Department of History
Graduate Course Descriptions
Fall 2025

HIS 8026-001 **U.S. Civil War**
Wednesday, 5:20-7:20 p.m.
Dr. Judy Giesberg

The South seceded for states' rights, Union soldiers fought for emancipation, and Lincoln died a martyr -- what else is there to be said about the Civil War? Everything! Despite commonly held assumptions such as these, little about what we think we "knew" about the Civil War has stood the test of time, the scrutiny of modern scholarship, and the revelations that can be found in considering new sources and deploying new methodologies. Indeed, scholarship on the U.S. Civil War is more lively and fresh today than it has ever been, having received new energy from scholars interested social and political history, the history of gender, and comparative slave societies. In this course, students will explore this scholarship in a course organized around a series of historiographical questions, including "Why War," "Why fight," "Who freed the slaves," "Regular v. irregular warfare" and "How to remember?"

HIS 8205-001 **Ancient Mediterranean: Empires**
Thursday, 5:20-7:20 p.m.
Dr. Eliza Gettel

This seminar will focus on the theme of empires of the ancient Mediterranean. Historians refer to several ancient Mediterranean states as 'empires,' but the people who ruled them and lived within them did not necessarily use such a term. Therefore, this course will revolve around the following questions: what was common amongst ancient states that we call empires, and where does the definition of 'empire' breakdown for the ancient world? Relatedly, how did the people who lived within these 'empires' experience and conceptualize imperial state power in a premodern world? In exploring these questions, the course will travel around the greater ancient Mediterranean world, including study of Persian, Greek, and Roman societies. You are also welcome to explore other ancient empires in course assignments!

HIS 8402-001 **TOP: Petroleum Century**
Monday, 7:30-9:30 p.m.
Dr. Andrew Liu

In this course, we will read different books and articles examining the history of the 20th century by focusing on one of its most important commodities -- petroleum. It will begin by examining the history of oil from economic and environmental history perspectives. But we will also explore connections with global trends in social, intellectual, political, and cultural history. Oil has affected countless places, from Pennsylvania, California, and Texas to Russia and the Arab world. For instance: oil is tied to the rise of the automobile and suburbanization in the US; cars were also central to the rivalry between US and east Asia manufacturing in the late century; the petrochemical industries (plastics, new materials in postwar consumption); chemical fertilizers revolutionizing agriculture; new financial instruments, such as the rise of the Petro-dollar in the 1970s; and the oil shocks of the 1970s that many point to as a turning point heralding a new era of history.

I will treat this as an open-ended colloquium. I have a few readings in mind but am open minded about including others that fit with students' interests.

HIS 8702-001 **Intro to Public History**
Tuesday, 5:20-7:200 p.m.
Dr. Whitney Martinko

This course introduces students to the intellectual and professional issues that define practices, professions, and projects often categorized as public history. It examines how historians create knowledge and interpret the past with various partners and for public constituencies. It also explores the professional values embraced by historians working with collaborators and audiences outside of academia and the interpretative, educational, and structural challenges that they face. Readings give students an intellectual framework to analyze debates about historical topics and interpretation, material form and media format, and the authority to decide what history should be told and how. Readings cover fields including museums, historic sites, community projects, digital history, government work and non-profit work, and historic preservation. Assignments will focus on the professional skill of grant-writing, and students will work on a semester-long research project on a topic of their choosing.

HIS 8850-001 **Theory and Methods in History Monday, 5:20-7:20 p.m.**
Dr. Rebecca Winer

This course is designed to acquaint MA students with the language, methods, and theoretical foundations of the historical profession. It introduces students to some of the most influential approaches that historians have employed to study, analyze, and write history over the last several decades. By familiarizing students with the common language of history, this course will allow students to gain a mature understanding of the ways in which historians tell their stories of the past; prepare them to engage meaningfully in their graduate courses; and provide them with the tools they will need to be active members of the history profession. Course readings will offer theoretical grounding in the study of history as well as examples of different historical approaches in practice.

HIS 9006-001 **Graduate Internship in Public History**
TBA
Director, Graduate program

Students may arrange internships at area public history sites to gain practical experience in public history workplaces, develop applied research and interpretative skills, and apply their skills as historians to contemporary situations and problems. Students are expected to work at least 8 hours per week at the internship site and complete a 12-15-page research paper, approved by both their internship advisor and their faculty advisor. Full guidelines for proposing an internship, applying for approval, and completing the course for credit are outlined in the Graduate Student Handbook. *Graduate students may take this course only once. Permission of graduate program director required.*

HIS 9012-001 **Directed Readings in History**
TBA
Various Faculty members

An independent study and reports on selected topics.
Permission of the instructor and approval of the graduate program director are required.

HIS 9042-001 **Internship in Teaching of History**
TBA
Director, Graduate program

An option for graduate students, normally in their second year of studies, to gain teaching experience under graduate faculty supervision. Graduate students might lead discussions of assigned readings, present a few lectures to undergraduate classes, hold remedial or supplementary tutorials, or assist in devising and evaluating quizzes, examinations, and paper assignments. The internship is designed to assist graduate students in gaining teaching and classroom experience. Internships are by faculty invitation only, but students may express an interest; consult the graduate or departmental chairperson.
Permission of the graduate director required.