

Department of History
Undergraduate History Course Descriptions
Summer 2021

HIS 1060-015

TOPIC: Islam and the West

MTWRF 10:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

Dr. Hibba Abugideiri

This core history course explores the historical cross-cultural influences and conflicts between “the Islamic world” (primarily in the area that is today the Middle East) and “the West,” with particular emphasis on the modern period (post 1800). We will do this by examining various aspects – like science, literature, architecture, religious and political ideas, popular culture and the media – in order to determine the shifting directions cultural influence has historically moved over time between these equally changing geographic entities and why. As we discuss texts, a novel, and videos, our historical approach will be guided by important questions, including: What does “Islam” in the expression “Islam and the West” mean? Is it a religious or cultural designation? Is there a geographic area that we can designate as “Islamic”? What is “the West”? Which areas does it include and why? Does “the West” presume certain cultural values not found in “the East”? When and where did “the West” emerge? How do we characterize the shifting relations between Muslims and “the West”? Does the expression “Islam and the West” reflect a historical reality or a modern construct? At the heart of our collective inquiry is an exploration of how these two entities interacted and how each viewed the other over time and why.

Attributes: Core History

HIS 1165-035

American Empire

TR 5:20-7:00 p.m.

Dr. Eugene McCarraher

Most Americans never think of the United States as an empire. Empire is ancient Rome, Victorian Britain, or Czarist Russia. In this view, if the United States has ever exercised anything even resembling imperial power, it has always been “reluctant” to do so; we have “stumbled” into global preeminence, like some drunken, off-duty superpower. This course aims at dispelling this mythology. Far from being a “reluctant” superpower that “stumbled” into global hegemony, the United States has always been embarking on imperial quests to impose its will around the world. From the Puritan belief in God’s providential anointment of the elect to build a “city on a hill,” to the creation of a slave-owning “empire of liberty” to spread the fruits of liberal democracy and capitalism, to the genocidal conquest of native Americans otherwise known as “manifest destiny” or “westward expansion,” and to the declaration of a (short) “American Century” and even of “the end of history” in the 1990s, American history has always had imperial adventure at its heart. Our economy, our conception of “freedom,” and our everyday lives have depended on empire. Indeed, empire, as the historian William Appleman Williams once observed, has been a way of life for Americans. In this course, we will examine the roots of American empire and the evolution of imperial justifications. We will explore how the quest for empire has shaped everything from the contours of its economic development to its conceptions of sexuality; how opposition to imperialism triggered anti-racist and anti-colonial ideas and movements; and how our economic and ecological turbulence may augur the end of American empire. Although we will pay attention to economics, politics, and foreign policy, the readings and assignments will focus primarily on empire’s domestic and cultural foundations.

Attributes: Core History

HIS 1250-020

TOPIC: Ancient Empires

MTWRF 10:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

Dr. Kelly-Anne Diamond

This course is intended to be an introduction to the empires of the ancient Near East from

approximately 1550 BCE to the end of the Babylonian Empire and the Persian conquest (ca. 539 BCE). From the borders of Iran and Afghanistan in the east, to the Levant and Turkey in the north, and to Egypt in the south, we will look at the most up to date political narrative and the latest archaeological and textual discoveries. We will also concentrate on the obstacles posed by various interpretative practices and methodologies.

Major themes include the evaluation of the main sources used to reconstruct these societies and political systems, existing historical problems, and scholarly debates (or controversial material). Special attention will be paid to the role of the king and the ideology of kingship.

This course will include a map quiz, a midterm and final exam, a seminar presentation and four response papers. All primary sources will be read in translation.

HIS 2993-030

History Internship

TBA

Dr. Marc Gallicchio

An internship in a local historical archive, museum, park, or library.

3.00 credit(s)

Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Undergraduate

HIS 2296-030

History Internship

TBA

Dr. Marc Gallicchio

An internship in a local historical archive, museum, park, or library.

3.00 credit(s)

Restrictions: Must be enrolled in one of the following Levels: Undergraduate

HIS 5515-030

Independent Research

Dr. Marc Gallicchio

Permission of Chairperson required Restrictions: Sophomore, Junior, Senior Majors only