

SPRING 2006 - HISTORY 481 SEMINARS

901 - Religion in American History

Dr. Engel

TR 12:45-2:00

Religion is one of the most important, and yet often least studied, aspects of American history. From the Puritans to televangelists, the birth of Mormonism to the political participation of modern Christians, this course will explore the diverse subject of religion in American history through readings that delve into both new scholarship and formative historiographical debates. The primary goal and focus of the course, however, will be the students' research papers based on original research.

902 - Women of the Atlantic World, 1500-1850

Dr. Schloss

TR 2:20-3:35

Between 1500 and 1800, the lives of both women and men around the Atlantic rim were transformed by the coming together of Western Europeans, Native Americans and Africans in the western hemisphere. This course examines both the history and the historiography of women in Spain, Great Britain, France, the Americas, and the west coast of Africa, from the period of first contact until the final days of the plantation systems. We will focus on how women's personal experiences – and public reaction to their presence – both shaped and were shaped by social, economic, political, and cultural circumstances in each locale.

903 - Russia

Dr. Reese

TR 9:35-10:50

In this seminar we will “put Joseph Stalin on trial” for murder in the first degree. Recently a historian has written a book, which asserts that, “Stalin is not guilty of first degree murder.” The point of putting Stalin on trial is to study the great purges in the Soviet Union in the 1930s. The class will be divided into three groups, defense, prosecution, and panel of judges. The defense and prosecution teams will have to collect exhaustive evidence to make their case. The judges will have to achieve a mastery of the historical work on the purges to judge and evaluate the evidence. Each team will have to prepare their findings in a term paper based as much as possible on primary research. We will hold a trial in class over several weeks with each team arguing their cases before the jury. The jury will give a presentation to explain its verdict. A dissenting opinion is allowed. Each student will then write a paper on the purges on a specific aspect assigned to him or her by Dr. Reese.

904 - The Vietnam War/ The American War

Dr. Dror

TR 11:10-12:25

The word “Vietnam,” unknown to most Americans before the 1960s, has become a symbol of national pain. This course will consider the war fought in the 1960s-1970s from different perspectives – of its opponents and proponents in the U.S. and of the two sides in Vietnam, Communist and anti-Communist.

905 - Ordinary Lives in History

Dr. Dunlap

MWF 9:10-10:00

This course deals with the impact of historical events and processes on ordinary lives. Students will read and discuss two assigned books selected as examples, and using class discussions bring to bear historical understanding of programs, events, and the conditions and culture of the times on these lives. Each student will find a suitable autobiography and prepare a paper showing how the events and ideas of the time shaped that person's life. Papers will be submitted in the tenth week of the course, graded and returned, with a rewritten version due at the end of the semester. Grades will be roughly 30% by class participation, 30% for the first version, and 40% for the final product.

906 - The Road to Iraq: U.S. Military History since Vietnam

Dr. Linn

TR 8:00-9:15

This seminar will focus on research/writing skills and a research project on US military history between Vietnam and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Seminars will consist of a combination of instruction and discussion of various skills necessary for the advanced study of history. Topics that may be discussed include the uses and limitations of primary materials; archival research; reconciling conflicting accounts; weighing sources; the difference between primary and secondary materials; note taking; writing book reviews; research in primary sources; writing a research paper; presenting research; and critiquing papers.

907 - Chinese Popular Culture since 1600

Dr. Wang

M 5:45-8:35 pm

A writing course exploring the history of Chinese popular culture from approximately 1600 to the present, including social customs, folk tradition, daily life, local dramas, popular religions, gender issues, festivals, and ritual ceremonies.

908 - Comparative Theories and Practices of Violence

Dr. Brower

MW 4:10-5:25

Understanding human violence has long preoccupied thinkers. Our seminar will survey the theoretical and historical debates of the modern era. These include debates related to the role of violence in the French Revolution, colonialism, and the Holocaust, up to the struggles of the post-colonial world. Our readings are drawn from a variety of historical contexts and disciplinary sources such as sociology, anthropology, history, philosophy, as well as authors inspired by psychoanalysis. We shall also engage primary sources theorizing violence in important historical contexts.

909 - Europe Between the World Wars, 1918-1939

Dr. Scipp

TR 12:45-2:00

The end of the First World War in 1918 did not bring about the kind of peace and stability that the peacemakers hoped to foster in Europe. Changing political geography, demographics, and attitudes toward war and authority fueled instability and uncertainty across the continent. This course will examine the multiple crises of European society between the World Wars, paying particular attention to the experiences of Central and Eastern Europe.