

Fall 2023

History Graduate Course Descriptions

Subtitle	Course	Professor	Day & Time
Introduction to Graduate Studies	HIST 510	Margaret Andersen	R 12:55-3:55
Readings in African American History	HIST 517	Brandon Winford	M 4:10-7:10
Readings in Modern European History	HIST 532	Vejas Liulevicius	M 12:40-3:40
Atlantic History	HIST 541	Kristen Block	R 4:05-7:05
Americanist Historiography II	HIST 545	Tore Olsson	F 9:10-12:10
Collective, Cultural, Social Memory	HIST 580	Jacob Latham	T 12:55-3:55
Rise of Complex Societies	HIST 585	J.P. Dessel	W 3:00-6:00

History 510: Introduction to Graduate Studies

Dr. Andersen

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 517: Classic/Contemporary Readings in African American History

Dr. Winford

The first goal of **HIST 517** will be to provide you with a survey of the major historiographical issues in African American history through readings in both classic and contemporary standards in the field. It is also designed to facilitate your understanding and expertise as it relates to the African American experience from the earliest days of the transatlantic slave trade through the twentieth century. In particular, the course readings will focus on a number of core subfields and thematic areas, including labor, family, migration, politics, religion, education, and capitalism. Moreover, you will explore one period more rigorously during the semester by reading widely in the literature on a single historiographical issue. Finally, the course is organized to help you master a body of literature that will enable you to teach a course in African American history and provide you with the foundation for a rich list for comprehensive examination.

History 532: Readings in Modern European History

Dr. Liulevicius

This graduate readings seminar examines an old, vital, and continuing historiography on the institution of monarchy and ideas surrounding it. We examine works that deal with the long-lived European legacy of Charlemagne, the worldwide ambitions of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, the influential image of the Sun King Louis XIV of France, the formidable Empress Maria Theresa of Habsburg, and a succession of "celebrity monarchs" in the 19th and 20th centuries who sought to reinvent the ancient customs of hereditary rule for a modern age.

History 541: Readings in Atlantic History

Dr. Block

The history of the Atlantic World has come to represent a paradigm shift in the study of the early modern period during the past three decades. The field has especially transformed scholarship in subfields that tend to assume a "nation-state" perspective (i.e. The United States, Colombia, Cuba), but which become anachronistic for colonial periods defined by transnational geographies and cultures. Atlantic historians might primarily identify their scholarship as centered on Europe, Africa, colonial Latin America, colonial (North) America, the Caribbean, or on African Diasporic

Studies—but they read widely for comparative purposes. Many (not all) scholars in the field hope to incorporate perspectives from both “above” and “below”—or use interdisciplinary methods borrowed from literary criticism, ethnography, cultural and social history, and economic history to understand the empires and subjected peoples in their purview. At its best, Atlantic History allows us to bring traditionally separate sub-fields into conversation with one another, to formulate new questions which might not even occur to others in more locally-bound fields. At worst, practitioners of Atlantic History can overlook excellent local or regional scholarship and have tended to splinter into language group sub-fields as different factions try to define and dominate the shape of the field. As we read about the major themes in Atlantic History, we will also discuss the field’s utility (especially vis-à-vis traditional, local, and/or global approaches), and its scholarly framing (geographically, chronologically, historiographically).

History 545: Major Problems in American History 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; it will provide a framework for students who will eventually teach the U.S. History survey.

History 580: Collective, Cultural, and Social Memory

Dr. Latham

In 1925, Maurice Halbwachs published *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (“The Social Frameworks of Memory,” published in English as *On Collective Memory*), which argued that though individuals remember, “yet it is in society that people normally acquire their memories. It is also in society that they recall, recognize, and localize their memories” (p. 38). Individuals remember in groups and from the perspective of a group identity. Despite concerns about collective memory as some sort of mystical group mind (concerns which persist), collective, cultural, and social memory has become a widely used lens through which to interpret historical events and historical actors. Indeed, in the past 20 years there has been a veritable memory boom in every historical field. In this seminar, we will read some of the fundamental theoretical and comparative explorations of the concept of collective, cultural, or social memory as well as a good number of case studies from historical fields taught in our department (e.g. US History, European History, Premodern European History, and World History). In addition, seminar participants will develop a historiography paper based on collective memory studies scholarship in their own field, so that they may add this instructive and revealing hermeneutical lens to their historical toolkit.

History 585: Rise of Complex Societies

Dr. Dessel

The rise of social complexity, as seen through the development of urbanism and the state, will be examined from both archaeological and historical perspectives, within a cross-cultural context. Models derived from history, sociology, anthropology, and archaeology will be presented in light of archaeological and historical data from specific case studies including Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Levant, Mesoamerica, Africa, South America, China, and South Asia. These case studies highlight how archaeologists understand the political, economic, and social organization of complex societies. Special attention will be given to how the rise of social complexity can be used as an organizational framework for the study of early World History.