frame, graded Discussions.
- > Week 9: third of five, Tuesday-Saturday time frame, graded Discussions.
- > Week 11: fourth of five, Tuesday-Saturday time frame, graded Discussions.
- > Week 14: fifth of five, Tuesday-Saturday time frame, graded Discussions, optional for extra credit.

### Format and Scoring of Graded Discussions:

In participating in these discussions, students are expected to enter three postings. The first and most substantive -- in effect, a "mini-essay" -- should be ca. 500 words. Here students state their position on the proposed discussion topic, buttressed with references to relevant assigned readings. If these are missing, points will be deducted. Information etc. from non-assigned sources (in particular Wikipedia and the like) will not be accepted.

The additional two postings will represent responses to what others in the class have presented, in their main postings. Expectation here is ca. 100 words, for each response posting. Here students are required to submit intelligent interventions that comment in a meaningful way on what fellow students have posted, and likewise exhibit knowledge of the relevant assignments and readings. Repeating what already has been said counts for little. The key here is to go deeply into the week's materials while learning, at the same time, from observations of fellow students.

Scoring of the graded discussions is 0-10 points.

### Timetable for Graded Discussions:

Discussions will open at 12:01 AM (i.e., after midnight) on Tuesday of the week in which the Discussion is scheduled to run. Students are encouraged to submit the main (500 word) posting before 11:50 PM the following Thursday. Those who do so will receive an additional two (2) "Early Bird Submission" points. All postings (main, 2 responses) must be completed by 11:50 PM the following Saturday.

Extensions and make-up possibilities will be allowed only for documented medical or crisis situations.

In scoring your postings, we'll be using a rubric developed by Dr. Susan Wegmann, a professor of education. "Rubric," by the way, in this context simply means explicit grading instructions for a project such as an online discussion.

### ONLINE EXAMINATIONS (QUIZZES)

Three weeks of the course will be designated "online exam (quiz) weeks." During each of those weeks, you will be required to take an online multiple-choice test, via our Canvas course website, which comprehensively assesses your understanding of material covered throughout the Modules preceding the test date. An advisory will be provided in advance of the exam period highlighting factual information that will be important for you to review and master to perform effectively on the exam. Each exam will be worth one hundred (100) points maximum.

The exam (quiz) weeks will be:

- > Quiz #1: Week 7, covering Modules 1-6
- > Quiz #2: Week 12, covering Modules 8-11
- > Quiz #3: Week 16, covering Modules 12-15

Exams will be available via Canvas "Quizzes" from 12:01 (i.e., after midnight) the Sunday of the designated exam week, and will close (i.e., no longer be available) as of 11:50 PM the following Saturday. Please note that you do not have the option of "starting and stopping" in taking the exam. Once you begin, you must continue until you finish, and if you stop early you will receive only partial credit for the portion you have completed. You DO have the option of taking the exam twice. In other words, if you are not satisfied with the results of your first test, you may take it again during the exam period. We will accept the highest of the two scores. Students are expected to take each examination as scheduled. Students for whom these scheduled dates present a legitimate conflict must contact the instructor as early in the semester as possible to work out alternative arrangements, if such are warranted.

### 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 Discussions 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, consult the ODS website

## 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. In cases of confusion or uncertainty, a warning will be given. Repeat offenses or suspected cases of intentional plagiarism 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, and helpful resources explaining plagiarism and how to avoid it, consult the Rutgers University Academic Integrity Website.