

The University of Western Ontario
Department of History
2011-2012
Draft Syllabus

HIST 9413B: Law, Justice and Mercy in Late Medieval England

Margaret McGlynn
Office: LH 1206
email: mmcglyn@uwo.ca

Class Hours: Th. 1.30-3.30pm
Classroom: LH 1218
Office Hours: Mon. 11.30-12.30, Wed. 1.30-2.30
or by appointment

Course Description:

This course will focus on the administration of the criminal law in England from c. 1200 to c. 1550. It will examine legislation, legal treatises and court records for the period to consider how crimes such as murder, rape, suicide and theft were conceptualized, how people were supposed to be punished for these crimes, and how they avoided punishment. We will pay attention both to the technicalities of the law, and to the social values and constructs that the actual administration of the law reveal.

Books for Purchase:

None. All readings will be available on reserve, in electronic resources, or will be distributed in class.

Grade Breakdown:

Seminar(s)	15%
Seminar reflection	15%
Research Paper	45% (35% +10%)
Participation	25%

Seminar(s)

You must lead at least one seminar discussion, perhaps two, depending on class size.

Seminar Reflection

Before the class you must submit a brief discussion of the material prepared for the seminar discussion you lead, detailing main arguments, implications, strengths, weaknesses etc. and key points to raise in the discussion. Following the seminar you must add in your reflections on the seminar discussion and any ways in which it changed your understanding of the material.

Research Paper

A 20 page primary-source-based research paper on a topic within the general ambit of the class. There will be small preparatory exercises as the paper develops.

Participation

Attendance is mandatory and thus not a factor in the participation grade. A graduate seminar can only work with the active and informed participation of all the members.