This course will examine exile—both internal and geographic—through contemporary memoirs, letters, novels and films. Our primary focus will be on Jews and Muslims living in North Africa and the Middle East. Questions to be asked include: How is community defined? What provides the authors with a sense of belonging? What prompts his/her exile? Is the homeland portable? If so, how and on what terms? Each week we shall explore a different expression of exile. Discussion will include comparisons and contrasts with previous readings.
Is there “progress” in science and medicine? If so, where and when has it happened — and why? To answer these questions, this course examines the causes of Europe’s “scientific revolution” in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries: the moment when modern Western science and medicine were born. We will investigate the new theories and practices of observation and experimentation; heated controversies about the relationship between science and theology; the cultural codes by which scientists and doctors projected trustworthiness; the effects of social norms and politics on research agendas; popular dissemination of new knowledge; the biologization of gender; and the persistence of alchemy, magic, and the occult. Readings include Copernicus, Galileo, Bacon, Newton, and Mesmer. We will bring our studies into the present by concluding with the writing of opinion pieces applying the lessons of the course to some science-related issue in the news.

Professor Grote  
Fall 2015
An introduction to American life, politics and culture, from the colonial period through the aftermath of the Civil War. Surveys the perspectives of the many peoples converging on North America during this era, and explores the shifting fault lines of “liberty” among them. Because Early America was not inevitably bound toward the creation of the “United States of America,” we will ask how such an unlikely thing, in fact, happened. How did a nation emerge from such a diverse array of communities? And how did various peoples come to claim citizenship in this new nation? Emphasis, too, on the issues that convulsed the American colonies and early republic: African slavery, revolutionary politics, immigration, westward expansion, and the coming of the Civil War.
This foundational course in international history explores the evolution of trade, competition, and cultural interaction among the world’s diverse communities, from the Mongol conquests of the late-thirteenth century through the end of the twentieth century. Themes include: the centrality of Asia to the earliest global networks of trade and interactions; the rise of European wealth and power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; empires, imperialism and its impact; the evolution of the nation-state; scientific and industrial revolutions; and “modernization” and the new patterns of globalization during the late twentieth century. Attention to agents of global integration, including trade, technology, migration, dissemination of ideas, conquest, war, and disease.

Professor Slobodian

Fall 2015
Rome’s cultural development from its origins as a small city state in the eighth century B.C.E. to its rule over a vast empire extending from Scotland to Iraq. Topics include the Etruscan influence on the formation of early Rome, the causes of Roman expansion throughout the Mediterranean during the Republic, the Hellenization of Roman society, the urbanization and Romanization of Western Europe, the spread of “mystery” religions, the persecution and expansion of Christianity, and the economy and society of the Empire.
This course traces the tumultuous history of Europe's German lands in the three centuries between the Middle Ages and the modern era, long identified with the origins of twentieth-century German militarism and anti-Semitism. We will focus on what makes this fascinating period distinctive: Germany's uniquely persistent political diversity and the religious schism that gave Germany multiple national religions. Topics include the Protestant Reformation, the Great Witch Panic, the devastating Thirty Years War that destroyed 150 years of economic growth, Prussia and Frederick the Great, the Enlightenment, the Napoleonic Wars, and the demise of the extraordinarily complex political system known as the Holy Roman Empire. Sources include treaties, treatises, literature, autobiographical texts, visual art, and music, by, among others, Luther, Bach, Lessing, Mozart, and Goethe.

Professor Grote

Fall 2015
There is perhaps no better time than the present to study the history of American capitalism, as political leaders, pundits, bank and business executives, and workers across the world struggle to negotiate a reprieve from our current economic crisis. This course will explore the development of American capitalism from its birth in the mercantile world of imperial Great Britain through the financial ruin of the Great Depression. This course will closely examine the relationship between government, business, and society by engaging key moments in nineteenth century American economic history: the rise of the corporation, transportation, and communication innovations, industrialization, American slavery and commodity production, financial speculation and panics, the development of American banking, immigration policy, and labor relations.
HIST 246

Vikings, Icons, Mongols and Tsars

Meets Tuesdays & Fridays 11:10 - 12:20

A multicultural journey through the turbulent waters of medieval and early modern Russia, from the Viking incursions of the ninth century and the entrance of the East Slavs into the splendid and mighty Byzantine world, to the Mongol overlordship of Russia, the rise of Moscow, and the legendary reign of Ivan the Terrible. We move eastward as the Muscovite state conquers the immense reaches of Siberia by the end of the turbulent seventeenth century, when the young and restless Tsar Peter the Great travels to Western Europe to change Russia forever. We will focus on princes, khans, tsars, nobles, peasants and monks; social norms and gender roles; icons and church architecture; and a host of Russian saints and sinners.
This course explores the multiple ways—beyond protest and resistance—that blacks struggled for their rights, recognition, and equality beyond the South and beyond the sixties, and ties the black freedom struggle to national and global developments. We’ll study actors often neglected in narrations of the struggle, such as black capitalists, advertisers, jazz musicians, mothers, and different non-black populations. And we’ll tangle with these questions: What defines a movement? What distinguishes civil rights and black power? And, how and why are people and institutions—then and now—invested in particular narratives of the black freedom struggle?
An introduction to the history of Native American peoples, from precontact to the present. As we plunge into one of the most dynamic and contentious fields of American history, we will meet some familiar characters (including Indian "Princess" Pocahontas and Sioux war chief Sitting Bull) and explore lesser-known stories, as well. Readings cover episodes including: Indians' first encounters with Europeans, Cherokee Removal, the battle for the nineteenth-century West, and the Red Power movement of the 1970s.
Deep in the Heart:
The American South in the Nineteenth Century

Perhaps no other region in the United States conjures up more powerful imagery than the American South – stately mansions with live oak avenues are juxtaposed with the brutal reality of slavery. Yet this same region gave birth to other, perhaps more powerful, cultural legacies – jazz and the blues, the freedom struggle and Jim Crow – a heritage both uniquely Southern and yet deeply American. To better understand this region that has always seemed to stand apart, this course will examine the early history of the American South from the Revolutionary War through the beginning of the twentieth century. Topics covered will include: African-American slavery and emancipation, the Civil War, Reconstruction, the spread of evangelical Christianity, Indian Removal, African-American culture, and the rise of Jim Crow segregation.

Mondays & Thursdays 9:50-11:00

Fall 2015

Professor Quintana
Overview of each political/cultural community and their interactions from ancient times to 1912. Topics from earlier periods include ancient mytho-histories and archeological records, the rise of China’s Han and Tang empires, selective adaptations of Chinese patterns by indigenous polities and societies in Korea and Japan, commercial and technological revolution in China and its international impact, Mongol “globalization,” Japan in the age of the samurai and Korea in the heyday of the yangban. Topics from later periods include the growth of international trade in East Asia and early modern developments in Ming-Qing China, Tokugawa Japan, and Late Choson Korea. Coverage extends through the first decade of the twentieth century to examine Europe’s expansion and the divergent trajectories of modern transformation in each society.
This course looks at popular religious beliefs and practices in medieval Europe, including miracles, martyrdom and asceticism, saints and their shrines, pilgrimages, relics, curses, witchcraft, and images of heaven and hell. It seeks to understand popular religion both on its own terms, as well as in relationship to the Church hierarchy. It also examines the basis for religious dissent in the form of both intellectual and social heresies, which led to religious repression and the establishment of the Inquisition in the later Middle Ages.
This seminar explores the many ways that victors and vanquished, victims and perpetrators, governments, political groups and individuals have remembered, celebrated, commemorated, idealized, condemned, condoned, forgotten, ignored, and grappled with the vastly complex history and legacy of World War II in the past half-century. Our primary focus is the war in Europe, including Poland and Russia, although we will also consider the U.S. and Japan. We will investigate the construction of individual and collective memories about World War II and the creation and subsequent transformation of set myths about the war experience. In addition to books and articles, sources will include memoirs, primary documents, and films. We will also study the impact of war memories on international relations and analyze the “monumental politics” of war memorials.
This seminar explores the history of fashion in U.S. social and political movements. How have people used clothing and style to define themselves, demand recognition, challenge power, publicize injustice, and defeat or attract attention? We will examine how ideologies and experiences of race, gender, sexuality, and nationhood shaped uses of and reactions to fashion politics. Topics include: end of slavery, rise of the “New Woman,” Second World War, civil rights movement, women’s liberation movement, rise of hip-hop, and war on terror. Through these events, we will consider the political significance of hair, uniforms, campaign fashion and religious dress. We will also consider how authenticity, imitation, appropriation and commodification figure into this history.

Professor Greer

Fall 2015
The idea of the “world economy” as a single, interconnected entity only entered widespread discussion in Europe and North America after World War I. This course explores the diverse ways of imagining and ordering the world economy since then and what Europe’s place has been within it, from imperial economies to national economies to a supposedly “globalized” economy to recent tilts of the European Union away from the United States and toward China and Russia. We will see how ideas such as development, modernization and globalization have dictated falsely universal models, but have also served as emancipatory idioms for previously marginalized individuals and populations. We will demystify economic arguments and learn to study economic texts for their content, but also as political and cultural documents.
The United States’ past is one of making and re-making the nation—as a government, a place, and a concept. This course surveys that dynamic process from the post-Reconstruction period through 9/11. Examining the people, practices, and politics behind U.S. nation building, we will consider how different groups have defined and adopted “American” identities, and how definitions of the nation and citizenship shifted in relations to domestic and global happenings. This will include considering how ideas of gender, race, ethnicity, and citizenship intersect within projects of nation building. We will cover topics that include: domestic race relations, imperialism, globalization, and terrorism, and developments such as legalized segregation, the Depression, World Wars I and II, and modern social progressive and conservative movements.

Professor Greer

Spring 2016
This foundational course in international history explores the evolution of trade, competition, and cultural interaction among the world’s diverse communities, from the Mongol conquests of the late-thirteenth century through the end of the twentieth century. Themes include: the centrality of Asia to the earliest global networks of trade and interactions; the rise of European wealth and power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; empires, imperialism and its impact; the evolution of the nation-state; scientific and industrial revolutions; and “modernization” and the new patterns of globalization during the late twentieth century. Attention to agents of global integration, including trade, technology, migration, dissemination of ideas, conquest, war, and disease.

Professor Matsusaka

Spring 2016
This course examines life in the Mediterranean from the disintegration of the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries through the Latin Crusades of the Holy Land in the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Readings will focus on the various wars and conflicts in the region as well as the political, religious, and social structures of the great Christian and Muslim kingdoms, including the Byzantine Empire, the Islamic caliphates of the Fertile Crescent and North Africa, the Turkish emirates of Egypt and the Near East, and the intellectual, literary, and artistic achievements of Christian, Muslim, and Jewish Communities.
This course provides an overview of Italian history from the disintegration of the Roman Empire in the fifth century through the rise of urban communes in the thirteenth century. Topics of discussion include the birth and development of the Catholic Church and the volatile relationship between popes and emperors, the history of monasticism and various other forms of popular piety as well as the role of heresy and dissent, and the development and transformation of cities and commerce that made Italy one of the most economically advanced states in Europe in the later medieval period, among others.
We are a nation organized around an ethos of buying things. Throughout the twentieth century, the government, media, big business, and the public increasingly linked politics and consumerism, and the formulation has been a route to empowerment and exclusion. In this course, we study how and why people in the United States theorized about, practiced, and promoted mass material consumption from the turn of the twentieth century into the twenty-first. Topics will include: the rise of consumer culture, the innovations of department stores, malls, freeways, and suburbs, developments in advertising and marketing, the global position of the American consumer in the post–World War II United States, and the political utility of consumption to various agendas, including promoting free enterprise, combating racism, and battling terrorism.
This interdisciplinary survey of Europe between 1300 and 1600 focuses on aspects of politics, literature, philosophy, religion, economics, and the arts that have prompted scholars for the past seven hundred years to regard it as an age of cultural rebirth. These include the revival of classical learning; new fashions in painting, sculpture, architecture, poetry, and prose; the politics of the Italian city-states and Europe’s “new monarchies”; religious reform; literacy and printing; the emerging public theater; new modes of representing selfhood; and the contentious history of the Renaissance as a concept. Authors include Petrach, Vasaria, Machiavelli, Erasmus, More, Castiglione, Rabelais, Montaigne, Sidney, Spenser, and Shakespeare. Lectures and discussions will be enriched by guest speakers and visits to Wellesley’s art and rare book collections. Students may register for either HIST 221 or ENG221 and credit will be granted accordingly.

Spring 2016
Theodore Herzl mused that he would like to be the Charles Stuart Parnell of the Jewish people. Yitzak Shamir used the code name of Michael (for Michael Collins) during Israel’s War of Independence. Eamon De Valera traveled to Israel to seek advice on the resurrection of the Irish language. Does this dialogue among nationalist leaders speak to a more significant connection between their movements? To answer this question, we shall explore the emergence and evolution of Zionism and Irish nationalism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Our focus will include poets, ideologues, and charismatic leaders, immigration, racism, and diaspora. Trends in modern Israel and Ireland will also be explored.
Alexander the Great murdered the man who saved his life, married a Bactrian princess, and dressed like Dionysus. He also conquered most of the known world by the age of 33, fused the eastern and western populations of his empire, and became a god. This course will examine the personality, career and achievements of the greatest warrior in history. This course may be taken either as 229, or with additional assignments, as 329.

Professor Rogers

Spring 2016
This lecture course explores the uses and visions of the city in Europe since the mid-nineteenth century. The course covers both the history of modern urban planning and the responses to it—the way the city was designed and the way it was lived. We will begin by looking at differing theories of the city: Was it a place of freedom or increased control, especially for socially marginalized groups like women, colonized populations and the poor? Was it an artifact of dominant social forces or a space for individual self-creation? Themes we will cover include colonial urbanism, modernism, fascist city planning, suburbanization, tourism, migration and reclamation of urban space by social movements, squatters and youth subcultures.

HIST240
Prof. Quinn Slobodian
Mondays & Thursdays 1:30-2:40

Spring 2016
In 1945, Germany’s war had left much of Europe in ruins. Yet postwar planners recognized that the continent’s strongest economic power and most populous country would have to remain the center of a reconstructed Europe. This course explores the challenges confronting a divided continent after 1945 through the histories of East and West Germany, which faced similar problems, but developed solutions that reflected the differing ideologies of state socialism and capitalism. It compares the relative influence of the U.S. and Soviet “partners,” strategies for dealing with the Nazi past and histories of collaboration, and efforts to build consumer culture and domestic consent. It also compares youth revolt, gender politics, immigration, and explores the role of a third, reunified Germany in Europe and the world after 1989.
History of the American West: Manifest Destiny to Pacific Imperialism

Meets Tuesdays, Fridays 1:30-2:40

With its sweeping landscapes, grand myths, and oversized egos, the American West has loomed large within US history. Since the nation's birth, Americans looked toward the horizon and imagined their destinies, a gaze since copied by historians, novelists, and filmmakers. Nevertheless, the history of this vast region is much more fractured and complex. This course explores the West – as an idea and place – from the early nineteenth-century through World War I. While we will engage the ways that Americans conjured and conquered the region, we will also look beyond their gaze toward the varied empires, peoples, and forces that created the West. Topics covered include: Northern New Spain and Mexico; American Indians and US expansionism; trans-continental and trans-Pacific trade and (im)migration; race, gender, and identity.

Professor Quintana

Spring 2016
Pursuits of Happiness: America in the Age of Revolution

Meets Tuesdays & Fridays 11:10-12:20

Investigates the origins and aftermath of one of the most improbable events in American history: the American Revolution. What pushed colonists to rebel, rather suddenly, against Britain? In addition, what social struggles followed the war’s wake? We will explore the experiences of ordinary Americans, including women and slaves; examine the material culture of Revolutionary America; trace the intellectual histories of the founders; and witness the creation of a national identity and constitution. Those who lived through the rebellion left behind plenty of material: letters; pamphlets; teapots; runaway slave advertisements; diaries. We will consider these and more. Visits to Boston historic sites will take you back in time and space to the besieged, volatile city that led the colonies into war.

Spring 2016

Professor Grandjean
Political Economy of Development in Colonial and Postcolonial South Asia

Professor Rao

Meets Tuesdays 6:00-8:30

In 1947, India was partitioned into India and Pakistan. Since then, these countries have wrestled with issues of governance and development, but colonial rule casts a long shadow over their efforts. This course introduces students to the complex politico-economic landscape of the subcontinent by examining how the idea of development changes in modern South Asian history. How are development efforts embedded in contexts of politics, society, and culture? How do political systems affect decisions? This course considers these questions by examining themes such as: the colonial state’s construction of railway and irrigation networks; Gandhi’s critique of industrialization; Nehru’s vision of an industrial economy; the challenges posed by Partition and militarization of Pakistan; the Green Revolution; the onset of economic deregulation.

Spring 2016
History 277

China and America: Evolution of a Troubled Relationship

Meets Mondays, Thursdays 9:50-11:00

A survey of China’s economic, cultural, and political interactions with the United States from 1784 to the present with a focus on developments since 1940. Topics include: trade throughout the centuries; American treatment of Chinese immigrants; World War II and the Chinese Revolution; the Cold War; Taiwan, and the ongoing instability of relations since 1979. Sources include the ever-increasing number of declassified U.S. documents as well as critical materials translated from the Chinese. This fall’s course will include opportunities for dialogue with Hong Kong university students covering similar material.

Spring 2016

Professor Giersch
In the years between the Revolution and the Civil War the United States experienced dramatic change, rapid geographic expansion, the growth and transformation of a market economy, the extension and evolution of slavery, the movement for abolition, and a Civil War that nearly destroyed the nation. These topics and others are long familiar to students of U.S. history, but we will re-frame our analysis of this period: examining expansion by re-centering American Indians and competing imperial powers, considering the rise of the state within the broader framework of world history, and re-imagining slavery in the context of global capitalism. In considering these topics and others from a variety of perspectives, we will explore the continued significance of the early nation era in American History.
This seminar explores the terrors that stalked the inhabitants of colonial and early national America. How did early Americans describe their fears? What did they find frightening? And what roles did fear and violence play in shaping American society? In this seminar, we will first explore the language and psychology of fear, and then study the many ways that terror intruded on early American lives. Topics include: the role of terror in early American warfare; fear of the supernatural; domestic violence and murder; the specter of slave rebellion; and fear and violence as entertainment in public executions and in early American literature.
C. Julius Caesar was descended from the goddess Venus and the Roman King Ancus Marcius. He was one of Rome’s greatest orators and Cicero said that every writer of sense steered clear of the subjects Caesar had written about. His life was both scandalous and unprecedented in Roman History: Curio called him every woman’s man and every man’s woman; Cato remarked that Caesar was the only sober man who tried to wreck the constitution. After conquering Gaul Caesar became Rome’s first dictator for life, and finally a god, after his assassination on the Ides of March of 44 BCE. This 300 level course will examine the life, death, and legacies of the greatest Roman against the backdrop of the destruction of the Res Publica.
Popular fascination with kings and queens is alive and well, but European monarchs once enjoyed a mystical, superhuman prestige far beyond mere celebrity. Why did they lose it? To find an answer, this seminar investigates their enigmatic killers: perpetrators of cosmic cataclysm in the name of liberation from tyranny. After examining the medieval legal foundations and ceremonial glamor of sacred kingship, we will analyze the most sensational modern cases of king-killing: Charles I in the English Civil War and Louis XVI in the French Revolution. Our analyses will encompass political maneuverings by individuals; bitter conflicts of class, religion, and party; the subversive power of satirical literature; utopian yearnings for a more egalitarian society; and the philosophical battles that produced modern concepts of the state.
This seminar examines the histories of imperialism from the late 18th century onwards. Both the actual histories of imperial practices as well as the way in which the meaning of the category itself changes over the course of two centuries will be investigated. As such, the course offers a comparative perspective on imperial practices of several states – including Britain, France, Japan, and the United States – in Africa and Asia. Topics include: the connections between imperialism, industrialization, and new technologies; imperial efforts to refashion subject peoples and resistance to such efforts; changing ideas of gender and race; decolonization; the enduring significance of imperial legacies in the age of globalization. Sources include selections from contemporary critics of imperialism such as Lenin and Fanon, scholarly writings, films, and fiction.

Professor Rao

Spring 2016
2015-2016