

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

Graduate Course Descriptions – Spring 2024

Below you will find detailed descriptions of the graduate courses which the History Department will be offering in Spring 2024. Please refer to the [course catalog](#) for a complete list of courses and descriptions. 500-level courses are reading colloquia; 600-level courses, except for HIST 601 and HIST 694, are research seminars.

*Permission numbers are **not** required to enroll in graduate courses except for HIST 694.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

HIST 545: Environmental History in the Middle East	1
HIST 574: Colloquium in Recent and Contemporary US History	2
HIST 596J: Pedagogical Approaches to World History	2
HIST 620: Research Seminar on Medievalism in the Modern	2
HIST 694: Practicum for Teaching Assistants	3
HIST 698D: Culminating Project.....	3

HIST 545: ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Dr. Howes | T 1600-1845 | SH288

Although historians of the Middle East have been interested in the relationship between humans and their environments for many years, Environmental History has only relatively recently become a field of study . There has been a rapid growth in the field as historians and paleoclimatologists try to fill an important gap in the global history of the environment. This class will examine recent books and articles that are explicitly focused on environmental history and several earlier studies that frame the study of the environment in other terms. We will try to place these works in an explicitly world and comparative framework . We will divide the class into five sections: The Southwestern Asia and North African Environment and World History; Climate, Collapse, and Catastrophe; Disease; Animals, Plants, and Humans; and Modern Politics, States, and Conceptions of the Environment. Students will be expected to write seven short (2-3 page) reviews of the books that we read in class, and they will be expected to produce a 10–15-page research proposal on a topic of their choice. In working towards their final paper, students are encouraged to work comparatively or thematically as well as regionally . The class is designed for all comers, and no class in Middle Eastern history is required . However, those who have no background in Middle Eastern history are encouraged to read a general survey of Middle Eastern history before class begins.

HIST 574: COLLOQUIUM IN RECENT AND CONTEMPORARY US HISTORY

Dr. Devine | T 1900-2145 | SH288

This course will offer an interpretive survey of political, economic, cultural, and social trends in the United States since 1933. If all goes according to plan, you will leave in May with a broader and deeper knowledge of the events of this period and their significance in shaping present-day U.S. society as well as the scholarly debates that have engaged historians who have interpreted these events. It is my hope that you will also finish the course with something more: a rich sense of the “fabric” of this era – a feel for how people lived their daily lives; an appreciation for the ideas, ideologies, fads, and follies that intrigued and seduced them; an understanding of the problems and tough decisions that confronted both everyday people and top policy makers; and, perhaps most importantly, a recognition of the contingencies of history and an empathy for the historical actors who benefited from or fell victim to these contingencies. Requirements will include two short analytical essays, a longer semester project, and leading one class discussion. For more information on the course, email Dr. Devine at tom.devine@csun.edu .

HIST 596J: PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES TO WORLD HISTORY

Dr. Neirick | W 1900-2145 | MA332

Designed for students who will one day teach world history, as well as those who are interested in trans-national, trans-regional integrative history. Provides a practical and theoretical approach to world history since 1500 and explores topics that include industrialization, imperialism, global trade, environmental change, migration, and slavery.

HIST 620: RESEARCH SEMINAR ON MEDIEVALISM IN THE MODERN

Dr. Oliver | M 1600-1845 | SH288

This seminar provides an opportunity to research the persistence of the medieval long after the close of the Middle Ages. Good examples of medievalism can be found in such cultural touchstones as the work of Sir Walter Scott, Victor Hugo, the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, LOTR, Monty Python, Harry Potter, GOT/ASOIAF, Gothic Revival Architecture, Dungeons and Dragons, Assassin’s Creed and other video games, Medieval RPGs, LARPing, etc. Research topics will seek to answer why the medieval genre remains particularly relevant from the 19th century to our own “information age,” and students are encouraged to consider race and gender in their analysis of medievalism. We will begin by reading Umberto Eco’s



essay “Dreaming of the Middle Ages” (which coined the oft-disputed term “neomedievalism”) and proceed from here to develop individual research topics . Students will be required to produce a twenty-five-page research paper by the semester’s end .

HIST 694: PRACTICUM FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

Dr. Horowitz | TBA | TBA

Working under the close supervision of departmental faculty and assigned to a specific undergraduate History course, students gain experience creating assignments, grading papers and exams, leading discussion and review sessions, and giving lectures. Students have the opportunity to discuss issues and problems in teaching. May be repeated once for credit. Contact the Graduate Coordinator (Rachel.Howes@CSUN.edu) or the History Office (History@CSUN.edu) for a permission number.

HIST 698D: CULMINATING PROJECT

Dr. O’Sullivan | M 1900-2145 | TBA

Prerequisites: HIST 601 and two graduate-level History research seminars. This culminating graduate course requires students to demonstrate their mastery of the historian’s craft. Students will revise an existing research paper that they produced in one of their graduate research seminar classes and transform it into a piece that could be submitted as a conference paper, a scholarly writing sample, and/or an article for publication. Students will prepare a cogent twenty-minute oral presentation of their work. This course is to be taken in the student’s final semester.