

**UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST**

German and Scandinavian Studies

Spring 2009

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Tu-Th 9:30-10:45

**Scandin 391P, Voices from the Top of the World**

# **ULTIMA THULE: POLAR EXPLORATION AND THE HEROIC IMAGINATION**

A course inspired by International Polar Year (2007-09).  
(Conducted in English)

The quest to reach the North & South Poles a century ago was inspired by scientific interest in the planet's last unconquered frontier, and also by a sense of adventure and nationalist competition. In this race, Scandinavians were among the best prepared and most prominent players.



We will examine the way early polar expeditions were planned, executed and endured; the explorers' interaction with indigenous populations, especially in Greenland; and the spectacular and dangerous landscapes, which today are profoundly threatened by global warming as different countries again compete for dominance in the Far North.

“Aurora Borealis” by Fridtjof Nansen