In 1095 the first crusade began a 300-year military and religious conflict that changed the history of Europe and the Middle East and still affects our international relations today.

This course explores the literary and historical writings about the Christian expansion into the eastern Muslim Mediterranean and into the north-eastern frontiers of Europe. We examine the justifications for this crusade and colonization, and the personal expressions of participants. We discuss both religious dialog and cross-cultural interaction that transformed the cultural landscape of both East and West.

We read eye-witness accounts and the writings both supporting and criticizing the project and its justifications and will focus on the following topics and literary works:

- The Just War in Islamic East and Christian West and Religious Dialog
- 3 Historical Perspectives (Byzantine, European, and Eastern)
- Portrayals such as Song of Roland, Willehalm, Richard Lionheart, Parzival
- Chronicles of the Eastern and Northern Crusades; Songs of War and Anti-crusade Poetry