

History 394 & Concurrent Courses*

Fall 2011 – Spring 2012 Descriptions

Fall 2011 Sections

HIST394 A and HIST354 American Religious History: Soul and Society

How did evangelical revivals help end slavery—and give it continuing power? What are the three chief modes of Catholic social thinking? How could Jefferson be so wrong (yet maybe also right) in predicting that all Americans would become Unitarians? German Lutherans, Polish Jews, and Dutch Calvinists—are American immigrant groups more alike or different? Religion is an intensely personal matter but has always had major public impacts over the course of American history. This course will trace the dynamic evolution of Soul and Society in America from 1776 to 1976, exploring the rules of the game, how different groups played them, and how they evolved over time. You should leave this course with a good grasp of the contours of American religious history and its leading consequences for American life.

Students enrolled concurrently in the 394 seminar will write an article-length (20-30 pages) paper of original research, based largely on primary sources, that takes up some aspect of the interplay between “private” and “public” in American religious life. The project might focus on one person’s life, on the life of a congregation or the work of a reform movement, on the political establishment or a radical spin-off sect, on the way that social class or gender is mirrored in worship styles, or that theology shapes and is re-shaped by social experience. Local records and library resources abound on this topic, so you should be able to pursue your own interest while producing a work that demonstrates that you have arrived as a historian in your own right.

Professor James Bratt

Times: 394A M 3:30-5:00 p.m. 354 T 6:00 – 8:50 p.m.

HIST394 B and HIST338 Mexico and the Americas

Mexico has two roots-Hispanic-Catholic and Amerindian. It is poised between modernity, visible throughout the country, and tradition which continues to influence the thought and behavior of individuals at all levels of society. Mexicans are torn between a fierce loyalty to their country and a profound cynicism about its institutions and leaders. Finally, Mexicans simultaneously admire and resent their rich and powerful neighbor to the north. This course examines Mexico from its pre-Columbian and Iberian origins through its recent embrace of neoliberal economics and democratic politics. It concludes with the experience of Mexican-Americans in the US.

History 394 is designed to give you the opportunity to use the skills of history that you have been learning during your major program. You will meet with your colleagues to read and critique each other’s work and to offer your own research findings in an oral presentation at the end of the semester. Your main assignment will be to research and write a publishable-quality, article-length essay (20 to 30 pages) based on the most relevant primary and secondary sources on a topic related to Mexico, Latin America, U.S.-Latin American relations, or Latinos in the U.S.

Professor Daniel Miller

Times: 394B T 3:30-5:00 p.m. 338 MWF 10:30-11:20 a.m.

HIST394 C and HIST357 American Economic History

History 357 takes an overview of the economic history of the United States from colonial times to the present, emphasizing the foundations of the American economy, the dynamics behind American economic expansion, the history of American business, the social costs and benefits of industrialization and modernization, and the causes for the economic changes of the 21st century. While many different themes and topics are covered, the general goal of the course is to understand and evaluate the dynamics of American economic growth—the forces, people, and events that shaped the American economy and its society. A special attempt is made to link economic history with the American people, their culture, and politics. Lectures will provide context and analysis, and book discussions and class conversations will explore certain topics with depth. The 394 course attached to 357 requires an article-length (roughly 20-30-page) paper based on original sources that addresses a well-defined historical topic of your choice in the field of United States Economic History. The possible topics are virtually endless and can include local or regional studies of pioneer settlements, business history, labor movements, urban conditions, environmental impact, finance, the Great Depression and New Deal, or the current “economic meltdown”—just to name a few.

Professor William Van Vugt

Times: 394D Th 3:30-5:00 p.m. 357 MW 1:30-3:10 p.m.

*All 394 courses must be taken with a concurrent 300 level course.

Spring 2012 HIST 394 & Concurrent Courses*

HIST 364 A and HIST 394 (Sports in 20th-century Europe and Asia) Studies in Modern Europe: Sports, Society, and Culture in Modern Europe and Asia.

An important—but often overlooked—aspect of the social, economic, and cultural changes of the 19th and 20th centuries, around the world, is the development of modern sports. In looking at the histories of team sports, national athletics organizations, bicycle and auto racing, and the Olympic movement, we see themes of sectarian and ethnic division, class conflict, imperialism, racism, debate over gender roles, modernization, commercialism and economic globalization, cheating and corruption, and the influence of political ideology. In this course, we will address these issues by looking at the development of modern sport in Europe, its spread to East and South Asia, and the creation of the current, global sports market (looking away from North America to other parts of the world). We also meet important historical figures like W.G. Grace, Ranji, Sonja Henie, Oh Sadaharu, Ferenc Puskás, Sachin Tendulkar, and, yes, Beckham, Ichiro, and Yao Ming—people who are more widely known among average people in Europe and Asia than many of the politicians, intellectuals, and activists we typically study. Sports history thus offers a window into the regular lives of people in England, Japan, and Germany: how they spend their Saturdays, what they watch on TV, and whom they idolize. But it also explains, better than many other subjects, the modernized, secular, money-driven society in which we live.

Students enrolled in the 394 seminar will write an article-length (20-25-pp) paper of original research, based largely on primary sources, focusing on sports and athletics as an aspect of political, social, economic, or cultural history in 20th-century Europe, East Asia, or South Asia. Among the larger themes students can consider in formulating their topics are: post-colonial national identities and sports; the development of women's sports; sports and the Cold War; racism in sports; and media, commercialization and the making of global sports. Students might also choose to focus on a specific team or pair of rivals, a particular match or tournament, or an individual athlete, and research how that certain subject offers a case study for a larger issue in European, Asian, or world history.

***Professor Bruce Berglund* Times: 394B T 3:30-5:00 p.m. 364 TTh 10:30-11:45 a.m.**

HIST 394 C and HIST 356 American Social and Cultural History

Students in this seminar will have the opportunity to apply innovative methods of cultural history, including the study of space, power, material culture, and consumption, to a topic in local or broader American history. Ideally, the papers will be based on primary sources drawn from area archives, although databases of primary sources may also be used. Students will be encouraged to consider class, race, gender, and ethnicity in their analysis.

The goal of the course is to produce a polished, article-length (20-30 pages) paper that contributes original research and demonstrates sophisticated cultural analysis. Previous paper topics have included a cultural analysis of Grand Rapids Pulaski Days, a cultural study of the 28th St. and Kalamazoo Meijer, of the Calvin/Hope basketball rivalry, and a history of political refugees in the Grand Rapids area.

***Professor Kristin Du Mez* Times: 394C Th 3:30-5:00 p.m. 356 TTh 12:30-1:45 p.m.**

***All 394 courses must be taken with a concurrent 300 level course.**