Introduction

This course will introduce you to the basic theories, methodologies, debates, and themes in the historical study of medieval and early modern history. In part one, we will survey the different conceptual and methodological approaches as they are applied to the period from approximately the twelfth through the eighteenth centuries. In part two, we will then move on to study classic and recent texts that apply such approaches to such essential topics as political thought and the emergence of states and nations; religion and the crisis of the reformation and counter-reformation; revolutions in science and technology; and transformations in social life and gender relations. This will be an intensive yet supportive course with the goal of helping you study for the first-year comprehensive examination; but aid you in laying the critical foundations for future studies, which makes it essential that you read more than the required books, and compile an extensive annotated bibliography for future use.

As such, our work will be collaborative; not only are you encouraged to see me in my office hours, but you should consult with each other and participate on blackboard (or in independent study groups) to share the material and your own comments and findings together.

Requirements

- **Attendance and Participation** (15%). You will be expected to read intensively in this course and to contribute substantially to the weekly discussions; attendance is therefore essential.

- **Weekly Response Papers and presentation** (40%). Every week you must submit a two-page critical essay on one reading of your choice, answering the questions I provide you in the handout. Four times this semester, you will be required to cover two books;
you can choose when to do those, but preferably over the weeks we don’t have class. You should focus on the major themes, questions, and problems posed by the reading(s) for the week, and post your essay on blackboard by 9 a.m. on the day of the class. I will need my own hard copy, and will grade it with a √+ for outstanding, a √ for good, and a √- for a deficient essay with no penalty. You may miss two papers without penalty. You will also be expected to participate in discussions of the book you chose, contextualizing it in accordance to the other readings on historiography and method.

- **Two Final Paper** (25% each). In a mock-up of the examination question, you will be expected to write two 8-10 page papers that utilize a broad range of the readings and theoretical approaches, answering the following broad questions.

  Paper 1: Based on conceptual/methodological approaches covered in part one of the class, describe the strengths and weaknesses of at least three of them. How do they react or relate to other approaches? How are they applied to the study of pre-modern history?
  Paper 2: What are the key questions that emerge around three of the topics in part two ((science, religion, the state, etc). How have these questions been addressed or answered by different historians?

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### Important Dates

Paper #1: Due October 29  
Paper #2: Due December 10  
First-Year Examination: Wednesday, December 16

### READING:

#### Required:

- At least one book a week, chosen from the list provided each session; two books a week in some cases (four times this semester). We will be coordinating the books with each other in order that most if not all are covered in each class. You are also encouraged to familiarize yourself with the other books, however.

- Historiography readings (3rd column) in part one of the class. Available on blackboard.

#### Recommended:

- **Textbooks:**
  - Daniel Waley and Peter Denley, *Later Medieval Europe: 1250-1520*

- **Useful Websites:**
- [link](http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/)  
  Annotated bibliographies of specialized areas, compiled by leading scholars in the field. See for Renaissance and Reformation, and for Medieval Studies.
- [link](http://home.uchicago.edu/~icon/teach/guideorals.pdf)  
  “Guide to the Study of Early Modern European History For Students Preparing their Oral Examination,” by Constantin Fasolt. Issued by the University of Chicago, very useful throughout your graduate career as a guide to sources and reference works, in addition to suggestions on how to study for exams and orals.

**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>Introduction to the course; overview of historiography; themes in medieval and early modern history; studying for the exam.</td>
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**Part One: Historio graphical Approaches and Methods**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>Historical Writing and the Problems of the Pre-Modern</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. G.R. Elton, <em>Practice of History</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. E.R. Carr, <em>What is History</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>No Class; Monday schedule</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/17</td>
<td><em>Annales</em> and the History of Mentalities</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1. E. LeRoy Ladurie, <em>Montaillou</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. Lucien Febrvre, <em>The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>No Class (Conference)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>Marxist History, Economic History, and “History from Below”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>History of Science and Ideas</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/15</td>
<td>Anthropology and Microhistory</td>
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**Century (Cambridge, 1985)**


## Part Two: Specialized Areas: Medieval and Early Modern

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
4. J. Scott, “Gender as a Useful Category for Analysis,” AHR 91 (1986), 1053-1075; Joan Scott, “Did Women Have a Renaissance?” [note: need to supplement with other books] |
3. Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (Baltimore, 1988)  
4. John M. Najemy (Ed), *Italy in the Age of the Renaissance*, |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 11/12 | States and Nations            | 1. Steven A. Epstein, *An Economic and Social History of Later Medieval Europe, 1000-1500* (Cambridge, 2009)  
| 11/19 | The Reformation and Counter-  |
| 11/26 | No Class                      |                                                                                                                                     |    |
2. Tim Blanning, *The Culture of Power and the Power of* |
3. Colin Jones and Dror Wahrman, eds. *Age of Cultural Revolution* (University of California, 2002).


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**READING LIST**

Note: You do not need to know all of the following books for the exam, but this list covers the material—and classic books in the field— we will be discussing in class, and you will be asked to discuss a good sampling of them on the exam.


47. Siraisi, Nancy G. *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (University of Chicago Press) 1990

**TIPS IN STUDYING FOR THE EXAMINATION:**

1. Read systematically, carefully and take notes. You may begin by consulting bibliographies such as the Oxford Bibliographies Online. Also, begin with some more recent works, or rather their bibliographies and footnoted,, which will give you a recent sense of the field.

   What is the author’s approach and argument? How is s/he positioning himself or herself in the existing historiography? What sources is he or she relying upon?

2. Read book reviews and other works that critique or engage with the work.
3. Consult guides and dictionaries.
4. Compile your own bibliography/database. You will be referring to this throughout your graduate career, and be thankful when it comes time for the orals.
5. Start support groups with your peers to circulate abstracts and study. For this class, utilize blackboard.
6. See me on a fairly regular basis to discuss any questions you may have.
7. Create study sheets and notes in preparation for the exam.