

Fall 2012 Experimental and Special Topics Course Descriptions

HIST 394: Atlantic World Empires

3 credit hours

Atlantic World Empires explores North American history from the earliest contacts between Europeans and natives to 1763, the eve of the American Revolution. Particular attention is devoted to the interaction of Native American, European, and African peoples and cultures. We will study native society prior to European contact; the Spanish, French, and British Atlantic empires; the trans-Atlantic slave trade; the rise of the British to a position of dominance; the internal development of the Anglo-American colonies; and the everyday lives of various groups who occupy the label of colonial Americans. Our goal is to understand the colonial period on its own terms, rather than as a mere prelude to "real" American history. While we will show, through both lectures and class discussions, that imperial laws and structures defined the lives of most colonials, we will also discover that the Atlantic left plenty of room for freedom and cultural interactions outside the reach of even the most powerful empire. We will discover that pirates and peoples floating between empires and preying on shifting loyalties also helped define the promise and culture of the Atlantic World.

HIST/POLS 394: Politics of Nationalism

3 credit hours

This course will expand on the themes of nationalism and conflict in the Middle East with a focus on three, currently inter-related countries, Iran, Iraq and Lebanon. The emergence of these three independent nations and their on-going domestic and regional conflicts will be traced chronologically from the mid-nineteenth century to the present. The issues of international involvement with these nations will also be described. The course will include lecture, films, and classroom discussions that will permit for lively debate on what are on-going, unresolved issues regarding these nations and the international community, particularly the United States.

LEAD 294: Leadership for Social Justice

1 credit hour

This course offers an in-depth study of the American Revolution from the perspective of the people who fought it. Often forgotten in our visions of heroic officers, elegant political treaties, and statesmen of the time are the ordinary people who agreed to face bayonet charges and cannon blasts in pursuit of both common and individual goals. The course will explore a wide range of participants including Native Americans, militiamen, Continental soldiers, British regulars, Loyalists, slaves, sailors, as well as female soldiers and camp followers. We will split our time between discussing social, cultural, and military histories of the war and closely examining primary sources. Exploring the thoughts and experiences of common people will provide a better understanding of the wider significance of the war.

POLS 294: Moot Court

3 credit hours

In this course, students learn a variety of oral advocacy and research skills. Students will work with a hypothetical Supreme Court case provided by the American Collegiate Moot Court Association. We will focus on developing a familiarity with the legal issues presented in the hypothetical case. This prepares students for participation in a moot court competition, which is a simulation of arguments before the US Supreme Court. Moot court is an activity that law students are typically required to participate so this course provides students a unique opportunity to familiarize themselves with the process as undergraduates. Even if students have no plans to pursue the law, moot court can improve public speaking, research and analytical reasoning. Students are encouraged, but not required, to participate in a regional competition.

POLS 294: Model U.N.

1 credit hour

This course introduces students to the origins, structure, functioning, and issues surrounding the United Nations. It is designed for students intending to participate in a Model UN conference toward the end of the semester. In addition to learning about the UN, students will prepare to represent a country by researching its foreign policy and studying the issues under discussion in the student's designed UN committee for the conference. Students will write position papers, working papers, give speeches, and practice using proper procedures in preparation for attending the conference.

POLS 294: Intro Chinese Law

2 credit hours

This course offers a brief introduction to the law of People's Republic of China. The course will cover sources of law, constitution, administrative law, foreign investment law, procedures, and legal professionals. Through discussions over real stories from China, students will understand the value, the culture and up-to-date reform of China that underlying the laws. Students are encouraged to share thought from the perspective of an average person on real cases.

POLS 394: Politics of Nationalism

3 credit hours

See HIST 394

SOCI 294: Comparative Studies of Injustice

3 credit hours

An examination and comparison of selected systems of injustice, including South African apartheid, American "Jim Crow," genocides in Armenia, Rwanda and Congo, and the mistreatment/oppression of Native Americans and Australian Aborigines.