

HIS 715 – Social History in Global Perspective
Spring 2019 – Mondays 6:30 - 9:20, 2208 MHRA

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Office Hours: T/W 10-11 am, or by appointment
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Course Objectives: This course examines selected readings in social history as windows onto what is useful and distinctive about the new global history. In the mid-twentieth century came transformations in scholarship and teaching of history which brought to the fore important thematic approaches such as social history, gender, area studies, environmental history, and others. Overarching and incorporating such themes came also new kinds of historical perspective and practice. World historians focus on comparisons, connections, and networks viewed in large scale or over long time periods. Over the semester we will explore and understand the ‘global’ as an alternative to Eurocentric and ‘presentist’ conceptions of the human past.

Student Learning Outcomes –

On completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Explain major social and cultural effects of intercontinental maritime trades between parts of Afro-Eurasia and/or the Americas;
- Analyze major themes and debates in the new global historiographies;
- Formulate historical questions and design research projects that employ cross-cultural or global-scale analytical approaches.

Requirements and Grading:

This course is an intensive readings course at the graduate level. Your main requirement is to come to class fully prepared for an in-depth discussion of the assigned readings. Attendance is required. Any absences will have a major effect on your grade. Required books are on reserve in Jackson Library and can be checked out for one week. Most of the primary source readings are available as eReserves in Canvas via the HIS 715 module.

In each class meeting we will be discussing that day’s book and that day’s primary sources. Each student will give a formal presentation to the class on one of the books listed in the syllabus calendar, and will guide a discussion of it for that day’s meeting (worth 30% of the final course grade). On each of the other days, students will bring in a one-page position paper on the primary source readings or viewings, and will bring copies for the other students (graded as 0, 2, 4, or 6 points each, together worth 30% of the final course grade).

Outside of class, students will each develop a research project in Comparative / World history (worth 40% of the final course grade). The project will include the historical problem or questions to be addressed, discussion of the relevant literature, a preliminary annotated bibliography, and rationales for locating and analyzing primary sources (sources should NOT be available online). A draft of the proposal will be handed in during the semester for my comments and questions. The final draft (10 pp. maximum) will be handed in at the last class meeting (May 1), together with a copy of the earlier draft with comments. Failure to hand in both drafts will constitute a failure (F) of the assignment. Documentation should follow the