

Department of History

Fall 2020 Courses

****Unless noted, general education designations are for students entering beginning Fall 2017**

****Honors courses taught by History faculty are listed at the end of this packet**

History 200

Empires of the Ancient World

Dr. Jennifer Stiles

MWF—12:55-1:45 p.m.

Many aspects of modern society, including politics, economy, religion and social issues have their roots in ancient and medieval civilizations. This course will explore past civilizations throughout the globe and their diverse contributions to modern society. In particular, we will explore the themes of geopolitics, population movement and interaction, spiritual and empirical paths to truth, and artistic expression. Students will investigate these themes through lecture, discussion and primary and secondary source readings.

****Gen Ed:** Humanities, Global Diversity

History 200

Empires of the Ancient World

Prof. Gang Zhao

TTH—9:15-10:30 a.m.

Comparative study of the formation of ancient empires of the Afro-Eurasian world up to the rise of Islam.

****Gen Ed:** Humanities, Global Diversity

History 200

Empires of the Ancient World

Prof. Gang Zhao

TTH—2:00-3:15 p.m.

Comparative study of the formation of ancient empires of the Afro-Eurasian world up to the rise of Islam.

****Gen Ed:** Humanities, Global Diversity

History 200-501

Empires of the Ancient World

Mrs. RoseMarie T. Eichler

Online

Through the use of examples drawn from diverse regions and historical eras, this course explores global encounters and parallel development among ancient societies, and the changes that these processes bequeathed to the modern world. It focuses on the major themes that show how connections between the world's regions formed the basis of the increasingly globalizing economies and societies of the last five hundred years. These encounters include the spread of agricultural technology, the growth of urban trade areas and the connections between them, the spread of universal religions and philosophical traditions, and the rise of large state structures that enabled many of these developments.

****Gen Ed:** Humanities, Global Diversity

History 210
Humanities in the Western Tradition
Prof. Michael Levin
MWF—8:35-9:25 a.m.

Course description: We will discuss the question, What is "Western Civilization"? In other words, why do we in "the West" think the way we do? In this course we will use a combination of history, art, literature, and philosophy to explore the roots of our society. We will examine what has changed, and what has not changed, in our thinking about big questions: love, death, politics, and the meaning of life. This course will survey Western culture from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia to the Italian Renaissance.

****Gen Ed:** (pre-Fall 2017): Humanities. Gen Ed (Fall 2017-present): Humanities, Critical Thinking

History 210
Humanities in the Western Tradition
Mr. Michael Selzer
MWF—11:50 a.m.-12:40 p.m.

Throughout the course of human history, cultures and customs have changed, but the basic problems people have faced have not. In this course we will discuss the big questions: the meaning of life, confronting the reality of death, how to create a just society, and how to treat our fellow humans. This course will survey Western culture from ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia to the Italian Renaissance, following the development of religion, philosophy, art, and literature in the "West". We will thus examine the roots of our current Western culture through primary source readings, with lectures to provide context.

****Gen Ed:** (pre-Fall 2017): Humanities. Gen Ed (Fall 2017-present): Humanities, Critical Thinking

History 210
Humanities in the Western Tradition
Prof. Michael Graham
TTH—10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Introduction to the human condition as manifested in ideas, religions, visual arts and music of Western civilization from ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt through the Italian Renaissance.

****Gen Ed:** (pre-Fall 2017): Humanities. Gen Ed (Fall 2017-present): Humanities, Critical Thinking

History 221
Humanities in the World since 1300
Prof. Stephen Harp
MW 2-3:15 p.m.

This course surveys important developments in history, the arts, religion, and culture generally during the early modern and modern eras. Unlike previous Humanities classes, it is no longer separated into lecture and discussion sections; instead, we will do both lecture and discussion in each class period. Readings include a textbook, abundant primary source readings, and Joseph Conrad's Heart of Darkness. Requirements include midterm and final examination, a paper, and discussion.

****Gen Ed:** (pre-Fall 2017): Humanities. Gen Ed (Fall 2017-present): Humanities, Critical Thinking

History 221
Humanities in the World since 1300
Prof. Stephen Harp
MW 5:15-6:30 p.m.

This course surveys important developments in history, the arts, religion, and culture generally during the early modern and modern eras. Unlike previous Humanities classes, it is no longer separated into lecture and discussion sections; instead, we will do both lecture and discussion in each class period. Readings include a textbook, abundant primary source readings, and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. Requirements include midterm and final examination, a paper, and discussion.

****Gen Ed:** (pre-Fall 2017): Humanities. Gen Ed (Fall 2017-present): Humanities, Critical Thinking

History 221
Humanities in the World since 1300
Prof. Janet Klein
TTH: 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Course Description and Themes: This course covers the major global intellectual, political, and artistic trends since 1300, and the ways in which those trends in the humanities reveal the connections among continents, regions, and nations in the modern era. Although we will cover prominent and well-known figures, the focus of this course is broader than the "high" culture that the Humanities component of the General Education curriculum has customarily offered. Instead, this course understands "culture" as the daily practices of peoples and the meanings that men and women assign to them. The main themes for this course are: (1) the interconnectedness and mutual influence of cultures (and the humanities) arising from the expansion of global trade, and the sharing of ideas and experiences across time and space; (2) the conflict that emerges (ironically) from cross-cultural interaction; (3) how gender affects the experiences of men and women cross-culturally and how they, in turn, interpret those experiences; (4) the ways in which art, music and literature reflect the societies in which they were created.

Course Goals/Learning Outcomes: (1) to expose students to various cultural traditions around the world and the exchanges among them; (2) to improve students' analytical skills through the interpretation of primary texts in their cultural and historical context; (4) to improve students' writing skills; (3) to improve students' oral expression in class discussions.

****Gen Ed:** (pre-Fall 2017): Humanities. Gen Ed (Fall 2017-present): Humanities, Critical Thinking

History 221
Humanities in the World since 1300
Prof. Janet Klein
TTH: 12:15-1:30 p.m.

Course Description and Themes: This course covers the major global intellectual, political, and artistic trends since 1300, and the ways in which those trends in the humanities reveal the connections among continents, regions, and nations in the modern era. Although we will cover prominent and well-known figures, the focus of this course is broader than the "high" culture that the Humanities component of the General Education curriculum has customarily offered. Instead, this course understands "culture" as the daily practices of peoples and the meanings that men and women assign to them. The main themes for this course are: (1) the interconnectedness and mutual influence of cultures (and the humanities) arising from the expansion of global trade, and the sharing of ideas and experiences across time and space; (2) the conflict that emerges (ironically) from cross-cultural interaction; (3) how gender affects the experiences of men and women cross-culturally and how they, in turn, interpret those experiences; (4) the ways in which art, music and literature reflect the societies in which they were created.

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****Gen Ed:** (pre-Fall 2017): Humanities. Gen Ed (Fall 2017-present): Humanities, Critical Thinking

History 250

United States History to 1877

Prof. Walter Hixson

TTH—2:00-3:40 p.m.

This course surveys the history of what became the United States, from European arrival in the late fifteenth century to the Civil War and Reconstruction culminating in 1877. Among the topics to be explored are indigenous peoples' history and culture; Euro-American settler colonization; imperial wars; birth of the United States; American imperial expansion across the continent; the history of Indian and African slavery; modernization; immigration; the crisis of the Union; the Civil War and Reconstruction.

****Gen Ed:** Social Science, Domestic Diversity

History 250

United States History to 1877

Ms. Jacqie Flynn

MTWF—8:35-9:25 a.m.

Historical survey from the Age of Discovery and North American colonization through the creation of the United States to the Civil War and Reconstruction.

****Gen Ed:** Social Science, Domestic Diversity

History 251

United States History since 1877

Mr. Matthew Novak

TTH—3:05-4:45 p.m.

Survey of United States history from the end of Federal Reconstruction to the present.

****Gen Ed:** Social Science, Domestic Diversity

History 251

United States History since 1877

Prof. Michael Sheng

MW—6:20-8:00 p.m.

Survey of United States history from the end of Federal Reconstruction to the present.

****Gen Ed:** Social Science, Domestic Diversity

History 301

Modern China

Prof. Gang Zhao

TTH—12:15-1:30 p.m.

This course examines the domestic and global roots of China's 20th century modernization and their relationship to the challenges China now faces.

History 310
Historical Methods
Prof. Michael Graham
TTH—2:00-3:15 p.m.

This course is designed to help students of history better understand and master the tools of the trade - research (finding source materials and framing the questions they can help to answer), and historical writing (including proper citation of sources and the peer review process). The “laboratory” within which we will work will be the seventeenth century (broadly conceived here as roughly 1580-1720) in Britain and its North American colonies. We will spend the first few weeks of the course familiarizing ourselves with the basic background of seventeenth-century British history, following that up with an exam to make sure you have attained some mastery of that knowledge. Students will then select primary sources with which they would like to work, and formulate research questions around which they will write the 10-15 page paper which will be the final product of their work in this course. Along the way, there will be some shorter quizzes and writing assignments leading up to that, aimed at building up some basic historical writing skills, as well as laying a foundation for the final paper.

History 317
Roman Republic
Prof. Clayton Fant
TTH—2:00-3:15 p.m.

This survey of the first half of Roman history focuses on the questions of how the Romans acquired a world empire before 100 BC, why the senatorial form of government was so successful (our Founding Fathers studied it!), and why it all fell apart at its peak (leading to rule by emperors). We will supplement the textbook with extensive primary source readings in the historians Polybius and Livy as well as documentary sources. There will be several short source analysis papers, a book review, a midterm and a take-home essay final exam.

History 321
Europe 1348-1610: From the Black Death to the Era of Religious Wars
Prof. Michael Levin
MWF—9:40-10:30 a.m.

This course surveys the main events and developments in Europe from the arrival of the Bubonic Plague (1347-1348) to the “era of religious warfare” (1610, the year the King of France was assassinated by a religious fanatic). We will explore the transition from “medieval” to “early modern” Europe, and the social, religious, and intellectual movements that caused that transformation, including the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the discovery of the “New World.” We will study this period from a variety of perspectives, using a variety of sources.

History 323
Europe from Revolution to World War, 1789-1914
Prof. Stephen Harp
MW 3:30-4:45 p.m.

This class covers Europe during “the long nineteenth century” from the start of the French Revolution to the outbreak of the First World War. Although we will start with the bloodshed of the Revolution and end with that of the Great War, we also consider the evolution of human rights and notions of democracy, the ideologies of liberalism, conservatism and socialism, the development of imperialism, and a host of other topics. In so many ways, the nineteenth century shaped the world that we live in, so this class serves as an excellent foundation for any future work in modern world history. Course requirements include midterm and final examinations, as well as short papers on other readings, and participation in a mock trial in class. Course

readings include a textbook, a primary source reader on European soldiers and civilians during the Napoleonic wars, German working-class autobiographies, and a history of King Leopold II's exploitation of the Congo.

****Gen Ed:** Critical Thinking

3400-324-001

Europe: World War I to the Present

MWF—8:35-9:25 a.m.

Mrs. RoseMarie Eichler

This course surveys the major political, social, and cultural developments in Europe from 1914 to the present. During this timeframe, the rivalries and internal strife experienced by European nations culminated in their decline as world powers and the loss of their empires. Special attention will be given to the two world wars, nationalism, national identity, ethnic conflicts, the Cold War, and the emergence of the European Union. The course will also examine the globalism and issues attendant to it. In looking at these topics, the student should acquire a more well-rounded comprehension of current world affairs.

History 340

Selected Topics: The Middle East in Film

Prof. Janet Klein

T—5:15-7:45 p.m.

Americans experience the Middle East through popular media, particularly box-office films. In mainstream movies, we encounter a Middle East in which camels, oil, harems, terrorism, and religious fanaticism are prominent and where joy and humor are often absent. In Western films, Middle Eastern characters are frequently flat and unidimensional. This version of the Middle East is very different from that depicted in films made by artists from the wide range of backgrounds that comprise diverse Middle Eastern settings. These artists don't shy away from difficult topics, but dive into them in all of their complexity. They expose Middle Easterners as complex, rational individuals who grapple with the social, political, and economic struggles they face in different times and places, often with humor and an eye for the absurd.

This course explores the history of the modern Middle East through the lens of film, particularly by investigating the theme of representation. Thus, this course aims to introduce students to various topics in Middle Eastern history and to the complexity and diversity of Middle Eastern societies, while also examining how specific themes are represented differently by filmmakers in diverse settings, each with their own politics and agendas. Together we will screen feature films, documentaries, and shorts, which will be paired with academic works that connect to the theme(s) at hand. Through these pairings, we will see how scholarly analysis helps us to better navigate popular culture, and how artistic productions represent different ways of speaking to and about power, politics, shifting gender dynamics, identity, and religiosity, as well as to larger trans-national processes like imperialism and decolonization, which continue to shape Middle Eastern societies and discourses about them.

This will be a fun, discussion-based course. We will watch the films and discuss them together. While our emphasis will be on cinema produced by Middle Easterners themselves, we will also screen films created in the West for Western audiences to compare and contrast how issues and people are represented.

History 352

The American West

Prof. Walter Hixson

TTH—9:15-10:30 a.m.

This class surveys a distinctive region of the United States, the American West. "The West" actually encompasses Euro-American expansion across the entire continent of North America, but we will focus overwhelmingly on the trans-Mississippi West. Relations with indigenous people, economic development, environmental history, and representations of the West will be among the topics we consider in depth. This

lecture/discussion-oriented course depends for its success on your willingness to read and engage with books and film, both in class as well as outside of it.

History 372:001

Selected Topics: The Habsburg Empire

Mrs. RoseMarie T. Eichler

MWF—11:50 a.m. -12:40 p.m.

Beginning in the late sixteenth –early seventeenth century, this course examines the emergence of the Habsburg Empire as one of Europe’s most powerful forces. Special attention is given to the empire’s distinctive, yet innovative system of government; its multinational characteristic; and its major role in balance of power diplomacy. Additionally, key political, social, economic and cultural factors that not only allowed this diverse empire to survive longer than any other major European monarchy but also threatened its existence will be addressed. The course culminates with the empire’s collapse in 1918 and explores how the issues that fueled its demise are still with us today.

History 401/501

Japan and the Pacific War

Prof. Michael Sheng

MW—2:00-3:15 p.m.

This course will examine Japan’s rise to power in the Asian-Pacific region and its imperial path leading to a collision course with China and the United States. This course’s emphasis is on Japan’s cultural, economic, and political development that contributed to the rise of Japanese imperialism and militarism, and the war’s impact on Japanese society. To help understand the uniqueness of Japanese culture and society, a brief introduction of the origins of samurai ethos, the Shinto religion, and the political evolution will be the focus of the first three weeks.

Then, the main focus of this class will be on the rise of Japanese militarism and the road to the Pacific War, and the war time Japan in terms of its economy, politics, wartime cultural and societal developments, and military operations. The objectives of this course are to study the causes and process of war in general, the most drastic and often tragic human collective experience, and the Pacific War in particular, as well as the war’s impact on the people and society in the nation at war, that is Japan. Students will learn that some phenomena of war and society are almost universal, such as violence and atrocity, others are culturally specific such as the kamikaze missions.

History 455/555

Origins of Modern America, 1877-1917

Prof. Kevin Kern

TTH—10:45-12:00 p.m.

How did we get here? This is one of the biggest questions people ask of history in general, but is particularly appropriate for the period 1877-1917 in American history. In a very literal sense, for example, the chances are very good that at least one of your direct ancestors “got here” during this time, and this course will examine the far-reaching causes and effects of the massive influx of immigration that occurred in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. But in an even more profound sense, this period of time holds the nucleus of nearly everything we associate with modern America. Wherever one looks, from American military involvement in foreign affairs, to Big Business, to the national media, to urbanization, to cars, to national advertising campaigns, to movies, to religious fundamentalism, to government regulations, to airplanes, to the Imperial Presidency, to the professional middle-class, to the kind of money you have in your pocket right now, to a hundred other big and little things we associate with contemporary life; all of these are rooted in the era between the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of American involvement in World War I. The goal of this course, then, will be to examine and understand the major social, economic, and political trends that characterized the forty-year period in which modern America was born.

History 461/561
The United States as a World Power
Prof. Walter Hixson
TTH—12:15-1:30 p.m.

This course focuses on the history of US foreign policy (diplomacy) throughout American history but with most attention paid to the period since 1898. Through lectures, readings, and discussion, the course will consider the drives and motivations behind US foreign policy; the leading diplomatic actors; all of the major wars in American history; and the many debates on how the United States should most appropriately engage with the wider world.

History 470/570
Ohio History
Prof. Gregory Wilson
MWF—10:45-11:35 a.m.

This course covers the span of Ohio history from prehistoric eras to the recent past. It focuses on issues including land and environment, Native American settlement, frontier life, industrial and urban growth, wars, technology, social and cultural issues, and political events. The class may include visits to local Ohio history sites.

History 483/583
History in Video Games
Prof. Martin Wainwright
TTH—3:30-4:45 p.m.

This course analyzes video games depicting historical themes. Although these games attempt to simulate history, issues of game balance, marketability, and developers' biases determine what aspects of history gamers encounter. Students will learn which approaches to history different development teams take and historians' perspectives on the major themes these games cover. Critical analysis will focus on the games' portrayal of different cultures and ethnic groups, gender, economic systems, religions, political ideologies, and technological development. Students will also learn about the power of games to help us better understand the past, particularly regarding immersive experiences and counterfactual scenarios.

Assignments will include a basic test on historical theories that we will be applying in our analysis of these games, mini-reviews of individual games, and a comparative analysis of games sharing a common theme. Students with programming experience may substitute a major modification (a.k.a. mod) of a game for part of the latter requirement. Students will be expected to rent, buy, or already own games that they use in the course or for their assignments.

History 485/585
History, Communities, and Memory
Prof. Gregory Wilson
MWF 9:45-10:35 a.m.

What, how and why do individuals and societies remember? What is the connection between history and memory? In this course, you will study two different but related areas in public history: how individuals and communities construct historical memory and meaning, and the ways in which the work of academic historians intersects with that of the non-academic world. The course will cover the history and memory embedded in things such as commemorations, oral history, museums, battlefields, and monuments. Assignments will include readings, writings, discussion, field experiences and a project.

History 487/587
Science and Technology in World History
Prof. Kevin Kern
TTH 9:15-10:30 a.m.

This course examines the development and diffusion of science and technology in human history. It will focus on the rise and evolution of science and technology in both the Western and non-Western worlds by situating these phenomena in the political, economic, intellectual, global contexts. It will also examine how these developments influenced society, culture, and daily life. Thematic in structure and interdisciplinary in approach, the course is intended to help students integrate history with other disciplines (e.g., philosophy, literary studies, anthropology, natural sciences) to trace not only the development and effects of certain specific technologies, but also the larger relationships between the Asian, Islamic, and Euro-American scientific traditions.

History 493/593
Special Studies: UA Everyday: Sesquicentennial History of Student Life at UA
Prof. Kevin Kern
TTH 2:00-3:15 p.m.

In this UnClass, students will use 150 years of the student experience at the University of Akron as a lens through which to view not only the history of the university, but also major social, cultural, economic, and political trends in Modern U.S. History. Working with the University of Akron Archives and the Summit County Historical Society, students will use primary sources (including student publications, university bulletins, photographs, and memoirs) to understand a century and a half of student life at UA and how campus, local, regional, national, and even international contexts influenced it.

Honors Courses:

1870: 350-002
Honors Humanities Colloquium
The History of Antisemitism
Prof. Michael Levin
MWF 3:05-3:55 p.m.

Why do people hate Jews? Is anti-Semitism different from other forms of prejudice? And what does it mean to be Jewish in the first place? In this colloquium we will explore the historical roots of these questions, using various primary sources as a springboard for discussion. We will start in Biblical times, and cover such topics as the Spanish Inquisition, the Holocaust, and events in modern America. There will be guest lectures from other professors in the History Department, who will bring their own expertise and experiences to the class. The emphasis of the course will be on discussion, with a final project to be determined.