H605/H705: Greek Historians: Herodotus and Thucydides  
(Robinson, E.)

The organization of this graduate course will combine the approaches of a History Department “seminar” and “colloquium,” and thus students will be able to register for it under either rubric.

Students will study the histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, two of the earliest and greatest of the historians of ancient Greece. The course material will be both historiographical and historical: while much of our time will be spent on the approaches taken by the two writers – their aims, methods, and styles – we will also study key aspects of the monumental conflicts they wrote about, the Persian and Peloponnesian wars.

For most of the semester classes will be run in a discussion-oriented format with frequent, relatively brief, student reports as we seek a general understanding of the major issues in Herodotean and Thucydidean studies. But this class also requires students to research and write a substantial paper on a topic of their choosing relating to these authors or the historical events they cover. Time in the last third of the course will be given over to discussion of techniques of ancient historical research, specific problems students encounter as they conduct their research, and individual attention to student projects.

Knowledge of ancient Greek will be very helpful but is not required for this course.

H610/H710: Chivalry and Courtliness  
(Shopkow)

Perhaps no features of medieval society have been as hotly contested as chivalry and courtliness. Where did they come from? Were they central or peripheral to the way developing medieval elites conceived of themselves? Did chivalry curb violence or perpetuate it? [How] did the crusades fit in? What was the role in women in creating or perpetuating either concept? Where or how did sexuality play a role in love? How did the church respond to ideologies containing so much that was antithetical to doctrine? Finally, were these merely intellectual conceits or did they have some connection to reality?

Needless to say, with so much ink spilled on this huge topic, in this semester we won’t be able to be comprehensive, so we will be examining the issues raised by this through a series of
lenses, such as violence (including violence against women) and sexuality, and reading some relatively recent scholarship in these areas as well as a few classics. We will focus on the secondary literature, but in the course of individual research you will be working with primary source materials.

Students taking the course as H610 will write a bibliographic essay as their final projects. Students taking the course as H710 will write a research paper on a topic of their choice related to this question. All students will write responses to and reviews of the assigned reading.

H640/H740: Soviet History  (Kuromiya)

This is an intensive reading course in Soviet history. The aim is to help the student to become acquainted with major scholarly works, critically appraise them, identify important historical, methodological, and conceptual issues and controversies, and explore possible areas for further research. At the end of the semester, the student is required to submit a bibliographical essay (10--15 pages) on a subject to be determined in consultation with the instructor. Those who need seminar credit may take this course as H740 with a different requirement (a research paper).

H665: Caribbean History  (Diaz)

The Caribbean is perhaps one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse regions for its size in the world. While language and the historical experience of colonization by different metropolitan states divide this region, the Caribbean is historically united by its common historical experience of population substitution, African slavery, plantation agriculture, economic dependency, migration and imperialist domination. This colloquium in Caribbean History will focus precisely on the issue of Caribbean racial, cultural and political identities and historical unity. This line of inquiry will be examined using pertinent works in specific areas of study such as slavery, emancipation, race and national identities, U.S. presence, cultural nationalism, gender, and migration to the United States. At the same time, this course seeks to familiarize students with the literature of and leading approaches to Caribbean history.

H699: Age of Revolutions  (Knott)

What was the age of revolutions? The field largely began in the mid-twentieth century with the synthesizing work of Jacques Godechot and R.R. Palmer. In their hands, the age of the democratic revolution was the story of Western Civilization. But with the turn to history from below and to “experience”, historians’ interest swung away from grand abstractions like the shift from aristocracy to democracy. Their quarry was in more local places and among a wider range of historical actors. Now, as more eighteenth-century scholars have taken the
“transnational turn,” they are returning to the revolutionary age with a fresh set of questions: about the nature of imperial sovereignty, for example, or the importance of Saint Domingue (notoriously left out of Palmer’s story), or the connections between revolution and slave emancipation, or the changing nature of subjectivity, identity and “stuff” amidst transitional political turmoil. This new graduate course explores the re-emergent and dynamic field of the age of revolutions. The historical terrain is set as the period between the British imperial crisis of the 1760s and the founding of Haiti in 1804. The geographic terrain aims to encompass the entire revolutionary orbit, from the United States, France and Haiti to other European nations such as Belgium and Britain, parts of the Caribbean such as Jamaica or Guadeloupe, and the shores of West Africa. We will ask, for example, about the utility of familiar binaries such as “revolutionary” and “reactionary”, freedom and slavery, empire and nation. We will consider how scholars are navigating the vagaries of multiple archives, retrospective national bibliographies, and archival inequalities. We will explore different scales and modes of analysis. In the face of enduring commitments to more specific time/place scholarship, we will also ask, where and how do we locate historiographic stakes? And, what are the connections, not just between American and European revolutions, but also between the Atlantic revolutions and broader global phenomena?

H699: Comparative Oral History    (James)

H699: Global Environmental History    (O’Bryan)

During the last few decades, environmental history has emerged as an important and dynamic field. Invented by historians of the United States, it is now a growing area of methodological and topic innovation in regional fields covering the globe. Environmental history explores how human activity has been shaped by the natural world, how humans have in turn altered natural environments to suit their ends, and how historically determined cultural understandings of “nature” have governed the interplay between societies and the landscapes, climate and wildlife around them. Early twenty-first century knowledge of environmental change has only given new urgency to the insights of environmental history and new interest in expanding the knowledge the field can offer to those working in a range of national or topical subfields.

This course looks at new understandings of the relations between “natural” systems and human endeavors by attempting to follow the call of Donald Worster to see environmental history in a global context and global history in an environmental context. Whether or not one’s research interests are directly linked to environmental history narrowly defined, this course provides an approachable and highly relevant means by which to enter into the fields of world and global history so increasingly important within our discipline, both in undergraduate teaching settings in colleges and universities across the country and in relation to exciting
opportunities for cross-disciplinary understandings of the past. Going well beyond merely bleak stories of depredation, we will investigate the many cultural and social subfields of environmental history, including the cultural histories of landscapes and geographical imagination, urban history in environmental contexts, and the history of human and animal relations—including, for example, the links between modern nationalism and dog breeding. We will also discover fertile ground for exploring fundamental questions relevant to the philosophy of history as a whole: Is environmental history always presentist? Or declensionist? Can it be a tool for “rescuing history from the nation.”? In what way is ecology also historical explanation? We will proceed throughout with an eye to your later teaching careers, evaluating the ways environmental history provides useful approaches to world history course development.

**H750: American History   (McGerr)**

This is a practical class intended to help you make progress towards a dissertation topic and/or to produce the draft of a publishable article. While papers should generally focus on some phase of American/US history, there is no prescribed theme or topic. Instead, the emphasis is on developing your own research agenda; the more diverse the topics, the better. There are no prerequisites and no assigned readings. From the beginning of the course, you will be able to focus on your research and writing in a collaborative setting so that you can successfully complete your paper by the end of the semester.

**H760: Researching Gender and/or Sexualities in Modern History   (Allen)**

*Rationale*

This research seminar is designed for each participant to devise and complete an original research project related to the history of gender and sexualities in the period since about 1800. Projects may take many forms. Some participants may apply a particular theory (or body of theory) arising in gender or sexuality studies to a historical problem through scrutiny of relevant primary sources. Others already working (or planning to work) on a topic related to the history gender or sexualities can use the seminar to develop it, through primary source exploration. Still others may design an original research related to transformations in some aspect of gender or sexuality, perhaps related to possible dissertation subjects. Some participants may aim to prepare a conference paper or a publishable article in the history of gender/sexualities; others may use the seminar to identify ways that research in this area may augment or diversify their conceptual and methodological expertise.

*Class Schedule & Resources*

Each class member must choose an original historical research project in advance of the course’s commencement, preferably in discussion with the instructor.
The class has an array of formats, designed to assist each person’s project development and to permit a balance of project design, research, writing, consultation, assessment, and exchange activities.

All class reading materials and submissions of written work are posted on Oncourse.

**Requirements:**

1. Notes and discussion of posted items in class meeting weeks   
   20%
2. Project Prospectus with annotated bibliography - by Week 4 [Feb. 2]: 10-12 pages  
   20%
3. Primary Sources Research Report - by Week 7 [Feb. 23]: 5-7 pages  
   10%
4. Plan & Outline for project first draft [posted by Thurs. Mar. 5]: 2-3 pages  
   10%
5. First draft - by Week 11 [Mar. 30]: 15-20 pages  
   15%
6. Final draft – by Week 14 [April 20]: 20-25 pages  
   25%

**H785: Early Modern Islamic Empires**  (Sahin)

This course focuses on the establishment and development of the early modern Islamic empires. First, we will look at various themes and issues, such as relations between nomads and sedentary societies; the impact of Turkic nomads on Muslim societies from Asia to the Middle East; the arrival of “early modernity” in Eurasia; etc. We will then study the Mongols and Tamerlane as a prelude to the Ottomans, the Safavids and the Mughals. Next, we will discuss the history of the Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires up to the middle of the eighteenth century. We will focus on political history as well as administrative structures, economic relations and religious discourses. Throughout the semester, we will also study and discuss a variety of primary sources. Students are expected to present books and articles in class, write short papers, and produce a research-based final paper.

**H799: The Ocean: Trans-Regional Histories, Routes, and Discourses**  (Machado)

For at least the last half-millennium the ocean has been the most important medium by which distant human societies have been brought into relation. Even in the age of air travel, the ocean is a critical conduit for human interconnectivity. This course takes as its focus the ocean writ large: a space through which humans interact and perceive one another, a space that gives shape to and is shaped by cultural, economic and political processes.
In this course we will seek to address the communicative, transactional and transitional aspects of oceanic space. We will survey the ways in which the ocean has been a medium for sustenance and transformation, a place of integration and a route for human interaction, a place of contemplation, confrontation, pleasure and subjection. We will also consider the discursive and legal divisions of the sea into, for instance, the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Ocean, and how scholars have imagined and written about these ‘aquatic’ spaces. But we will keep in mind that the ocean has been a critical means of global integration precisely because it is a single body.

T500: Empire & Ethnicity in Modern Russian History   (Raun)

This colloquium offers a study of Russia and the Soviet Union as a multinational empire, stressing the period since the mid-19th century. The course will begin with a brief examination of the nature of Russian imperialism and assess its evolution in the context of other European imperialisms. This will be followed by a comparative evaluation of tsarist and Soviet nationality policies (the view from the center). The bulk of the course will offer a comparative study of the major nationalities of the Russian Empire and the USSR (the view from the non-Russian borderlands), seeking to elucidate their political, socioeconomic, and cultural development and to provide a meaningful basis for generalization about Russia’s ethnic diversity. Weekly meetings will focus on discussion of common readings, typically 6-8 articles or chapters (c. 200 pp.). Written work will consist of two book reviews and a historiographical essay. For overall context we will be reading Andreas Kappeler, The Russian Empire: A Multiethnic History (2001).