

History 4416F, Fall 2025
Witchcraft in the Early Modern World
DRAFT OUTLINE

Somerville House 3355 Wednesdays 10:30-12:30

Instructor: **Dr. Mitchell Hammond** Email: **mhammo42@uwo.ca**

Office: **Department of History, Lawson Hall 2218**

Office Hours: **Mondays 2:00-3:00 or by appointment**

Course Description

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thousands of people—mostly women—were tried and executed for the crime of witchcraft in Europe and beyond. Why were Europeans and their descendants so fearful of witchcraft? What do accusations and trials reveal about the beliefs and social structures of the early modern world? Our course will explore these questions and also focus on developing and drafting an original research essay.

Antirequisite (s) - History 2108F/G, History 2408F/G

Course Syllabus

In this class students will build the following competencies and skills:

1. Identify and describe key events and concepts related to witchcraft in the early modern world.
2. Evaluate diverse forms of historical evidence and cultivate interpretive skills.
3. Strengthen writing skills in history and related disciplines.
4. Engage with faculty and peers in a collaborative, respectful atmosphere.

Methods of Evaluation:

Seminar Attendance and Participation including the components below:	30%
General participation (20%)	
Leadership in one class (5%)	
Rough draft evaluation exercise (5%) on Wednesday, November 19	
~1200-word assignment (due Friday, October 3)	10%
~5000-word essay, including the components below:	60%
Prospectus (10%), due Wednesday, October 15	
Rough draft (20%), due Friday, November 14 (crucial deadline)	
Final essay (30%), due Wednesday, December 3	

Course Materials

Reading and advance preparation are essential for a successful class. Assignments will be based on class readings or materials that students find in their own research.

Required Text:

Brian Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 4th ed. (Routledge, 2016) \$110.70 at the Western Bookstore.

Other readings will be made available in Brightspace and through Weldon Library.

Attendance and Extension Policies

- Students must submit all assignments to pass the course. In this seminar, class participation is especially important. Students are expected to attend weekly seminars throughout the term and to prepare for the discussions, rough draft exercise, and other activities. **Attendance is flexible but there will be no academic considerations.** Students may miss 2 meetings without penalty (**excluding** the rough draft exercise session on November 19). Thereafter, 5 points will be deducted from the course grade for the third and fourth absences. 20 points (the whole participation grade) will be deducted for the fifth absence.
- **Grace period:** late papers and the prospectus (but **not** the rough draft) may be submitted up to three days past the stated deadline. For any other extensions, students must apply to Academic Advising for a **documented** consideration. Otherwise, no written work will be accepted after three days past the stated deadline.

Additional Statements

- During class, please limit use of electronic devices such as phones to note-taking and course-related activities.
- Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at:
https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.