

Fall 2025 History Graduate Course Bulletin

CORE

HIS 526 – Core Seminar (Theory and Practice) M 3:30-6:20pm N-318 Professor TBA

This is the first half of a year-long course that is your introduction to graduate study in history in general, and Stony Brook's Graduate Program in History in particular. **For Academic Track MA and PhD students only, advanced Academic Track MA students should consult advisor prior to enrolling.**

FIELD SEMINARS

HIS 501/CEG 516 Medieval & Early Modern Europe TH 3:30-6:20pm N-318 Alix Cooper

This seminar aims to provide an introduction to important topics and approaches in the history of medieval Europe (roughly 500-1450) and early modern Europe (roughly 1450-1789). The goal will be both to survey the history of these eras and to discuss debates among historians about them. Themes we will discuss include, among others, the origins of European culture and society in the Middle Ages; the concepts of the "Dark Ages" and of "Early", "High", and "Late" Middle Ages; the impact on Europe of cross-cultural encounters both before and after the Crusades and Columbus; the relationship between elite and popular cultures in both the Middle Ages and the early modern period; conflicts over emerging state power in both the Middle Ages and the early modern period; changing attitudes towards knowledge and belief in Renaissance and Reformation Europe; the rise of the witch-hunts in early modern Europe; the origins and unfolding of the so-called "Scientific Revolution" of the early modern period; the rise of absolutism; and the significance of the Enlightenment and French Revolution. Student performance will be evaluated on the basis of both participation and writing assignments. **History MA & PhD students register for HIS 501; MAT students register for CEG 516; or permission of instructor.**

HIS 521/CEG 532 Introduction to US History to the Civil War TU 6:30- 9:30pm N-318 April Masten

This graduate field seminar is designed as an introduction to the history and historiography of America from pre-colonization to the Civil War. Its purpose is to introduce students to major themes, interpretations, and methods of inquiry. It is intended to provide a broad (rather than deep) command of the field. During the semester, we will discuss key concepts and arguments in the literature, and explore the way historians interpret events, activities, and ideas from the past. We will proceed through the material in roughly chronological order, with each session examining an approach, theme, concept, or debate that has been of particular interest to American historians. **Enrollment in History MA/PhD program or permission of instructor.**

HIS 542/CEG 517 Modern Latin America W 3:30-6:20pm N318 Eric Zolov

This Field Seminar introduces students to some of the central debates within the field of Latin American history since independence. It is designed to accommodate the divergent goals and diverse background knowledge of MA, MAT, and PhD students in the graduate program in History. Although not inclusive of all historical approaches, the course aims to introduce students to many of the most relevant historiographical discussions across as broad a temporal and geographic range as possible, with a particular focus on the 19th & 20th century. Each thematic unit is divided into two sessions, with the first week oriented towards understanding the broader historiographical context and the second week focusing on a specific, recently published (or alternatively, "classic") monograph. MAT students will have a distinct set of requirements (and in certain instances, of reading assignments) aimed at preparing them with a more generalized understanding of the region. **Enrollment in History MA/PhD program or permission of instructor.**

THEME SEMINARS

HIS 516 Theme Seminar Empire, Modernity – Big Transitions & Social Effects: Histories of Large-Scale Change W 6:30-9:20pm N-318 Eric Beverley

The world is perpetually remade by massive shifts that are global in scale and sweeping in their impacts, rippling globally over centuries or playing out in more compressed time-frames. Historical writing, however, is grounded by its tight focus on particular contexts, subjects, and practices – communities, societies, and

individual people; states, institutions, texts, and documentary cultures; cities, rural areas, borderlands, and larger regions. In this experimental seminar we will think between these two contrasting scales. Some readings track epochal, revolutionary historical transformations on a global scale, typologically, or from an intellectual or conceptual perspective. Other texts are fine-grained studies of particular contexts or subjects. Many combine the two scales of analysis in varying balances. We will collectively try to think about how scholars – and we ourselves – can write histories that both reflect explicitly on large-scale global transformations, and carefully ground their analysis in particular times, places, and social worlds. The course will move broadly chronologically, from premodern social and imperial formations, technologies, and practices; through foundational modern shifts in the industrial revolution and rise of global capitalism and modern empires; then towards the contemporary via decolonization, nation-building, neoliberal globalization, and into the contemporary rise of new idioms of majoritarian populism. Within this broad range of topics, we will consider transforming modes of production; political and economic ideologies and governance systems; energy transitions and changes in environments and infrastructures; and the way global transformations are reflect and deepen global inequality, and articulate shifts in ideas and practices of race and social difference. The course is historical in orientation but interdisciplinary in conceptual and methodological scope.

Readings and discussions are designed to create a framework to reflect on the implications of global shifts on connected empirical contexts across Asia, Africa, Europe, and the Americas from premodern eras to the present (readings and topics will be set and modified depending on interests of enrolled students). Requirements include regular attendance and active participation, in-class presentations, and two written assignments (a short review essay and a longer historiographical term paper). The term paper will be on a topic of the student's interest, determined in consultation with instructor, centered on a major historical shift or transition, and including a short experimental component based on primary sources from the student's own research. **Prerequisite: Enrollment in History MA or PhD Program or Permission of Instructor.**

HIS 553 Theme Seminar Law, Society, State - Uprisings, Riots, Rebellions: State, Racial, Populist and Political Violence in Global History TH 6:30-9:20pm N318 Robert Chase

In the aftermath of global responses to George Floyd's murder and the insurrection at the Washington, D.C. Capitol, this course asks our graduate students to historicize and rethink histories of violence through the lens of new histories and approaches to writing state atrocity, political violence, urban uprisings, and populist street violence and vigilantism. As such, this course explores new and exciting work that reconsiders state, racial, and street violence as a matter of political uprisings and state reprisal. From Haymarket to the Black Liberation Army to Luigi Mangione, this course reconsiders street violence as critical moments of political violence that became emblematic of societal fears and desperate political needs. Through a critical historical lens, we will reconsider the meanings and differences between what historians and political pundits might name as riots, senseless violence, insurrections, uprisings, revolutions, terror, and liberation. The course will rethink sites of violence through a global and transnational lens and one that spans three centuries (the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries). Course topics will include slave revolts; "race riots" and historical memory; political assassinations and violence; and, urban uprisings as an expression of political discontent and resistance to global systems of white supremacy, colonialism, and capitalism. We will also take up new work on populist violence and vigilantism through new work on lynchings and public memory; extremist street violence; the history of gun violence as racial and political violence; genocides and "race wars;" and, domestic terrorism and political violence (from Nazi Germany to the Oklahoma City bombing). We will also read new work on state violence as political reprisal, racial repression, and as part of a global campaign of anti-insurgent thought and practice during the Cold War era. Topics of state violence will include global and domestic systems of policing and incarceration; border control, immigration detention and deportation; political violence in totalitarian regimes; and state campaigns against guerilla insurgencies during the Cold War. Despite popular narratives that argue that we have entered a new millennium as a less violent age (particularly the claims of Harvard psychologist Steven Pinker about the decline of violence), the persistence and even the intensification of modern-day violence requires that we think historically about this phenomenon to better disentangle the many

meanings of violence as social, cultural, political and racial expression. **Enrollment in MA/PhD Program or Permission of Instructor.**

TEACHING PRACTICUM

HIS 582 Teaching Practicum TU 3:30-6:20pm N318 Donna Rilling

This course is designed for those preparing to teach students-especially at the post-secondary level-about the past and its contemporary relevance. We'll explore a wide range of issues related to pedagogy, and important professional and personal skills for today's educators in an ever-changing political and digital landscape. Topics will include teaching strategies for lectures and seminars; grading; effective classroom management; innovative pedagogical approaches; new educational technologies; and resources to support students' learning and well-being. In addition, we'll reflect on some of the opportunities and challenges in teaching history for today's educators. Course requirements include mandatory attendance, required readings, active participation in class discussions, short writing assignments, developing a sample syllabus and teaching statement (as part of a teaching portfolio), and teaching a practice class. **History PhD students or Permission of Instructor.**

RESEARCH SEMINAR

HIS 601 Research Seminar

Advanced Research Methods for Historians W 3:30-6:20pm S309 Nancy Tomes

This seminar provides graduate students with advanced training in the methods of historical research and writing. Our main goal is for each participant to produce a 25-30 page paper (including footnotes) that might be published as a journal article as well as form the basis for a dissertation chapter. Course readings and discussion are designed to achieve that goal. Although sources and arguments must be historical, graduate students outside the History Department are very welcome.

As part of our discussion, we will reflect on what makes historical work distinctive from other disciplines. Questions to be considered include: what are the possibilities and limitations inherent in any historical archive? What constitutes a historical source? What were the social, cultural, political and intellectual contexts of its production? Why was an image or text produced and who viewed/read it? What were its modes of circulation? Who did it privilege and who exclude? How could different groups or communities of meaning-makers alter its use and importance? Besides writing several drafts of their papers, students will be asked to discuss examples of their primary sources in class and to provide constructive feedback on their fellow student's work.

Enrollment in HIS PhD program or Permission of Instructor.