

History 701

History in Global Perspective

History 701 is a one-credit, one-hour, required weekly seminar for students in their first semester in the Ph.D. program in History. It is convened by the professor currently serving as Director of Graduate Studies.

The course has multiple **goals**:

- ~ To give you an opportunity, at the outset of your graduate career, to become better **acquainted with your cohort** and their diverse geographical, thematic, and methodological interests. Your cohort will delineate the “cutting edge” in historical studies in future years. As you push the boundaries of the discipline, it is quite likely that you will learn as much from each other as you do from the faculty. This seminar is intended to launch that process.
- ~ To encourage you to **think in broad, expansive terms** about the discipline and profession of history and about your own work. As you progress through the graduate program, your work will inevitably become more specialized. This seminar encourages you to develop the lifelong reflex of thinking “laterally” – thinking broadly and engaging routinely with a wide array of historians, historical work, and audiences.
- ~ To introduce you to members of **our faculty** and to the array of professional, geographic, chronological, and thematic interests that they embody. During most seminar meetings, visiting historians will lead a discussion of their work and field of expertise.
- ~ To give you an introduction to some of the **current issues** that animate discussion in the discipline.
- ~ To provide a **friendly forum** (usually the first ten minutes of seminar) in which to ask any questions you may have, quotidian or otherwise, about life as a graduate student.

Given the size of the class and the limited time at our disposal, our discussions will inevitably be suggestive and illustrative rather than comprehensive. As with every course that you will take as a graduate student, *how much you get out of the seminar will depend on how much you put into it*. Optimally this seminar will instill in you a **perpetual curiosity** to explore the intersections of your research interests and those of historians working in widely different times and places or with radically different methodological tools.



Essential Details

Seminar meets on

Thursdays, 12:05-12:55 p.m.

5233 Mosse Humanities Bldg*

(Curti Lounge)

* With one exception

Contact Info

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Requirements

The requirements of this course are modest: do the reading and writing assignments, reflect on them in your discussion posts, and come to seminar prepared to engage in thoughtful and informed conversation.

In most of seminars, we will have a faculty visitor. Please arrive a few minutes *before* 12:05, if possible, so that we may begin on time. Most seminars will begin with about ten minutes for our own internal discussion, followed by a faculty visitor at 12:15 p.m. Our guests will speak for about fifteen minutes, and we will then open the floor to discussion, led by the visiting historian and moderated by Prof. Dunlavy.

Readings: Most of our guests will assign a brief reading (one or two short pieces at most). I will post these on our History 701 Canvas site one week in advance of their visit.

About two-thirds of the way through the semester—after you’ve had a chance to get your “sea legs”—I have scheduled a) a week of readings on aspects of the discipline of history and b) a whirlwind tour of the Historical Society (government documents and the archives, with an emphasis on sources for non-US) and Special Collections in Memorial Library.

Please notify me in advance if you must be absent from seminar or routinely late. Note that this is a credit/no-credit course so participation is absolutely essential.

Assignments

Your principal duty is straightforward: do the assigned reading, write a short reflection on it, and post your reflection on our Canvas discussion list (more on that below). These will be due no later than 9 a.m. the morning of our seminar meeting.

You must submit a minimum of nine reflections – eight on readings assigned by our faculty visitors (your choice) and the ninth on the readings that I have assigned for October 27. You may submit more than nine reflections, of course, if you wish.

What is a “short reflection”? Aim for 150-250 words, and think of it as a thoughtful blog post. It might take the form of a short critique of the readings (strengths and weaknesses), for example, or it might lay out and explain questions that the reading raises in your mind. The emphasis is on “reflection” as in “careful consideration.” Use these reflections as opportunities to sharpen your critical-thinking skills, your lateral-thinking reflex (ability to think outside the conventional boxes), and your ability to convey your thoughts in engaging, succinct prose.



Visitors This Semester

Emily Callaci – African history

Cindy Cheng – US history

Francine Hirsch – Russian and Soviet history

Florence Hsia – early modern science

Rudy Koshar – modern German and European cultural/social

Tony Michels – Am. Jewish

Leonora Neville – Byzantine empire

Brenda Gayle Plummer – U.S. Afro-Am., foreign relations

Robin Rider – early modern science

Lee Wandel – early modern Europe

Gloria Whiting – early U.S., race, gender

To access the readings and to post your reflections, you will need to use the seminar's Canvas¹ site. Go to <https://canvas.wisc.edu> (or reach the site via My UW at <https://my.wisc.edu>). Log in using your NetID and password; locate History 701 on your class list; "Content" (for the readings) or "Discussion" (to post your comments). The best technique is to compose your reflection in a word processing program and then cut and paste it into the discussion. Please do not upload a document.

Time management alert! Each week, please set aside time on Thursday morning to read the other students' reflections before seminar. Do so in two modes, paying attention to what they say as well as how they say it. In other words, think about which reflections are more useful (thought-provoking, enlightening, engaging) and what makes them so. Then try to emulate those qualities in your own posts.

Schedule

Note: All assigned readings will be available on our Canvas site. Those assigned by visiting historians will be posted one week in advance and are not listed below. (I'll issue periodic revisions of the syllabus with full citations in case they may be useful to you in the future.) Note that the hyperlinks below will take you to the faculty member's department web page. The schedule of visitors may change as circumstances require.

SEPTEMBER 8 – Introductions

SEPTEMBER 15 – PROFESSOR LEE WANDEL – early modern Europe, Christianity

- ~ No assigned reading. Prof. Wandel is teaching History 710, Professional Development Seminar: On the Job Market this semester. Her assignment for you: Come prepared to speak for one minute (sic) about your dream post-PhD positions—one academic and one non-academic.



SEPTEMBER 22 – ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR CINDY I-FEN CHENG – US history / identity, Cold War, Asian American

- ~ Podcast, This American Life, 567: [What's Going On In There](#), September 28, 2015, Act 2 (begins at 40:39)



SEPTEMBER 29 – PROFESSOR LEONORA NEVILLE – medieval eastern Mediterranean, Byzantine Empire

- ~ Reading TBA



OCTOBER 6 – PROFESSOR FRANCINE HIRSCH – Russian/Soviet history, comparative empires, human rights

- ~ Reading TBA



¹ UW-Madison is transitioning from the course management software Learn@UW to [Canvas](#). Since Canvas is in your future, we are using it this semester. You can reach it either through <http://learnuw.wisc.edu> or <http://canvas.wisc.edu>. You will need to log in with your UW NetID and password.

OCTOBER 13 – PROFESSOR BRENDA GAYLE PLUMMER – Afro-American, 20c US, race, foreign relations

~ Reading TBA



OCTOBER 20 – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR EMILY CALLACI – modern East Africa, 20c urban Tanzania, urban migration and cultural politics

~ Reading TBA



OCTOBER 27 – The Discipline of History – Current and future issues

- ~ Cronon, William. "Getting Ready to Do History." Carnegie Essays on the Doctorate. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2004. 18 pp.
- ~ Banner, James M., Jr. *Being a Historian: An Introduction to the Professional World of History*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. Pp. 1-33.
- ~ Guillory, John. "How Scholars Read." *ADE Bulletin*, no. 146 (Fall 2008): 8-17.
- ~ Denbo, Seth, et al. "History as a Book Discipline (Forum)." *Perspectives on History* (April 2015): 19-27.
- ~ Putnam, Lara. "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast," *American Historical Review* (April 2016): 376-402.

NOVEMBER 3 – WHIRLWIND TOUR of the Historical Society (govt. documents and archives) and Special Collections at Memorial Library

~ No assigned reading; meet in the Reading Room of the Wisconsin Historical Society lobby at 12:05 p.m.

NOVEMBER 10 – PROFESSOR RUDY KOSCHAR – modern German and European cultural and social history, literature in the "age of extremes," social identities, and more

~ Reading TBA



NOVEMBER 17 – PROFESSOR FLORENCE HSIA, History of Science – early modern science and European expansion; **SR. LECTURER ROBIN RIDER, History of Science and Head of Special Collection, Memorial Library** – early modern science

~ Reading TBA



DECEMBER 1 – ASSISTANT PROFESSOR GLORIA WHITING – early U.S., race and slavery, women/gender and family

~ Reading TBA



DECEMBER 8 – PROFESSOR TONY MICHELS – American Jewish history, Yiddish culture, socialism, working-class history, and nationalism

~ Reading TBA



DECEMBER 15 – Wrap-up discussion
