FIG 7

In this FIG, your study of the societal, literary, artistic, and religious expression of the medieval Scandinavians – often called Vikings – will be enhanced by exploring the living narratives and material cultures of people throughout the world. You will examine folklore as well as explore a contemporary Scandinavian society through its language. Much of what we know of old Scandinavian culture comes from texts that were written after the introduction of Latin writing and Christianity to the region.

The main course of this FIG, “World of the Sagas” (Literature in Translation 235), is an investigation of the Icelandic sagas viewed in their social, cultural, and literary contexts. This course is an introduction to one of the greatest bodies of vernacular literature of the early Middle Ages.

Our understanding of medieval Scandinavian culture integrates the content from your studies in Anthropology 102, "Archaeology and the Prehistoric World,” a course which looks at the origins of human culture as revealed by archaeological research at great sites and ruins across the globe. In this course you will better understand the rise and demise of vanished societies, and you will come to a better understanding of the material culture of the Vikings.

The language of a culture is an important component of understanding that culture. By learning Swedish in “First Semester Swedish” (Scandinavian Studies 111), you will gain important insights into the present culture of Scandinavia as well as learning by contrast about your own language and culture. By learning about techniques and practices from both of these disciplines, you will gain a better understanding of how information about medieval Scandinavia has been obtained.
This FIG is a total of 10 credits. Students will need to take a 12 credit minimum to be a full-time student.