



Edvard Munch, *Death at the Helm* (1893)

HIU22035 **Living with the Dead in Modern Europe**

Co-ordinator **Erin-Marie Legacey**

Credits **10 ECTS**

Semester **Hilary Term**

Assessment Course Portfolio (40%), and a 2,000 - 2,500 end-of-term words (60%)

Module Description:

This module examines the complex and changing relationship between the living and the dead in Europe since the end of the eighteenth century. As the title indicates, this class is not primarily about attitudes or beliefs about death, dying, and the afterlife (although these topics will certainly come up). Rather, it will focus on the different ways that the living have handled, manipulated, imagined, honored, and exploited the dead over the last three centuries. Each week we will closely examine and historicize a social or cultural practice related to the dead. Examples of the kinds of questions we will discuss include: How and why did the “vampire” change in European popular culture over the last three hundred years? Why did people in the nineteenth century worry so much about being buried alive? Why has “death tourism” become so popular in the modern era? By the end of this class you will not only possess a wealth of strange facts about the place of the dead in history, you will also have gained a better understanding of some of the most important cultural changes that have occurred in Europe over the last two centuries.