

HISTORY 2188B:
Pirates & Piracy on The World's Seas and in the Public Imagination
Online Asynchronous
Winter 2027

Cap'n Mike Dove mdove2@uwo.ca



Please Note: This is a **draft** outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version. Both the midterm exam and final exam in this course will be held in-person on campus. There is no option available for an online midterm exam or online final exam.

Course Description

Pirates have been the scourge of the seas since maritime trade and commerce began. From its origins in the classical period to its continued existence in the modern day, piracy has had significant economic, political, social and cultural effects on societies. The Jolly Roger, Long John Silver, the “prostitute pirate” Lady Cheng, Blackbeard and Captain Jack Sparrow have informed popular depictions of piracy and stirred romantic visions of freedom, adventure and buried treasure. This course seeks to separate myth from reality by tracing the history of piracy from antiquity through the medieval and early modern pasts to the present day. Among the chief questions explored throughout the course will be what constituted piracy in a given era; why people ‘turned pirate’; what a pirate’s life was like; and why pirates continue to generate public fascination.

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- o understand the origins, causes and major periods of piracy in world history;
- o identify significant events and personalities in the history of global piracy;
- o assess the impact and enduring relevance of piracy on the economic, political, military, social, and cultural history of world societies;
- o separate myth from reality through examining the depiction of piracy in popular culture (fiction, folklore, literature, film);
- o understand how to critically assess both primary and secondary sources on the extensive history of global piracy;

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- o explore themes relating to the history of piracy through a variety of disciplinary approaches and methods;
- o express their ideas and arguments clearly and concisely in writing.

Course Materials

There is no textbook for this course. Instead, weekly content will include a recorded PowerPoint lecture, and various readings, which may consist of book chapters, journal articles, and videos, all of which will be provided and accessible through the OWL Brightspace course website.

Methods of Evaluation

Midterm Exam	40%	27 February 2027	In-Person
Final Exam	60%	April Exam Period	In-Person

Students must complete two in-person exams in order to pass this course: a two-hour in-person midterm exam, tentatively scheduled for Saturday, February 27th, 2027, and a three-hour final exam, to be scheduled during the April Exam Period by the Registrar's Office. Both exams will be non-cumulative and will feature two sections: one will ask students to identify and describe the significance of a choice of five of eight historical terms; and the other section will ask students to write on a choice of essay-style questions (i.e. one essay for the midterm and two essay questions on the final). Electronic devices of any kind (i.e. phones, watches) are not permitted to be near or carried by the student during these exams.

The Midterm Exam will examine students on course materials from Weeks 1 to 6 inclusive. Students should prepare their answers with reference to the relevant course materials only. Information and sources external to the course will not be given credit. The midterm exam is weighed at 40% of the final course grade. **Please note that the midterm exam is a 'designated assessment', meaning that supporting documentation will be required for any academic consideration. Students cannot use an undocumented absence to miss or reschedule this assessment.**

The Final Exam will examine students on all course materials since the midterm exam (i.e. from Week 7 to Week 12 inclusive). Students should prepare their answers with reference to the relevant course materials only. Information and sources external to the course will not be given credit. The final exam is weighed at 60% of the final course grade.

Accommodation for Missed Exams:

Make-up midterms and exams can only be approved by Academic Advising. Please see: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

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(Tentative) Course Schedule and Readings

WEEK 1:	04-08 JANUARY	Pirates & Piracy: An Introduction
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 2:	11-15 JANUARY	Sea Robbers of Antiquity
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 3:	18-22 JANUARY	Medieval Sea Raiders: Muslim Corsairs & Viking Invaders
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 4:	25-29 JANUARY	New World Empires & the Elizabethan Seadogs
Reading:	TBA	
WEEK 5:	01-05 FEBRUARY	Piracy's 'Golden Age': Buccaneering & the Pirate Round
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 6:	08-12 FEBRUARY	Piracy's 'Golden Age': 'The Most Notorious Pyrates'
Readings:	TBA	

15-19 FEBRUARY: NO CLASS: WINTER READING WEEK!

27 FEBRUARY 2027: MIDTERM EXAM!

WEEK 7:	01-05 MARCH	Female Pirates & Agents of Piracy
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 8:	08-12 MARCH	Pirates & Privateers of Atlantic Canada
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 9:	15-19 MARCH	Rovers of the Barbary Coast
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 10:	22-26 MARCH	Sea Bandits of China and SE Asia
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 11:	29 MARCH-02 APRIL	Modern Piracy
Readings:	TBA	
WEEK 12:	05-09 APRIL	Pirates & Piracy in Popular Culture
Readings:	TBA	

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Welcome to the Course!

The best way for us to keep in touch is via email. I will respond to emails sent on weekdays within 24 hours and those on weekends within 48 hours. This course will be taught through weekly recorded lectures and assigned readings via the OWL Brightspace course website. It contains all course materials and is where students will access the final course syllabus, announcements, calendar, weekly lectures, assigned readings, exam information and their grades. I hope this will be an enjoyable experience for you. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are encountering issues or have concerns about your performance in the course. We will work towards finding a solution. Thank you for enrolling. Arrrrr!

Cap'n Dove

Additional Statements

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.