HIS 716 Graduate Colloquium in World History
Tuesdays, 3:30-6:20, MHRA 1304

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:
Dr. Jill Bender, MHRA 2116, (no phone), jcbender@uncg.edu, Office Hours: Mondays, 1:30-2:30, Thursdays, 1:00-2:00, and by appointment
Dr. Linda Rupert, MHRA 2106, (no phone), lmrupert@uncg.edu, Office Hours: Thursdays, 10:00-12:00, and by appointment
Dr. Greg O’Brien, MHRA 2110, 336-334-3988, wgobrien@uncg.edu, Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:00-3:00, and by appointment
Dr. Asa Eger, MHRA 2113, 336-334-5203, aaeger@uncg.edu, Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00-3:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
How does one study World History? How does one examine multiple sites within a particular analytical framework? This course attempts to answer these questions by introducing students to a variety of methodological approaches to the growing field of Global History. In particular, we will examine World History through the lens of the Atlantic World, Modern Imperialism, Environmental History, and Cities of the Ancient World. The course is team-taught and comprised of multiple three week units. Students will be encouraged to examine both the possibilities and challenges posed by World History.

Student Learning Outcomes:
Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Describe broad knowledge of the field of world history (SLO1)
2. Demonstrate mastery of the methodology of world history through written essays (SLO2)
3. Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods (SLO3)
4. Synthesize material read from a variety of sources to produce a larger analytical conclusion (SLO4)
5. Compose written work utilizing scholarly studies of specific topics within world history (SLO5)

EVALUATION AND GRADING:
Each three week unit will have its own requirements and assignments, which will be assigned and graded by that unit’s professor (see below for more details). Throughout the entire course, you will develop skills in reading, writing, and analysis by writing a thoughtful analysis of each week’s readings. Incorporate all of the week’s readings (to the extent possible) into your analysis and find a unifying theme that connects all (or most) of the readings together. These papers should do more than summarize your readings. They should put the readings in conversation with each other and demonstrate your ability to draw out common threads and themes. Furthermore, all papers should conform to professional norms of historical analysis and writing.
Graduate students should own, and consult often, the latest edition of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University of Chicago Press).

All readings and assignments for each week will be completed before the start of class and are due on the dates listed (for example, you should read Stearns’ *World History* and complete the assigned critical response in preparation for class on January 21, 2014—this particular essay will be counted with the Modern Imperialism unit led by Dr. Bender). We will discuss the findings and implications of the book chapters and articles we read. You must participate in class discussion in order to do well on that portion of your grade.

There is no final exam for this graduate course. **Assignments for each unit will be given equal weight in the overall course grading, each worth 25%.** Unit grades will be determined according to the following calculation:

**Unit 1: The Atlantic World (Dr. Linda Rupert)**
- Class Discussion: 25%
- Papers: 75% (25% each)

**Unit 2: Modern Imperialism (Dr. Jill Bender)**
- Class Discussion: 20%
- Papers: 80% (20% each)

**Unit 3: World Environmental History (Dr. Greg O’Brien)**
- Class Discussion: 20%
- Reading Analysis: 60% (20% each)
- Book Review: 20%

**Unit 4: Cities of the Ancient World (Dr. Asa Eger)**
- Class Discussion: 25%
- Papers (3): 75% (25% each)

**Attendance Policy:** You are expected to attend every class and to complete all required work. Students who miss a class must contact the professor for that week as soon as possible to discuss the possibility of making up incomplete work.

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Please cite your sources using footnotes or endnotes. Plagiarism is a breach of the university’s academic integrity policy. For more information on this policy, see [http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/](http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/).

**Letter grades** for PhD students assigned as follows:

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**Letter grades** for MA students assigned as follows:

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**REQUIRED BOOKS:**
The following books are available for purchase at the university bookstore.


Book chapters will be available via the Course Documents section of the class Blackboard site. Journal articles are available via the UNCG library or e-reserves. **Always bring copies of all the week’s readings to class.**

**SEMESTER SCHEDULE**

**INTRODUCTION (Dr. Jill Bender)**

**January 14: Introduction to World History**


**January 21: Concepts of World History**


*Assignment:* Please write a 2-3 page critical response to the required reading. According to Stearns, what is World History? What does the field of World History offer to our understanding of the past? What challenges does the field face? (SLO1, SLO2)

**UNIT I: THE ATLANTIC WORLD (Dr. Linda Rupert)**
**Unit Description:**
This course introduces students to the Atlantic World both as an historical phenomenon and as a conceptual and methodological framework of analysis. Readings and class discussion will examine the parameters, contours, strengths, and limitations of one of the newest and fastest-growing fields in our discipline. We will consider the Atlantic World both as an expansion of nation-based histories and as a subset of a wider world history, with particular attention to the integration of geographic and spatial dimensions into temporal and thematic narratives. Papers for this unit should be 3-5 pages, double spaced (750-1500 words)

**January 28: The Atlantic as an Historical Phenomenon**


**Paper #1:** Briefly summarize and compare the relative weight the four authors give to different factors in the rise of an Atlantic system. (SLO2, SLO3, SLO4, SLO5)

**February 4: Atlantic Geneologies**


**Paper #2:** Briefly summarize, compare, and assess the relative weight the authors give to various factors in the development of the Atlantic World as a framework for historical analysis, with attention to similarities and differences in their emphasis. (SLO2, SLO3, SLO4, SLO5)

**February 11: Parameters**

Paper #3: Briefly compare the authors’ different perspectives on the parameters of the Atlantic World as a framework for historical analysis, its potential, and limitations. (SLO2, SLO3, SLO4, SLO5)

UNIT II: MODERN IMPERIALISM (Dr. Jill Bender)

Unit Description:
The last twenty years have witnessed a renewed interest in both global history and imperial history. As such, the two fields have informed and shaped each other. Historians in both fields have sought (and often struggled) to examine diverse peoples and places within one analytical framework. This section of the world history colloquium will examine the complementary relationship between world history and imperial history, paying particular attention to methodology and conceptualization.

February 18: Conceptualizing Empires, Conceptualizing Worlds


Assignment: Write a 3-4 page paper that compares the assigned readings and critically reflects on the relationship between world history and imperial history. Is imperial history world history? How do the two fields complement each other? What challenges do both face? (SLO2, SLO4)

February 25: Networks, Links, and Webs in the British Empire


Assignment: Write a 3-4 page paper that summarizes the argument of the assigned readings and places the readings within historiographical context. How have historians
sought to study the disparate locations of the British Empire? What are the similarities and differences in their methodology? (SLO2, SLO3, SLO5)

March 4: Global Empires


Assignment: Write a 3-4 page paper that summarizes the argument of the assigned readings and places the readings within historiographical context. What do the authors argue? What are the similarities and differences in their methodologies and theses? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these readings? (SLO2, SLO3, SLO5)

March 11: SPRING BREAK – No Classes

UNIT III: WORLD ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY (Dr. Greg O’Brien)

Unit Description
The natural environment intersects with major themes in world history, including colonialism, industrialization, and war. We investigate the environmental context and consequences of these and other subjects, with the understanding that the environment is an agent and a presence in human history. Because environmental change often transcends national boundaries, this unit places important subjects in environmental history into a global context.

March 18: Key Concepts and “Big History”
DUE: Reading Analysis #1
We will also choose/assign books for the book review due April 1.

Readings:
Book: Penna, Human Footprint, pp. 1-81

Articles:
March 25: Food, Manufacturing, Trade & Case Studies
DUE: Reading Analysis #2

Readings:
Book: Penna, Human Footprint, pp. 82-240

Articles:

April 1: “Natural” Disasters as Shapers of Human History
DUE: Reading Analysis #3 and Book Review
Approximately half of this class will be devoted to discussion of the weekly readings and half to your presentation of the material in the book you read for your book review.

Readings:
Book: Penna, Human Footprint, pp. 241-305

Articles:
Myron Echenberg, “Pestis Redux: The Initial Years of the Third Bubonic Plague Pandemic, 1894-1901,” Journal of World History vol. 13, no. 2 (Fall 2002), pp. 429-449
Shujh Cao, Yushang Li, and Bin Yang, “Mt. Tambora, Climatic Changes, and China's Decline in the Nineteenth Century,” Journal of World History vol. 23, no. 3 (Sept. 2012), pp. 587-607

Specific Graded Assignments:

Reading Analysis Papers (3-5 pages, double-spaced) on weekly readings (SLO1, SLO2, SLO3, SLO4)
Book Review of a book on a Natural Disaster in World History (SLO1, SLO2, SLO3)
You will further develop skills in reading, writing, and analysis by writing a professional-quality book review on a book chosen from the attached list. The review will be 500-750 words, the typical word limit for book reviews in Environmental History. In the review identify the thesis of the reading. Summarize the most important ideas and evidence that support the thesis. Evaluate the reading. Does the author make a convincing case? Do the author’s sources, methods, insights, or angle of approach stand out? How does this reading relate to others? Obviously, you must be concise yet thorough. Never tell me that a book is “interesting.” Instead, explain why it is important. You will also inform the class orally about your disaster and its impact on human history in a 10 minute or so presentation that is meant to be informal but thorough. I and your class peers will ask you questions about it after your presentation. Due in class April 1.

Book List for April 1 Book Review:
_____. The Little Ice Age: How Climate Made History, 1300-1850, 2002.
Post, John D. Food Shortage, Climate Variability, and Epidemic Disease in Preindustrial Europe, 1985.

UNIT IV: CITIES OF THE ANCIENT WORLD (Dr. Asa Eger)

Unit Description
Studying and teaching history on a global scale and over millennia presents particularly daunting challenges to historians who are trained in modern history and are accustomed to working solely with written sources. This section of the World History Colloquium introduces students to ancient world history by focusing on the varying ways scholars have defined and viewed cities, the types of primary sources that provide evidence of them (instead of or in addition to written
sources, e.g. the built environment, material culture, historical linguistics, etc.), and how those sources can be interpreted to reveal changes in social and economic complexity over time in the transition from ancient to medieval cities.

Requirements
+ Essay #1: One 3-5 page position paper on comparative definitions of and approaches to the city in ancient history, based on required readings in Week 1. (SLO1, SLO2, SLO3, SLO5)

+ Essay #2 (3-5 pages) catalogues and discusses the general time frame of the study and the types of primary sources that serve as evidence for cities in one geographical region or chronological period. (SLO2, SLO5)

+ Essay #3 (3-5 pages) analyzes how those primary sources are interpreted to reveal historical change by examining social complexity or the economy over time and in comparison between cities. (SLO3, SLO4, SLO5)

Schedule

April 8: *The Ancient City, Changing Views*

* Essay #1 is due and will be discussed in class.

Readings:

April 15: *Varieties of Evidence of Ancient Cities in the Old and New Worlds*

* Essay #2 is due and will be discussed in class

Readings:

Individual Reading
+ Pick one monograph of a city or time period from the list below and read it. Pay close attention to the types of primary sources and methods of analysis used in assessing the city. You will present this in class to your classmates in the first half of class. This will form the core of your Essay #2.

Old World: Ancient Near East

Old World: Greece and Rome

Old World: Egypt and Africa

Old World: South and East Asia
Fairservis, Walter A. The Roots of Ancient India: The Archaeology of Early Indian Civilization.

New World


**April 22: Social and Economic Complexity in the Transformation from Ancient to Medieval City**

* Essay #3 is due and will be discussed in class

**Readings:**


**Individual Reading:**

Pick one other work from the same region as the one you did for your second essay, using the same list in the previous week (or you may introduce another study with my permission). You will compare two different cities over time and pay special attention to 1) urban theory utilized, 2) methods of primary sources, and finally 3) what differences can you observe in either or both social complexity and economy between the two cities? This will be Essay #3 due April 22. *See supplementary sources for full list of suggested readings.*