

WORLD HISTORY CORE SEMINAR.

THE WIDEST CONTEXTS: WORLD HISTORY NARRATIVES

HIST 2718, SPRING 2016
DIEGO HOLSTEIN

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This course examines exemplary works in world history addressing either the entire time span of human experience or the modern period alone. The aims of the course are to introduce students to world-historical literature and to provide them with the widest contexts potentially relevant to their own field, research, and teaching.

FORMAT OF CLASS SESSION

Every week we will read and discuss one book (or two booklets). Our weekly meetings will be structured by three blocks: Presentation; discussion; application.

Presentation: We will begin each class with the reading of the minutes of the previous session written by a volunteer or appointed student. This will allow us to recapitulate on the state of our discussion before incorporating a new book. Second will come a 15-minute student presentation on that week's reading/s. In her/his opening remarks, the student will provide an introduction to the intellectual trajectory of the author/s under discussion. Subsequently, this presentation will aim to identify the building blocks of the narrative (its periodization, organization of space, choice of variables, and their articulation) and to discuss its core arguments, approaches, and methods. Students are encouraged to volunteer for those presentations; in the absence of volunteers, the instructor will assign presenters for given weeks.

Discussion: A group discussion will follow suit. The group discussion will review the above mentioned intellectual trajectory and narrative parameters, will assess the strengths, contributions, open questions, problems, and flaws of each book. The book will then be brought into conversation with other relevant works (primarily but not limited to those included in the seminar's bibliography).

Application: Last but not least, each student will explore in advance how the book/s of the week can enrich her/his own research, writing, and teaching. Each students will present her/his conclusions and plans in this regard during this final part of the weekly session.

ASSIGNMENTS

- (1) Students will actively engage in the weekly discussion based on their original analysis of the readings and will take their turns in minutes writing and lead presentations. (50% of final grade)
- (2) Students will write one short (4-5 pages) paper on a book of their choice every month (September, October, November). The paper will be submitted before the discussion on the selected book in class. (10% of final grade each)
- (3) A final synthetic paper of 2500 words, surveying the course as a whole, will be due at the last meeting. Late papers will not be accepted. (20% of final grade)

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

I. Introduction to the fields of World and Global Histories

Week 1.

Manning, P. *Navigating World History: Historians Create a Global Past*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Sachsenmaier, D. *Global Perspectives on Global History: Theories and Perspectives in a Connected World*. Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Hunt, L. *Writing History in the Global Era*. W. W. Norton & Company, 2015.

Conrad, S. *What Is Global History?* Princeton University Press, 2016.

II. Synthetic Overviews

Week 2.

Vanhaute, E. *World History: An Introduction*. Routledge, 2012.

Allen, R., *Global Economic History. A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2011.

Week 3.

McNeill, W. *The Rise of the West: A History of the Human Community*. New American Library; New English Library, 1963.

Or

McNeill, W. *A World History*. Oxford University Press, 4 edition, 1998.

Week 4.

McNeill, W. "The Rise of the West, twenty-five years after." *Journal of World History* 1, no. 1 (1990): 1-21.

McNeill, J. and McNeill, W. *The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of World History*. W.W. Norton & Company, 2003.

Week 5.

Chase-Dunn, Christopher, and Bruce Lerro. *Social Change: Globalization from the Stone Age to the Present*. Paradigm Publishers, 2014.

III. Modern World and Global Histories

Week 6.

Taylor, Peter J. *The Way the Modern World Works: World Hegemony to World Impasse*. John Wiley and Sons, 1996.

Week 7.

Abernethy, D. *The Dynamics of Global Dominance. European Overseas Empires, 1415-1980*. Yale University Press, 2000.

Week 8.

Frank, Andre Gunder, *ReOrient: Global Economy in the Asian Age*. University of California Press, 1998.

Week 9.

Pomeranz, K. *The Great Divergence: China, Europe and the Making of the Modern World Economy*. Princeton University Press, 2000.

Week 10.

Bayly, C. *The Birth of the Modern World, 1780-1914: Global Connections and Comparisons*. Blackwell Pub, 2004.

Week 11.

Darwin, J. *The Empire Project: Rise and Fall of the British World-System 1830–1970*. Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Week 12.

Bairoch, P. *Economics and World History: Myths and Paradoxes*. University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Week 13.

J. Osterhammel and N. Petersson, *Globalization. A Short History*, Trans. by D. Geyer. Princeton University Press, 2005.

Week 14.

Olstein, D. *Manuscript in progress on Global Socio-Political Economy History of the Contemporary World*.

IV. Conclusions

Week 15. Concluding Session

Tilly, Charles. *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons*. Russell Sage Foundation, 1984.