HISTORY DEPARTMENT

Spring 2016

Graduate Course Descriptions
State University at Buffalo
The graduate core is a survey of U.S. historiography in the long 20th century (i.e., since the Civil War). We will read books and articles that introduce us to some of the major topics and fields, themes and issues, and research and analytical methods from this time period. The goal is not primarily to increase your factual knowledge of U.S. history, but to get a sense of the relationship between history and historians. What kinds of questions do historians ask of the past? How do they go about answering them? What kinds of evidence do they look at, how do they choose, and how do they interpret it? How do historians build on and/or challenge each other’s work and interpretations? If history only happened once, why does history as written by historians change over time? What are some of the most active and exciting subjects and approaches in 20th century U.S. history today? These kinds of questions are central to critical reading and thinking, i.e., figuring out how to take apart and (hopefully) put back together again the kinds of narrative—stories—that we are all familiar with as the stuff of “history.”

This course introduces the participants to some major issues in the field of modern European history. It covers the period from the French Revolution to the end of the Cold War, as well as different geographical areas. The course wants

(1) To provide an understanding of the history and diversity of Europe. We will discuss whether “European History,” in fact, constitutes an entity, and what role nation-state and regions, non-state actors and “the people,” gender and international relations, among other factors, play in this story;

(2) To identify—through a close reading of scholarly literature—some trends in the recent historiography of modern Europe and understand in what ways and to what ends historians have defined their topics, formulated their questions, and chosen their sources;

(3) To train the participants in analyzing historical sources and dealing with visual materials, ranging from a novel and an autobiographical account to films.
This course introduces students to the history and theory of colonialism and empire. What defines colonial and imperial relations—is it, at base, about might? Politics? Territory? Capitalism? Law? Race? Gender? Knowledge? We will examine a range of theoretical views and will draw from work on different parts of the world in order to gain comparative insights into colonialism and empire.

Religion in and through Empire: Europe and Asia
This course investigates the intersection of empire and religion from the early-modern period to the early twenty-first century in Europe and Asia. We will begin by examining the notion that religion as a universal category of human experience and as an object of scholarly inquiry was historically constructed through imperial encounters. In what ways did religion motivate and justify empire building? In what ways did it influence those who critiqued and opposed imperial practices? How did imperialism and colonialism transform the institutional shape of religious practices and traditions or lead to the creation of new religions? Although these issues could be studied in a wide range of empires and a variety of historical contexts, this course focuses primarily on the British Empire in South Asia and the Japanese Empire in East Asia. Students are welcome to investigate these themes in other historical contexts for their final papers.

This research-oriented seminar will gauge the value of fiction film as an historical source. After viewing and discussing several films and writings on film in common, students will pick a movie and create a portfolio that will include the making of the film, the reception of the film, its historical context and accuracy, and pedagogical potential. They will present this to the class and then produce a final summary.

This course is intended to provide the graduate student with the opportunity to develop, with a faculty member, an intensive reading program in a specialized subject. Courses may be taken more than once; be mindful that it is not in your best interest to more than 25% of your total credits in independent study—see the director of Graduate Studies for guidance. Variable credit to be recommended by instructor.
The president of Mexico, Porfirio Díaz, once said, “Poor Mexico! So far from God and so close to the United States.” This course will explore the long and complicated relationship between the United States and Latin America. We will read old and new monographs as we grapple with historiographical debates in this field. The course will cover U.S.-Latin American relations history from the Age of Revolutions to the present. Core themes we will include, but are not limited to: U.S. Imperialism and Latin American resistance, transnational discourses and inter-American solidarities, borderlands and border crossers in the Americas, and race and racism in the Americas.

This seminar concentrates on the formation and transformation of racial, ethnic, and gender relations and identities in colonial Latin America and the wider Iberian Atlantic world. Examining the historical literature on Spanish and Portuguese America between 1492 and the end of colonial rule in the 1820s, students will consider how historians have posed and answered questions concerning the legacy of contact, conflict, and collaboration among peoples of indigenous, European, and African origin. How did native peoples define themselves in the face of European conquest? How did Europeans view the original inhabitants of the New World? How did transplanted African cultures assume new forms in the Americas? How did women navigate restrictions placed on their conduct by the church and secular society? To what extent did colonists assume new American identities incompatible with European colonial control? By delving into scholarship concerning these and other themes, students will probe how historians have made sense of Latin America’s colonial period and its role in shaping the vast region that now comprises the southwestern U.S., the Caribbean basin, Mexico, Central America, and South America. Together, we will challenge conventional assumptions about colonial Latin America, including the tendency to define its peoples and institutions as traditionalist, if not backward, unequipped to embrace an emergent modernity and scientific rationality associated with northern Europe and British North America.

Students focusing on the Atlantic world, early America, early modern Europe, global colonialism, race and gender relations, identity formation, and subaltern studies will find this course valuable. As one of our graduate program’s “core” seminars, it is required for history doctoral students who wish to offer Latin America for the major field of their oral examinations. The course is not an introduction to or survey of the history of pre-independence Latin America, but no background in the field is required.
This course is organized thematically and is designed to give advanced MA and PhD students a deeper, more nuanced understanding of disability history and of the lived experiences of people with disabilities. Themes may include but are not limited to: disability and the history of eugenics, disability and war, disability and industrialization, disability and the built environment, disability and the social history of medicine, disability and domestic life, and disability rights.

A department requirement is the completion of a special project by each person wishing to complete the MA program. This requirement consists of a written essay of graduate-level quality, representing the equivalent of the work of a one-semester course (3 credits). This essay may be a project based on primary source materials. The project affords the student an opportunity to read and write extensively on a narrowed topic of special interest to him/her. The essay will be written under the supervision and with the approval of an advisor appointed by the Director of Graduate studies. This project may be carried out in a 600-level seminar, with the consent of the instructor, but often it will be done independently under the number 598 or 612, with the guidance of the assigned advisor. Register with Graduate Program Assistant – Park 543.

This course is intended to prepare graduate students to take their Ph.D. qualifying/general exams. This is an intensive reading program in a specialized subject with a faculty member. Variable credit to be recommended by instructor; may be taken more than once.

**PERMISSION OF INSTRUCTOR REQUIRED.**

**REGISTER IN PARK 543 WITH GRADUATE PROGRAM ASSISTANT**

**NOTE:** HIS 600 CAN ONLY BE TAKEN BY Ph.D. students who have completed all course work and are preparing for qualifying/general exams—this replaces the use of HIS 552 only in this instance.
The main purpose of this class is to guide students in the preparation of a substantial essay of original research. To this end, each student will write a seminar paper of between 7,000 and 8,000 words (inclusive of notes) that is based on primary sources and engages the relevant historiographical and methodological debates in the scholarly literature. When devising a paper topic, students should feel free to interpret "imperialism and colonialism" broadly to include formal and informal imperialism, colonialism, post-imperialism, post-colonialism, neo-imperialism, etc.

This course introduces students to recent literature and classic texts on race as a category of historical analysis. As a research seminar, the students' primary goal is to write an article length essay based on primary research. Though based on primary research, students will be required to integrate theoretical and historiographical scholarship into their study. The geographical and chronological parameters of the paper are open, as long as the topic engages the issue of race, broadly defined. In this way, projects that deal with belonging, ethnicity and identity are suitable for this course.

This course is designed for history MA students in the public history concentration and interdisciplinary disability studies graduate students interested in gaining practical experience in the field of public history. Both groups will gain professional experience in specially designed fieldwork projects. Projects are developed by students with the assistance of the history MA program and the interdisciplinary program in disability studies, and must be approved by the course instructor and the participating history or advocacy organization. The course may be repeated for credit with the approval of program advisers. Admittance to the course is by application essay. For information, contact Kristin Stapleton
VARIES ARR ARR
612 ADVANCED RESEARCH ARR STAFF

This course is designed to allow a graduate student to receive training in advanced research in history under the tutelage of a member of the History Department. See the Director of Graduate Studies for guidance. Variable credit to be recommended by instructor.

VARIES ARR ARR
700 THESIS GUIDANCE STAFF

Writing and submission of dissertation chapters under the supervision of your major professor/committee chairperson. Variable credit. YOU MUST BE A.B.D. TO REGISTER. PERMISSION OF INSTRUCTION REQUIRED.