



University at Buffalo

Department of History

College of Arts and Sciences

## Fall 2020 Graduate Courses

### **HIS 501 Historical Inquiry** **Dewald**

What is historical knowledge? How is it put together, and what is it good for? Those are the questions on which this seminar focuses. We'll address them mainly by looking at recent work by practicing historians, asking how they define the problems they study, construct their arguments, and discover and use evidence. From these examples, we'll try to deepen our understanding of the topics and interpretive strategies that today engage professional historians.

But those questions specific to the contemporary discipline of history can't be separated from broader problems that surround all study of the past, and we'll consider some of those as well. How much can we ever know the past, given that by definition it's over and done? Does the history written within university departments differ significantly from other forms of knowledge about the past, as produced by amateur historians, novelists, social scientists, and many others? How do our specific disciplinary practices shape and reflect our thinking?

### **HIS 502 American History Core 1** **Barclay**

This course seeks to introduce MA and PhD students to the history and historiography of America to 1865. That is, this course will help students master a basic narrative of American history through the Civil War. At the same time, it will introduce them to the main historiographical trends of the past twenty-five years.

### **HIS 504 Early Modern European Core** **Vardi**

This seminar examines Europe from the fifteenth century to the French Revolution of 1789. During these centuries, Europe underwent a series of dramatic transformations: Europeans encountered other regions of the globe and came to dominate several of them; printing increased the speed with which ideas circulated and evolved; other new technologies changed the nature of warfare, enhanced government power, and began the processes that would culminate in the Industrial

Revolution. The seminar seeks to provide students with an overview of these changes, and to sketch the main lines of current historical thinking about them.

For this reason, seminar readings will be drawn from recent monographs and other scholarly studies of the period; no textbook will be assigned, but students whose knowledge of the period is weak will be expected to acquire such background knowledge on their own, through reading in standard textbooks and/or Wikipedia. Three short (about ten pages each) essays on the assigned reading will be required, each counting for about 30 percent of the course grade. The remaining 10 percent of the final grade will be based on contributions to seminar discussions.

### **HIS 544 History of the Body** **Liu**

Why is there a history to the body? If we assume that our biological bodies have remained largely unchanged since antiquity, what account for the diverse perceptions and experiences of the body throughout history and across cultures? Why does a study of the body matter in historical inquiries? This seminar seeks to explore the rich cultural history of the body by reading monographs in the fields of history, anthropology, literature, and philosophy, which encompass both theoretical analyses and empirical studies of the body in varied contexts. The course focuses on, but not limited to the history of medicine, and scrutinizes issues of sick bodies, dissected bodies, gendered bodies, disabled bodies, dead bodies, non-human bodies, among others. In addition, the course discusses extensively the history of the body beyond the Western world, and explores how the body is differentially understood and practiced in Asia and in Africa. In the end, by reading the body literature across disciplines, this seminar aims to not just inspect the body in various times and places, but also illuminate the understanding of our own bodies in the contemporary world.

### **HIS 549 Topics: US and the World** **G. Zubovich**

This course surveys the myriad of ways Americans have engaged with peoples abroad. In addition to foreign policy, Americans have gone abroad as tourists, missionaries, and musicians, they have flooded foreign markets with consumer goods, taken part in human rights organizations, received immigrants, and waged wars across the world. This course will introduce students to the methodological debates about the field of U.S. and the World. It will cover both American influence on foreign peoples and the impact of the world on the history of the U.S. in the twentieth and twenty first centuries.

### **HIS 559 Colonial Latin America Core** **Langfur**

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 early nineteenth century, students will consider how historians have posed and answered questions concerning the legacy of contact, conflict, and cooperation among men and women 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, disrupted by slavery, persist or assume new forms in the Americas? How did women navigate restrictions placed on their conduct by a patriarchal church and secular society? To what extent did colonists develop 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.

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. For others, background in the field is not required, nor is training in Spanish or Portuguese.

### **HIS 564 Imperialism and Decolonization McDevitt**

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the study of modern European imperialism and its aftermath since the 17th century. It will not be a survey course and therefore coverage will not be the aim. Rather it will explore different approaches to the rise and fall of imperialism. By examining the way the history of imperialism has been written and discussing the major issues of the literature, it is hoped that students will gain a broadened understanding of the complex process of imperial expansion and retraction.

### **HIS 635 Special Topic: Research on Spatial Methodology and History Wolcott**

The last decade has witnessed a "spatial turn" in historiography that has profoundly influenced a variety of sub-fields in History. This course will introduce students to this literature and allow them to develop an independent research project in which a spatial framework is used. Such projects could range from topics in urban history, public policy, geography, or cultural history. The first month of the course we will meet on a regular basis to discuss relevant historical and theoretical works. The remainder of the course will be spent working on your research papers, meeting periodically with me to discuss your projects, engaging in peer review, and presenting your projects to the class.

## **HIS 701 Proseminar on History Teaching Pack**

The proseminar on history teaching is a forum for conversations on techniques and resources for effective history teaching. The focus is on college teaching in a variety of settings and formats; aspects of K-12 teaching and public history may also be addressed. Class meetings involve discussion of short readings and problems encountered in the classroom. The major written assignment is a first draft of a teaching portfolio. This is a non-credit course required of first-time Teaching Assistants (may be taken concurrently with first semester as a TA). It is open to all graduate students. There are no prerequisites.