ANTH 398

LIFE & DEATH IN THE VIKING WORLD

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Erin McGuire

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

The course takes a detailed look at the nature and impact of the Viking expansion in the North Atlantic (including Scotland & the British Isles, the Faroes, Iceland, Greenland and North America) in the period defined rather broadly from c.800-1300 AD. It will focus particularly, although by no means exclusively, on the social and ecological consequences of migration and will draw on a variety of sources including archaeological data, saga literature, and historical sources. This module examines theoretical approaches from a number of disciplines, such as archaeology, anthropology, and sociology. In addition to developing critical thinking skills, students will build on written and oral communication skills.

Skills Development

Aims
The aims of this course are:

- To examine the Norse expansion using interdisciplinary source material with a focus on the archaeological record;
- To outline theoretical and interpretative approaches to the Norse migrations;
- To challenge the accepted narratives of the Norse expansion and propose/encourage alternative interpretations; and
- To develop writing skills for both academic and general audiences.

Learning objectives
By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Explain the causes and consequences of the Norse expansion;
- Critically assess the evidence used in the investigation and interpretation the Viking Age (e.g. archaeological, historical and literary sources);
- Analyse and explain content, methods, and theoretical approaches with regards to material culture;
- Develop group, written and oral communication skills.