

**USC VAN HUNNICK HISTORY DEPARTMENT**  
**UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**  
**SPRING 2025 SEMESTER**

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**101gp State and Society in the Ancient World Maskarinec T/Th 10:00-11:20am**

**Course Description:**

This course introduces the history of the ancient Mediterranean world: the Near East, Egypt, Greece and Rome. We will examine aspects of the societies and cultures of these civilizations and their impact on the modern world. Special attention will be given to the circulation of people, products and ideas, the changes that this brought about, and their legacy. Other themes addressed include state formation and concepts of power, cultural and religious identities, individuals and communities, freedom and slavery, literary and artistic production, and how ancient peoples imagined the cosmos and their place in it.

Throughout this course, we will engage with the diverse but fragmentary textual and material evidence that survives from the ancient world and address the problems of interpreting this evidence. Students will begin acquiring the skills of a historian, learn why and how historians have studied the period, and reflect on the repercussions that such interpretations have for our world today.

**103g The Emergence of Modern Europe Soll M/W 3:30-4:50pm**

**Course Description:**

Political, intellectual, and cultural developments in Europe, 1300-1815. Renaissance and Reformation; absolute monarchy, scientific changes, and Enlightenment; French Revolution and Napoleon.

**107gp Introduction to the History of Japan Uchiyama T/Th 2:00-3:20pm**

**Course Description:**

Japan from the earliest times to the present; social, cultural, and political dimensions.

**111 Africa Since 1880 Mseba T/Th 12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

This course is a survey of the history of sub-Saharan Africa from the 1880s to the present. It examines the experiences of Africans under Colonial domination and under the independent states which succeeded colonial governments after 1960. The objective of the course is to introduce students to the major forces that have shaped Africans' lives in the recent past and to the initiatives of Africans in charting the course of their own lives. Major themes include European conquest, colonial economic structures, African responses to colonial rule and African political movements. The course also explores struggles against the form of white domination known as apartheid in South Africa and Zimbabwe. It further examines the opportunities and challenges that independence brought to Africans.

**128gp The Arts and Society in Latin America, Colonial to Contempor**                      **TBA**                      **M/W**                      **8:30-9:50am**

**Course Description:**

Survey of the art, architecture, and visual culture of Latin America from the colonial period to the present, focusing on connections to culture and society.

- **Crosslist:** This course is offered by the AHIS department but may qualify for major credit in HIST. To register, enroll in AHIS 128.

**201 Approaches to History**                      **Glenn**                      **T/Th**                      **12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

Although it comes in perhaps as many versions as instructors who teach it, History 201 typically aims to offer students a somewhat systematic overview of a range of approaches to the study of the past, that is, to the discipline of History. This version of the course has no such ambitions. Instead, it consists of a hodgepodge of exercises and undertakings designed to raise questions and problems of the sort historians — whatever their particular geographical, temporal, thematic or topical interests — must consider in their reflection on the past and in their research and writing about it.

There are four essential, if seemingly distinct, elements of this course; some of them will be interwoven over the course of the term; others will stand alone with no obvious connection to the rest.

1. Over the course of the term, students shall create an archive of their own writing and documents related to — and which relate — their lives and experiences. The archive will include all written assignments and most of the class readings. It will be housed digitally in a Dropbox folder to which all students in the class will have access. And it will not only serve to raise questions about what constitutes an archive and how an archive might come into existence, but it will also serve as our materials for a number of exercises that we undertake together as a group and for individual research projects.
2. We shall also read a series of seminal essays written by scholars and view several films. In different ways, these essays and films will articulate and illustrate some of the fundamental problems and questions with which historians have struggled in the modern study of the past. They will also inform our creation and analysis of the class archives.
3. We shall read an as-yet-to-be-determined monograph. We shall consider, on the one hand, the author's historical methods, theoretical approaches, and historiographical concerns as well as their implications for our own reflection on the past. On the other hand, we shall discuss at some length how it is that we can or, indeed, should read and engage contemporary historical scholarship.
4. Each student will study a monograph of a faculty member (of his/her choice) within the history department. They will analyze the historian's approaches to the topic and the ways she/he chose to present his/her findings. Students will each offer a short presentation in class about the scholar and, ultimately, evaluate the book alongside the as-yet-to-be-determined monograph in a paper of between five and seven pages in length — like every other piece of writing that students do, this review will be included in the class archive.

**211gp Race in America**                      **Shaler**                      **T/Th**                      **12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

This course will investigate what race is, how race has been instrumental in the formation of the American republic and of the Americas as a whole, how race has been entrenched through legal and legislative mechanisms, how it has been built into societal structures, and how it operates both obviously and subtly. We will discuss how race and racial ideologies have been constructed since the first encounter with indigenous American populations, how they

have shifted and changed over time, and how daily actions and systems reflect racist ideology. We will begin with the first European encounters of American indigenous populations in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and continue to the present day.

**225g Film, Power, and American History Ross M/W 10:00-11:50am**

**Course Description:**

This course analyzes the nature of power in the United States—as exercised from above and below—and how it operated to shape the course of American history from the 1890s to the present. We will examine many of the fundamental social, political, and economic problems that have shaped the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries: industrialization, urbanization, war, poverty, crime, politics, success, race, class, and gender conflict. Using methodologies drawn from history and cinema studies, we will learn how to navigate among three different types of sources that inform our knowledge of how human behavior has shaped the economic, political, cultural and social landscape: (a) primary documents that shed light on those issues and behaviors; (b) secondary sources (historical overviews) that assess those issues; (c) films made during the period that address those issues.

A note on our use of film as an analytic tool: Few contemporary institutions have a greater effect on molding popular understandings of the world than film and television. Yet, most citizens lack the critical tools to contextualize, analyze, and critique the images and ideologies conveyed on the screen. This course is designed to join elements of film studies with various schools of historical analysis to provide students with the critical skills needed to analyze the images and ideologies they see on the screen and to understand how those images effect our views of the past and present.

Our films and documents cover the period from 1900 to 2010. We only watch films (which *include fiction films, documentaries, and newsreels*) that were made during that decade and deal with one or more of the major problems of the time. In this way, these films serve as another primary source. But movies offer only one perspective on the world. Each week we will also read and analyze works that offer additional perspectives: **secondary source readings** that discuss the general historical events of the era; readings that offer **primary documents** that shed light on how people of the time saw their world and sought to change it; and **contemporaneous films** that deal with the problems of the time. In short, we will triangulate our way through American history using different methodologies and sources to understand the past, the present, and the possibilities for the future. It is the student's job to figure out which of these perspectives seem most convincing, why it seems so, and the implications of one form of knowledge being more powerful than another.

**237gp Fascism Lerner T/Th 10:30-11:50am**

**Course Description:**

Over the last decade or so, fascism has been used increasingly to characterize and demonize political enemies and to sound alarms at threats to democracy in the United States and across much of the world. But what is fascism and where did it come from?

This course takes that question as a starting point for a deep historical investigation of fascist movements and regimes from fascism's pre-history in nineteenth-century Europe and its emergence in post-World War I Italy through today. Along the way we ask such questions as: was fascism a historically specific movement and ideology in the early- to mid-twentieth century or do we encounter it in other periods? Is it specifically Italian, German, or European, or does it effectively describe Latin American, Asian, and other international phenomena? How, indeed, does fascism differ from authoritarianism, populism, nationalism, imperialism, and other extreme and violent political movements and ideologies? Are all fascist movements racist? What is the place of anti-Semitism in fascist ideology, and why have Jews played such a pronounced role as targets of fascism and xenophobia? What was/is fascist culture, i.e. were there distinct aesthetic regimes under fascism and how did fascists seek to instrumentalize the arts and media? Were there common assumptions about women, gender, and sexuality among fascist movements and regimes? How did fascist ideas and policies change when their movements went from being fringe oppositional movements into positions of power? Why does this early to mid-twentieth-century phenomenon and label have so much staying power? Why is fascism in the news so much today and why have xenophobic and radically right-wing

movements reappeared with such intensity in recent years? What is anti-fascism (Antifa) and what are its historical trajectories?

We approach these and related issues historically, starting in Europe and radiating out through the globe, and our analysis takes us into multiple areas including social theory, literature, the visual arts, gender and the family, science, film, and media studies. Classes consists of interactive lectures and weekly discussion sections with primary and secondary source readings.

**240gp History of California Ethington M/W 2:00-3:20pm**

**Course Description:**

A thematic approach to California history from precontact to present; focus on peoples, environment, economic, social, and cultural development, politics, and rise to global influence.

**278gp Ottomans and Empire: Anatolia, Antaramian T/Th 11:00-12:20pm  
the Middle East, and the Medi**

**Course Description:**

Overview of the history of the Ottomans and their imperial subjects.

**302 Heritage Archaeology Mayfield T/Th 11:00-12:20pm**

**Course Description:**

Heritage studies is a profession and an academic field built upon modern ideas about how and why objects, buildings, landscapes, and traditions should be preserved, protected, and presented to people living today and in the future.

Cultural heritage can be broadly defined as both tangible and intangible signs of the human past that exist in the present. Throughout the course we will explore cultural heritage through various lenses, work with a variety of data types –objects and materials; natural and built environments; social, economic, and cultural positionality; documentary and oral records– and uncover issues related to cultural heritage and public access to historical materials, activities, and landscapes.

Students will be exposed to the theories and methods behind heritage studies, learn how researchers design their studies and define their problem orientation, understand how data collection and sampling are intertwined, receive training in and apply multimethod/mixed-method research approaches, and, importantly, recognize how data collection methods ultimately effect research outcomes and interpretations.

Throughout the course we will explore issues such as current threats to cultural heritage, the roles of public opinion and tourism in the protection and interpretation of cultural heritage, impacts of development, questions of authenticity and identity, international law, ethics, and emerging and non-traditional areas of the field. Students will have the opportunity to learn about real-world case studies, complete individual and group fieldwork and data collection exercises, and design, peer-review, produce, and present an original analytical case study.

Contact Dr. Tracie Mayfield at [tmayfiel@usc.edu](mailto:tmayfiel@usc.edu) if you have any questions or would like additional information about the course.

- **Crosslist:** This course is offered by the ANTH department but may qualify for major credit in HIST. To register, enroll in ANTH 343.

**314 Rome Through its Monuments from Antiquity to the Middle Ages Maskarinec T/Th 12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

How did a small Italian settlement by the Tiber River rise to become the capital of a vast Mediterranean Empire? How did this same city reinvent itself as the spiritual capital of Western Christendom? How were these dramatic changes registered, recorded, remembered, forgotten or erased in the urban fabric? This course ‘reads’ the multilayered city of Rome from its origins through the Middle Ages: **Part I: From Village to Empire; Part II: A Christian Capital; Part III: Reform and Renewal in the Middle Ages.** Each meeting focuses on select sites or monuments in the city, each paired with a primary text, to consider larger economic, social, cultural, religious, and political changes taking place in Rome and the impact that they had on the urban landscape. Throughout, we will delve into the methodological challenges faced by scholars in understanding these changes. Students will be encouraged to think creatively about the intersections of history and legend and the participation of monuments in their wider urban setting.

**352 The American Civil War Baumgartner T/Th 11:00-12:20pm**

**Course Description:**

This course examines the causes, course, and consequences of one of the most transformative events in American history. At the cost of 700,000 lives—the equivalent per capita of four million Americans dying in Vietnam—the Union remained intact and over three million enslaved people won their freedom. The war remains significant not only because it preserved the Union and destroyed slavery, but because it raised questions that remain central to our understanding of ourselves as a nation. What is the correct balance between the state and federal governments? Who is entitled to U.S. citizenship? What do freedom and equality actually mean?

**361 20<sup>th</sup> Century U.S. History Nelson T/Th 9:30-10:50am**

**Course Description:**

This course will focus on political and social movements to think about critical turning points in 20th century American history. Through close analysis of primary sources, films, artwork, and historical scholarship, we will trace the trajectories of liberalism, conservatism, and radicalism. We will look at a diverse range of movements, including progressivism, labor rights, the long Civil Rights Movement, Black Power, women’s movements, countercultural movements, the New Right, and environmentalism, asking: What were the aims and goals of these movements? How did they critique institutions and structures of power? In what ways did they reshape American culture and politics? How does turning to these movements help us analyze and understand critical moments of political and social change in the 20th century? Over the semester, we will cover the Progressive Era, the New Deal, the Cold War, the Great Society, urbanization, suburbanization, and contemporary neoliberalism and post industrialization.

**364 Religion and Difference in the Modern Middle East Antaramian T/Th 12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

Introduction to the diversity of religions in the Middle East and how they have responded to imperialism, colonialism and nationalism in the modern period.

**372 Modern Latin America Becker T/Th 12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

Modern Latin American history invites students into lush, enthralling modern Latin American historical landscapes. These places come to life in this class as we trace the complex and compelling ways Latin American women and men made independence from Spain and Portugal, and, responding to perceived injustices emerging from their post-colonial societies, developed rebellion, revolution, literary and visual art and dance. The class focuses on four of

Latin America's most highly significant countries (Mexico, Brazil, Argentina and Chile.) It also enabled students to focus on the compelling histories of Bolivia, Paraguay, Central America and Cuba. Throughout the course, the connections between history, politics, literature, music, art and religion emerge because of the vivid ways that Latin Americans have experienced these themes.

**373 History of the Mexican American Chavez T/Th 12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

Racial and cultural background of Mexico; immigration and conquest; the Mexican in California and the southwest; the rise of contemporary Mexican-American consciousness.

- **Diversity:** This course satisfies the university's diversity requirement.
- **Crosslist:** This course is offered by the AMST department but may qualify for major credit in HIST. To register, enroll in AMST 373.

**379 Arabs in America Saliba M/W 5:00-6:20pm**

**Course Description:**

Arab immigration and acculturation in the U.S. from late-19th century to present; emphasis on community formation, race, religion and gender.

- **Crosslist:** This course is offered by the AMST department but may qualify for major credit in HIST. To register, enroll in AMST 379.

**386 American Legal History Logan T/Th 9:30-10:50am**

**Course Description:**

Exploring the legal history of the United States through a range of sources from graphic histories to oral histories, we will focus on the narratives and experiences of people sentenced to “transportation,” witnesses in the Salem Witch trials, Supreme Court justices, Abolitionists, grade-school children in Orange County, Presidents and more. The legal histories of the formations and experiences of race and gender connect to the systemic realities of the present – and for those who are more activist-minded – offer cautions and strategies for future work. By the end of this course, students will have the skills to analyze case law, conduct legal history research, and will apply their own arguments about the relationships amongst history, law, and culture to a relevant topic of their choosing.

**389p Modern Iran TBA M/W/F 10:00-10:50am**

**Course Description:**

History and culture of modern Iran from the nineteenth century to present through historical and ethnographic approaches to Iran today, richly contextualizing events and people.

- **Crosslist:** This course is offered by the MDES department but may qualify for major credit in HIST. To register, enroll in MDES 313.

**395 Sex and the City: Constructing Gender in London, 1700-1900 O’Neill W 12:30-1:50pm**

**Course Description:**

Ideas about sex and gender were changing in England as the eighteenth century folded into the nineteenth. As medical ideas altered, as the notion of the individual became cemented, and as a consumer culture grew, the way



killing the reputed heretics inside, a group of highly educated canons that included her former confessor. The heresy of these men, said to have been brought to Gaul by a woman from Italy, had been discovered and revealed by a Norman cleric who had gone under cover, infiltrated their group, and brought their practices to the attention of the king. On the king's orders, these men were burned at the stake.

This seminar uses these three events as points of departure for an exploration of the cultural landscape of Europe in the tenth century, conceived broadly as extending from the 880s through the 1030s. This period, perhaps the darkest of the so-called "Dark Ages", represents a time of dynamic change in the social, economic, religious, intellectual, and political complexion of the lands stretching from England to North Africa and from Iberia to Byzantium. Students will work together with the instructor in an effort to make sense of these events and, perhaps more importantly, to develop from primary sources a picture of the larger contexts in which those events (and the larger cultural changes we detect) took place. This seminar therefore offers students an opportunity to do history rather than merely to study it.

There are no prerequisites for this course, and students will find it relevant to any number of concentrations — students with questions about its applicability to their concentration should contact the instructor (jkglen@usc.edu). In short, anyone prepared to work hard and participate in the seminar is welcome. But this is a demanding course, as it will require weekly readings of between 125 and 150 pages, most of which will be in primary sources. There will be regular writing assignments, usually not more than a paragraph, and a final paper of fifteen to twenty pages in length.

**438      War and Peace in Medieval Japan                      Piggott                      W                      3:30-6:20pm**

**Course Description:**

The highways of medieval Japan were travelled by itinerant minstrels who chanted, to the accompaniment of their biwa music, the exploits of fighting men during the civil war of the late twelfth century. These bards shaped the earliest parts of the *Heike* corpus, likely based on an early written text in Chinese characters. In the mid-fourteenth century, the *Heike monogatari*, Tales of the Heike as we know it today, was compiled by the master bard Kakuichi. In this seminar we will read the *Tale* and study the world in which it took form. We will consider its main themes, its historicity, how it depicts the medieval world in which it was produced, and why it has been beloved by listeners and readers since medieval times. We will debate its categorization as history or literature and some strategies proposed by historians like Jacques Le Goff in France and Fumihiko Gomi in Japan who advocate attention to "works of the imagination" like the *Heike* for the study of history.

**451      The Mexican Revolution                                      Serna                      W                      2:00-4:50pm**

**Course Description:**

The Mexican Revolution was one of a number of monumental social, political, and cultural movements that shaped the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Over 1 million people (out of an estimated 15 million) died in a conflict that lasted over a decade, touched virtually every corner of the country, spilled over into the US in significant ways, and continues to reverberate today. In this course we will examine the revolution's causes, its protagonists, and its echoes. We will read selections from the voluminous historiography on the revolution, explore primary sources, and students will conceptualize, research, and write original research papers on a topic related to the Revolution.

**456      Race, Slavery, and the Making                              Davidson                      Th                      2:00-4:50pm**  
**Of the Atlantic World**

**Course Description:**

Introduction to the literature of the Atlantic World with a focus on slavery and its role in the emergence of the modern era.



**467 Defeat and Occupation in Modern Japan Uchiyama T/Th 5:00-6:20pm**

**Course Description:**

History of the Allied Occupation of Japan after the Second World War, with particular focus on democratic reforms, war crime trials, gender and popular culture.

**470 The Spanish Inquisition in the Early Modern Hispanic World Ibarra T 2:00-4:50pm**

**Course Description:**

The Spanish Inquisition is often invoked as the early modern paragon of fanaticism, violence, bureaucratization, surveillance, and institutional persecution. This course will provide an introduction to the legal and institutional history of the Inquisition across the Iberian world, from Spain and Portugal on the peninsula itself, to the tribunals established in the Americas and the Indian Ocean. Students will consider the legal procedures and institutional frameworks involved in its creation and operation, as well as major myths, theories, and interpretations of the impact of the Inquisition on Iberian societies from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century. Along the way, we will also explore critiques of the “inquisitorial” mindset from the period and consider the tensions between legislation and social practice. In addition, students will become familiar with the primary sources produced by the Inquisition, both in translation as well as through images of original manuscript trials, in order to consider the extent to which these documents can serve as evidence about everyday experiences, culture, and beliefs. The final product of the course will be a research paper, produced in stages throughout the semester, that will answer the question: what can we expect to learn from the Inquisition and the documents it produced that can advance our understanding of law, society, and culture in the early modern Iberian world?

**492 Honors Thesis O’Neill W 3:30-6:20pm**

**Course Description:**

Writing of the honors thesis; for students in the History Honors Program. Requirements for acceptance into the History Department Honors Program.

- 3.5 History GPA
- B+ or higher in HIST 201
- Completion of at least one 400-level seminar in area of concentration
- Approval of Faculty Thesis Advisor and Honors Seminar Instructor

**493 Law, History, and Culture Honors Thesis Seminar Morgan T 3:30-6:20pm**

**Course Description:**

Writing of the honors thesis; capstone for students in the Law, History and Culture major.

- **Restriction:** Registration open to the following major(s): Law, History and Culture