

Fall 2019

History Graduate Course Descriptions

Subtitle	Course	Professor	Day & Time
Introduction to Graduate Studies	HIIST 510	Victor Petrov	M 3:35-6:35
Readings and Rancor in Medieval History	HIIST 530	Jay Rubenstein	R 12:40-3:25
U.S Historiography, Reconstruction to the Present	HIIST 545	Tore Olsson	M 12:20-3:20
African History: Theory and Method	HIIST 563	Nicole Eggers	W 2:30-5:30
Gender and Sexuality in U.S. History	HIIST 580	Lynn Sacco	T 12:40-3:20
Race and Empire in Modern European History	HIIST 632	Margaret Andersen	F 12:20-3:20

History 510: Introduction to Graduate Studies

Dr. Petrov

The purpose of this course is to introduce beginning graduate students to the varied strategies and conceptual tools historians use to study the past. It will provide students with an introduction to the history of the discipline, give them practice interpreting theoretically sophisticated texts, and expose them to important recent methodological debates in the field.

History 530: Readings and Rancor in Medieval History

Dr. Rubenstein

In this class we will examine some of the most important scholarship in medieval history, with an accent on historical debate. Our purpose is twofold. First, and most obviously, it is to examine the historiography and in the process to learn some of the key topics, ideas, and figures of medieval history. As such, it is hoped that this class will prepare its participants to developed their own survey courses in medieval history and to explore potential avenues of doctoral research. Second, this class will offer a chance to explore the process of making historical arguments. What makes for a successful historical polemic? Why do certain arguments fail while others genuinely do reshape the way we talk about key topics in the Middle Ages? What is the best or most convincing strategy to adopt when disagreeing with a colleague or an established scholar?

History 545: U.S. Historiography, Reconstruction to the Present

Dr. Olsson

This graduate readings seminar will serve as an introduction to the historiography of the United States since 1865, or what is traditionally called the “second half” of the U.S. history survey. The course will introduce students to the central debates and dialogues that have consumed historians in the field for the past few decades. It will teach students to intensively read and write for argument. It will provide basic preparation for further reading toward comprehensive exams in American history. Lastly, it will

provide a framework for students who will eventually teach the U.S. History survey. Thematic topics include gender, culture, environment, labor, politics, capitalism, imperialism, energy, migration, war, diplomacy, social movements, and globalization, among others.

History 563: African History: Theory and Method

Dr. Eggers

African History is by necessity an innovative field. Deeply interdisciplinary, it draws on fields such as linguistics, archaeology, art, anthropology, literary studies, and others in order to make sense of pasts for which archival sources can be limited. Interpreting African archives demands sophisticated theoretical and methodological approaches that take seriously the politics of power in knowledge production. The purpose of this course is to introduce graduate students to some of the theoretical and methodological contributions that the field of African History has made – and continues to make – to the study of the past. We will read both classic and innovative new works from the field, selected from diverse regions of the continent and covering different eras of its history. The intended outcomes are twofold: 1) to introduce graduate students to theories and methods that might prove useful in their own field of research, and 2) to give students – many of whom will go on to teach courses in global history – both a sense of how historians of Africa think and write about its past and a solid grasp of some of its major themes. Students can expect to write weekly book reviews, lead seminar discussions, and complete a final project that asks them to reflect on the outcomes outlined above.

History 580: Gender and Sexuality in United States History

Dr. Sacco

This reading seminar will focus on historical scholarship that treats gender as the central category of analysis. This scholarship conceives of Americans as gendered people who also have a race, ethnicity, class position, and sexual orientation. We will read major historical and theoretical works to investigate how and why gender and sexuality became a subfield of history, and what difference that has made.

History 632: Race and Empire in Modern European History

Dr. Andersen

This course will introduce students to the historiography of race and empire in Modern European history. Rather than providing students with a comprehensive overview of the topic, the readings are intended to be a sampling of both recent and classic works in this field of study. Topics will include race, gender, medicine, the environment, and colonial knowledge. Though the majority of the readings deal primarily with Great Britain and France, our exploration of these topics will also include other colonial powers such as Germany, the Netherlands, and the Soviet Union. One of our objectives will be to explore the concept of the “nation” in European history in light of recent research on imperialism.