HISTORY

Students may complete a major or minor in History.

A primary aim of the Department of History is to deepen students' sense of time as a factor in cultural diversity and change. Our program of study offers students the opportunity to experience the past through attention to long-range questions, comparative history, and complex causation. Students learn about particular periods, cultures, and historical moments alongside mastering the ability to consider multiple viewpoints, aggregate data, articulate research questions, marshal evidence, and construct arguments, and have opportunities to engage with digital humanities and public history.

The department's 100-level courses, centered upon specific topics within the instructor's field of expertise, introduce students to a wide array of subjects and themes, and are open to all students, regardless of any prior instruction in History. In the 200-level courses, the department offers students the opportunity to pursue interests in specific cultures, regions, policies, or societies, and enables them to experience a broad array of approaches to history through attention to primary sources, introduction to historiography, and mastery of chronology.

The department's 300-level courses build on students' knowledge gained in 200-level classes, and provide opportunities to explore topics at greater depth in a seminar setting. 300-level courses offer students opportunities to undertake significant intellectual projects based on research in primary and secondary sources.

Major Requirements

Eleven courses are required for the History major, and two—Introduction to Historical Methods (HIST B299 Exploring History), and Approaches to Historical Praxis (HIST B398 Approaches to Historical Praxis)—must be taken at Bryn Mawr. In HIST B299 Exploring History, students will be introduced to different historical frameworks and historiographic debates that animate the field. (Majors taking HIST B299 Exploring History will fulfill the College's Writing Intensive requirement.) It is intended to prepare advanced sophomores and juniors to do advanced work at the 300-level and in some advanced 200-level courses.
In HIST B398 Approaches to Historical Praxis, which must be taken in Fall of senior year, the students complete a series of focused assignments designed to give them an opportunity to practice different ways of "doing history." Students will work with professors as well as other resources at the College (archivists, librarians, digital technologists, Praxis Program, etc.) to articulate a historical question, research it, and produce a final project. This final project may be a term paper, but might also take the form of a digital project, an exhibit, a short film, a Praxis internship in a museum or archive, or something else. Upon successful completion of HIST B398 Approaches to Historical Praxis, students may, if they wish, continue their project into a second semester. This is not required, but if students wish to do so, the department will authorize and provide support for an independent study in order to facilitate that ongoing work.

The remaining nine history courses may range across fields or concentrate within them, depending on how a major's interests develop. Of these, at least two must be seminars at the 300 level offered by the Departments of History at Bryn Mawr, Haverford or Swarthmore Colleges or the University of Pennsylvania. (It is strongly recommended that at least one of these advanced courses be taken with Bryn Mawr history faculty). At least one course, at any level, must concentrate on the period before 1800.

Only two 100-level courses may be counted toward the major. Credit toward the major is not given for either the Advanced Placement examination or the International Baccalaureate.

Honors

Majors with a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 (general) and 3.6 (history) at the end of their senior year qualify for departmental honors.

Minor Requirements

The requirement for the minor is six courses, at least four of which must be taken in the Bryn Mawr Department of History, and include one course at any level that deals with the period before 1800, at least one 300-level course within the department, and two additional history courses within the department. No more than two course at the 100-level may count toward the minor.

HIST B101 The Historical Imagination (1 Unit)
Explores some of the ways people have thought about, represented, and used the past across time and space. Introduces students to modern historical practices and debates through examination and discussion of texts and archives that range from scholarly monographs and documents to monuments, oral traditions, and other media.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B102 Introduction to African Civilizations (1 Unit)
The course is designed to introduce students to the history of African and African Diaspora societies, cultures, and political economies. We will discuss the origins, state formation, external contacts, and the structural transformations and continuities of African societies and cultures in the context of the slave trade, colonial rule, capitalist exploitation, urbanization, and westernization, as well as contemporary struggles over authority, autonomy, identity and access to resources. Case studies will be drawn from across the continent.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B105 Introduction to Digital Humanities (1 Unit)
"Digital Humanities" includes a variety of ways that computers can be used to explore, analyze, and publish human histories and cultural objects (literature, art, music, and more), as well as the study of computer technologies through humanistic frameworks. This course will provide a general introduction to digital humanities through a combination of reading, discussion, and hands-on digital making. We will begin with digital publication and digitization (multi-modal scholarship, digital collections, creative coding, immersive/3D models, and more) by discussing examples and building our own small-scale projects. We will ask: how can understanding and situating the digital infrastructures we inhabit every day help us imagine new ones? Then we will turn towards humanities data: how are cultural objects represented digitally, and how can computational analysis methods provide insights? What are the limitations and possibilities of these data-centered approaches? Assignments will include visual essays, simple websites, and data visualization; students will learn to work in command line, Python, and HTML, among other digital skills.
Tagged with: History at Haverford
College Requirement(s): Course does not meet an Approach
Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B129 The Religious Conquest of the Americas (1 Unit)
The course examines the complex aspects of the European missionization of indigenous people, and explores how two traditions of religious thought/practice came into conflict. Rather than a transposition of Christianity from Europe to the Americas, something new was created in the contested colonial space.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B156 The Long 1960's (1 Unit)
The 1960s has had a powerful effect on recent US History. But what was it exactly? How long did it last? And what do we really mean when we say “The Sixties?” This term has become so potent and loaded for so many people from all sides of the political spectrum that it’s almost impossible to separate fact from fiction; myth from memory. We are all the inheritors of this intense period in American history but our inheritance is neither simple nor entirely clear. Our task this semester is to try to pull apart the meaning as well as the legend and attempt to figure out what “The Sixties” is (and what it isn’t) and try to assess its long term impact on American society.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B200 The Atlantic World 1492-1800 (1 Unit)
The aim of this course is to provide an understanding of the way in which peoples, goods, and ideas from Africa, Europe. and the Americas came together to form an interconnected Atlantic World system. The course is designed to chart the manner in which an integrated system was created in the Americas in the early modern period, rather than to treat the history of the Atlantic World as nothing more than an expanded version of North American, Caribbean, or Latin American history.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Anthropology at Bryn Mawr
- Anthropology at Haverford
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies
- Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies
- Peace, Justice and Human Rights

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Every other Fall

HIST B203 The High Middle Ages (1 Unit)
We’re becoming used to the idea of environmental crisis. Drought, floods, storms, and extinctions constantly remind us that humans can be terrifyingly effective at shaping the world in which we live. But the interplay between human agents and the rest of the world is as old as humanity. This course explores how people in the European Middle Ages – mostly the peasants left out of the history books – lived with and made decisions about limited natural resources, looming overexploitation, customary common rights, and shared responsibilities, all within the narrow margins which characterized their immediate and taxing relationship with their landscapes. The period is alien in many ways: it was an age of faith, oaths, and lordship. Horsepower was measured in literal horses (or in human muscle). But the decisions its people made, and the assumptions they held, have shaped our own world in ways we don’t always see. How did people in another age work within the constraints set by their environments? How did they change those environments to suit their desires? And whose desires were being pursued? Who was left out? Through attention to cultivation, climates, plague, and human conceptions of the natural world, we’ll consider these questions, and seek to gain glimpses of the human-to-human and human-to-non-human relationships that dominated the medieval experience.
Tagged with:
- Environmental Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Every Year

HIST B208 Monuments, Museums, and Memory (1 Unit)
In this course we will examine how U.S. history circulates in public, investigating the ways scholarly, curatorial, archival, and creative practices shape popular conceptions of the American past, in particular understandings of racial, gender, sexual, and class oppression and resistance. Students will build skills in historical interpretation and archival research and explore possibilities and challenges in preserving and presenting the past in a variety of public contexts—monuments, memorials, museums, historical sites, movies and television, genealogy, and community-based history projects.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History at Haverford
- Museum Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Every other Spring

HIST B212 Pirates, Travelers, and Natural Historians: 1492-1750 (1 Unit)
In the early modern period, conquistadors, missionaries, travelers, pirates, and natural historians wrote interesting texts in which they tried to integrate the New World into their existing frameworks of knowledge. This intellectual endeavor was an adjunct to the physical conquest of American space, and provides a framework though which we will explore the processes of imperial competition, state formation, and indigenous and African resistance to colonialism.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Environmental Studies
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies
- Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)

HIST B216 History of Mental Health and Mental Illness in the U.S. (1 Unit)
This course examines the history of mental illness—its conception and treatment—in the United States, from the eighteenth century to the present. Pairing primary and secondary sources, the course moves chronologically in order to track, and draw connections between, a wide range of movements within American psychological and social welfare history, including the creation and closure of asylums; the pathologization of racial, gender, and sexual difference; social welfare movements; the Americanization of psychoanalysis; social psychiatry; psychopharmacology; and the politics of diagnosis.
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- General Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

HIST B218 Memories, Memorials, and Representations of World War I (1 Unit)
The course considers the historical origins and experience of Word War I from a social and cultural perspective. We will think about why some people anticipated and willingly went to war while others were caught by surprise and also, how the experience of war differed on the home front and battlefront. Second, the course will look at the political, social, economic, and cultural consequences of the so-called, Great War. How did the end of the war affect people at the individual and community levels as well as nations as a whole? Finally, we will examine the various historical factors that influence how (and when) WWI has been remembered in modern Europe.
Tagged with: History at Haverford
College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)

HIST B219 LGBTQ+ History in the United States (1 Unit)
This course traces the history of LGBTQ+ identities, relationships, and politics in the United States from the late 18th century to the present. We will consider, in particular, the shifting meanings of sexual and gender variance and LGBTQ+ identities; changing forms of romantic and sexual relationships; the emergence and policing of LGBTQ+ communities, as shaped by class and race; the history of LGBTQ+ activism and its intersections with broader movements for social and economic justice; and the relationship between LGBTQ+ people and the state. Students will learn to read and analyze a range of historical scholarship, as well as primary texts in the history of gender and sexuality including memoirs and letters, periodicals, photographs, and political manifestos.
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

HIST B226 Topics in 20th Century European History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Every Year

HIST B228 Topics in US Social History (1 Unit)
TTopics in US Social History
Tagged with:
- African Studies at Bryn Mawr
- Africana Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B234 An Introduction to Middle Eastern History (1 Unit)
This course serves as an introduction to the history of the modern Middle East. We will also explore the narratives and debates that have shaped the field of Middle East history. Topics include orientalism, colonialism, political reform, social, cultural, and intellectual movements, nationalism, and the Cold War. Readings will be drawn from the fields of history, anthropology, politics, and literature.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- History of Religion at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies
- Philosophy
- Philosophy at Haverford
- Religion at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)

HIST B235 Africa to 1800 (1 Unit)
The course explores the formation and development of African societies, with a special focus on the key processes of hominisation, agricultural revolution, metalworking, the formation of states, the connection of West Africa to the world economy.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B236 African History since 1800 (1 Unit)
The course analyzes the history of Africa in the last two hundred years in the context of global political economy. We will examine the major themes in modern African history, including the 19th-century state formation, expansion, or restructuration; partition and resistance; colonial rule; economic, social, political, religious, and cultural developments; nationalism; post-independence politics, economics, and society, as well as conflicts and the burden of disease. The course will also introduce students to the sources and methods of African history.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B237 Themes in Modern African History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies
- Museum Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B242 American Politics and Society: 1945 to the Present (1 Unit)
This course examines transformations in American culture, politics, and society from World War II to the present, focusing on flashpoints of government policy, popular culture, and social activism. We will trace this history with a focus on four central themes: (1) U.S. domestic and foreign policy and the fear of annihilation, from the Cold War, the specter of nuclear warfare, and the War in Vietnam to the War on Terror and climate change; (2) the growth and convergence of movements for social justice, including African American, Latinx, Asian American, indigenous, feminist, and LGBTQ+ rights and liberation; (3) the rise of the New Right, neoliberalism, the reshaping of party politics, and their impact on social welfare, healthcare, and the environment; and (4) the politics of popular culture, especially television, music, and digital media. Across these themes, we will consider where government leaders and popular culture have worked to reinforce social norms and sharpen political divides and how social movements have reshaped American politics and society.
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Every other Year

HIST B243 Topics: Atlantic Cultures (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford
- Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Every other Year

HIST B250 Media and Medicine in Modern America: (1 Unit)
Have you ever turned to TikTok for health advice? Are you a fan of medical dramas like Grey's Anatomy? This course explores of the co-development and evolution of modern medicine and the media in the United States, from the late nineteenth century through the present day. Students will delve into a wide range of media formats, including advertising, newspapers, radio, film, television, and the Internet, to analyze the media's long-standing influence on perceptions and practices of medicine. Special attention will be paid to the shifting cultural authority of medicine, as well as the stakes of communicating health information and implications for public health.
Tagged with:
- Health Studies
- History at Haverford
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B257 British Empire I: Capitalism and Slavery (1 Unit)
Focusing on the Atlantic slave trade and the slave plantation mode of production, this course explores English colonization, and the emergence and the decline of British Empire in the Americas and Caribbean from the 17th through the late 20th centuries. It tracks some of the intersecting and overlapping routes—and roots—connecting histories and politics within and between these "new" world locations. It also tracks the further and proliferating links between developments in these regions and the histories and politics of regions in the "old" world, from the north Atlantic to the South China sea.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B258 British Empire: Imagining Indias (1 Unit)
This course considers ideas about and experiences of "modern" India, i.e., India during the colonial and post-Independence periods (roughly 1757-present). While "India" and "Indian history" along with "British empire" and "British history" will be the ostensible objects of our consideration and discussions, the course proposes that their imagination and meanings are continually mediated by a wide variety of institutions, agents, and analytical categories (nation, religion, class, race, gender, to name a few examples). The course uses primary sources, scholarly analyses, and cultural productions to explore the political economies of knowledge, representation, and power in the production of modernity.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B263 Impact of Empire: Britain 1858-1960 (1 Unit)
Is empire (on the British variant of which, in its heyday, the sun reportedly never set) securely superseded (as some have confidently asserted) or does it endure and, if so, in what forms and domains? Focusing on the expanding British colonial empire from the 17th century on, this course considers its impact through the dynamics of specific commodities' production, and consumption (sugar and tea, for example, but also labor and governance), their cultures (from plantations and factories to households to the state), and their disciplinary technologies (including domesticity, the nation, and discourses on history and modernity).
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

HIST B264 Passages from India: 1800-Present (1 Unit)
This course explores the histories and effects of migration from the Indian subcontinent to far-flung destinations across the globe. It starts with the circular migrations of traders, merchants, and pilgrims in the medieval period from the Indian subcontinent to points east (in southeast Asia) and west (eastern Africa). However, the focus of the course is on modern migrations from the subcontinent, from the indentured labor migrations of the British colonial period (to Africa, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific) to the post-Independence emigrations from the new nations of the subcontinent to Britain, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B265 Colonial Encounters in the Americas (1 Unit)
The course explores the confrontations, conquests and accommodations that formed the "ground-level" experience of day-to-day colonialism throughout the Americas. The course is comparative in scope, examining events and structures in North, South and Central America, with particular attention paid to indigenous peoples and the nature of indigenous leadership in the colonial world of the 18th century.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies
- Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B274 topics in Modern US History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course in 20th century America social history. Topics vary by half semester
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- Health Studies
- History at Haverford
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

HIST B277 Food and Fitness in America (1 Unit)
This course investigates the centrality of food and fitness to national identity and culture in modern U.S. history. From the "physical culture" movement in the late nineteenth century and the rise of the diet industry in the 1920s to the aerobics craze of the 1980s and the contemporary "slow food" movement, we will explore how changing patterns of production and consumption have shaped the role that food and fitness play as key markers of identity and "lifestyle." Paying particular attention to how concerns about nutrition and exercise have historically indexed larger social anxieties regarding race, class, gender, and sexuality, this course asks students to think critically about food and fitness as contradictory sites of pleasure and self-control in U.S. culture.
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Health Studies
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)

HIST B279 Power, Freedom, and the Ties that Bound in medieval Europe (1 Unit)
People in the Middle Ages cared about power, freedom, and the relationships that bound men and women to each other. But their concepts of each, and the way they evaluated the goodness and the purposes of their exercise, were very different from our own. So, what did freedom mean in the Middle Ages? What made power good or bad? How did people try to create reliable structures so that they would use what freedom or power they had for good? And how did they twist those structures to serve selfish aims? In this course we will explore these questions through deep dives into four case studies: the relationship between lords and vassals (often described as “feudalism”); servitude and freedom in the rural world among the bulk of the population, who were peasant farmers; the ties of power, obligation, and affection that structured marriage and family life; and the (ideally) voluntary relinquishment of freedom by monks and nuns in ordered religious life. At the end of the course, each student will create a final project investigating similar questions in a relationship or situation of their choosing. Possible topics include teachers and students, masters and apprentices, craft guilds, trade partnerships, and law courts with their required participation (as well as pomp and circumstance).
Tagged with: History at Haverford
College Requirement(s):
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B284 Movies and America: The Past Lives Forever (1 Unit)
Movies are one of the most important means by which Americans come to know – or think they know—their own history. We look to old movies to tell us about a world we never knew but think we can access through film. And Hollywood often reaches into the past to tell a good story. How can we understand the impact of our love affair with movies on our understanding of what happened in this country? In this course we will examine the complex cultural relationship between film and American historical self-fashioning.
Tagged with:
- Film Studies
- Film Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford
- Sociology
- Sociology at Haverford
- Visual Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B286 Topics in the British Empire (1 Unit)
This is a topics course covering various "topics" in the study of the British Empire. Course content varies.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

HIST B292 Women in Britain since 1750 (1 Unit)
Focusing on contemporary and historical narratives, this course explores the ongoing production, circulation and refraction of discourses on gender and nation as well as race, empire and modernity since the mid-18th century. Texts will incorporate visual material as well as literary evidence and culture and consider the crystallization of the discipline of history itself.
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B294 Making Modern America Between the Wars (1 Unit)
The decades between World War I and World War II were a tumultuous and uncertain period for the U.S., and a critical moment in the emergence of modern American culture and politics, with important connections and parallels to the present. The years from 1918 to 1941 encompassed a major epidemic on the scale of COVID-19, the winning of women's suffrage, a rise of policing with Prohibition, the spread of anti-black violence and segregation, early African American civil rights activism, the growth of black communities and culture in Northern cities, rising nativism and Eugenics, shifts in gender and sexual norms, the Great Depression, labor activism and Communist witch-hunts, and a major expansion of the roles and responsibilities of the federal government with the New Deal. Rather than simply track major events, we'll study American society and politics in this period by foregrounding the lives of everyday people through close analysis of their material and cultural worlds, including personal and domestic artifacts such as letters, photographs, and food, as well as new technologies and creative works such as radio shows, films, novels, plays, and music. We'll work with archival and art collections at Bryn Mawr and Haverford. We'll also consider how historians frame these objects through different thematic lenses to imagine and interpret the past. The class is especially geared to first years and sophomores considering a major in history.
Tagged with: History at Haverford
College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)

HIST B299 Exploring History (1 Unit)
This course is designed to introduce history majors to the debates governing the production of historical knowledge which dominate the discipline. Although undergraduates often read history monographs as finished and "complete" projects, in fact each of these works is always deeply contested - both in terms of method and product. The goal of this course is to not only reinforce habits of critical textual reading but to provide students the tools to critically "read" the entire project of writing history. Required for History Majors.
Tagged with: History at Haverford
College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Writing in the Major: Writing Intensive
Typically Offered: Every Spring

HIST B303 Topics in American History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies. Recent topics have included medicine, advertising, and history of sexuality. Course may be repeated for credit.
Tagged with:
- Gender & Sexuality Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Health Studies
- History at Haverford

Typically Offered: Every Semester

HIST B319 Topics in Modern European History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B325 Topics in Social History (1 Unit)
This a topics course that explores various themes in American social history. Course content varies. Course may be repeated.
Tagged with:
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- Health Studies
- History at Haverford
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford

Typically Offered: Every Semester

HIST B327 Topics in Early American History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B334 Caste and Race: Analogies and Intersections (1 Unit)
With the global spread of the Black Lives Matter movement, and since the publication of American journalist Isabel Wilkerson's Caste: The Origins of our Discontents, there has been a renewed interest in thinking comparatively about caste and race. This course will examine the intertwined histories and legacies of caste and race as imaginaries deployed both to create and enforce social inequality and hierarchy, and to describe and analyze it. In the first half of the course we will examine how analogies and comparisons between caste and race have been made at various moments over the long 20th century. In the second half of the course, we will explore how caste and race have intersected in lived experience, using historical sources, ethnography, and memoir. In tracking intersections of experience and the production of knowledge, our course will bring together history, anthropology, sociology, and related fields, as well as different world areas– India/South Asia and the U.S./ Western hemisphere– that have traditionally been held apart in the modern academy.
Tagged with:
- Anthropology at Bryn Mawr
- Anthropology at Haverford
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

HIST B337 Topics in African History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Topics vary.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- Health Studies
- Health Studies
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B341 Go Burbs: Local Histories of Modern America (1 Unit)
If "all politics is local," then so too is all history. This course takes a local approach to the history of the United States, focusing on the nearby Philadelphia suburbs as a microcosm of modern American society and culture. Paying particular attention to Delaware County, students will investigate local history and local cultural sites and integrate them into a broader historical context.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History at Haverford
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Course does not meet an Approach
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Writing in the Major: Writing Attentive
Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B349 Topics in Comparative History (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Topics vary.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- History at Haverford
- Museum Studies

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B357 Topics in British Empire (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Topics vary.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B371 Topics in Atlantic History: The Early Modern Pirate in Fact and Fiction (1 Unit)
This course will explore piracy in the Americas in the period 1550-1750. We will investigate the historical reality of pirates and what they did, and the manner in which pirates have entered the popular imagination through fiction and films. Pirates have been depicted as lovable rogues, anti-establishment rebels, and enlightened multiculturalists who were skilled in dealing with the indigenous and African peoples of the Americas. The course will examine the facts and the fictions surrounding these important historical actors.
Tagged with:
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies
- Latin American, Iberian, and Latinx Studies

Writing in the Major: Writing Intensive
Typically Offered: Occasionally

HIST B398 Approaches to Historical Praxis (1 Unit)
Prerequisite(s): Senior history major
This course is designed to provide students the opportunity to consider different ways of "doing history." In conversation with the professor and using the resources of the College (archivists, librarians, digital specialists, Praxis Program) students will articulate a historical question, research it, and produce a final project. This project may be a final research paper, but might also take the more public form of a digital project, an exhibit, a short film, or an internship in a local museum, oral history center, or archive.
Tagged with: History at Haverford
Typically Offered: Every Fall

HIST B403 Supervised Work (1 Unit)
Optional independent study, which requires permission of the instructor and the major adviser.
Tagged with: History at Haverford
Typically Offered: Every Semester

HIST B425 Praxis III: Independent Study (1 Unit)
Praxis III courses are Independent Study courses and are developed by individual students, in collaboration with faculty and field supervisors. A Praxis courses is distinguished by genuine collaboration with fieldsite organizations and by a dynamic process of reflection that incorporates lessons learned in the field into the classroom setting and applies theoretical understanding gained through classroom study to work done in the broader community. Note: Students are eligible to take up to two Praxis Fieldwork Seminars or Praxis Independent Studies during their time at Bryn Mawr.
Tagged with: Praxis Program

ANTH B327 Caste and Race: Analogies and Intersections (1 Unit)
With the global spread of the Black Lives Matter movement, and since the publication of American journalist Isabel Wilkerson's Caste: The Origins of our Discontents, there has been a renewed interest in thinking comparatively about caste and race. This course will examine the intertwined histories and legacies of caste and race as imaginaries deployed both to create and enforce social inequality and hierarchy, and to describe and analyze it. In the first half of the course we will examine how analogies and comparisons between caste and race have been made at various moments over the long 20th century. In the second half of the course, we will explore how caste and race have intersected in lived experience, using historical sources, ethnography, and memoir. In tracking intersections of experience and the production of knowledge, our course will bring together history, anthropology, sociology, and related fields, as well as different world areas– India/South Asia and the U.S./Western hemisphere– that have traditionally been held apart in the modern academy. Prerequisite: One course in Anthropology or History or related Social Science or Humanities departments, or permission of the instructors.
Tagged with:
- Anthropology at Haverford
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s): Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

ARCH B244 Great Empires of the Ancient Near East (1 Unit)
A survey of the history, material culture, political and religious ideologies of, and interactions among, the five great empires of the ancient Near East of the second and first millennia B.C.E.: New Kingdom Egypt, the Hittite Empire in Anatolia, the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires in Mesopotamia, and the Persian Empire in Iran.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Writing in the Major: Writing Attentive
Typically Offered: Occasionally

CITY B250 Topics: Growth & Spatial Org of Cities (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Occasionally

CITY B345 Advanced Topics in Environment and Society (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Topics vary.
Tagged with:
- Environmental Studies
- Environmental Studies
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Course does not meet an Approach
Typically Offered: Occasionally

CSTS B108 Roman Africa (1 Unit)
In 146 BCE, Rome conquered and destroyed the North African city of Carthage, which had been its arch-enemy for generations, and occupied many of the Carthaginian settlements in North Africa. But by the second and third centuries CE, North Africa was one of the most prosperous and cultured areas of the Roman Empire, and Carthage (near modern Tunis) was one of the busiest ports in the Mediterranean. This course will trace the relations between Rome and Carthage, looking at the history of their mutual enmity, the extraordinary rise to prosperity of Roman North Africa, and the continued importance of the region even after the Vandal invasions of the fifth century.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
Typically Offered: Occasionally

CSTS B205 Greek History (1 Unit)
This course traces the rise of the city-state (polis) in the Greek-speaking world beginning in the seventh-century BC down to its full blossoming in classical Athens and Sparta. Students should gain an understanding of the formation and development of Greek identity, from the Panhellenic trends in archaic epic and religion through its crystallization during the heroic defense against two Persian invasions and its subsequent disintegration during the Peloponnesian war. The class will also explore the ways in which the evolution of political, philosophical, religious, and artistic institutions reflect the changing socio-political circumstances of Greece. The latter part of the course will focus on Athens in particular: its rise to imperial power under Pericles, its tragic decline from the Peloponnesian War and its important role as a center for the teaching of rhetoric and philosophy. Since the study of history involves the analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of the sources available for the culture studied, students will concentrate upon the primary sources available for Greek history, exploring the strengths and weakness of these sources and the ways in which their evidence can be used to create an understanding of ancient Greece. Students should learn how to analyze and evaluate the evidence from primary texts and to synthesize the information from multiple sources in a critical way.
Tagged with:
- Classical Culture and Society at Bryn Mawr
- Classical Languages at Bryn Mawr
- Classics at Haverford
- Greek
- History
- History at Haverford
- Latin

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Occasionally

EALC B131 Chinese Civilization (1 Unit)
A broad chronological survey of Chinese culture and society from the Bronze Age to the 1800s, with special reference to such topics as belief, family, language, the arts and sociopolitical organization. Readings include primary sources in English translation and secondary studies.
Tagged with:
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Every Fall

EALC B200 Major Seminar: Methods and Approaches (1 Unit)
This course is a writing intensive course for EALC majors and minors to introduce some foundational ideas and concepts in the study of East Asia. Beginning with close readings of primary source texts, students are introduced to the philosophy and culture of China, and its subsequent transmission and adaptation across the vast geographical area that is commonly referred to as "East Asia." Students will gain familiarity with methods in this interdisciplinary field and develop skills in the practice of close critical analysis, bibliography, and the formulation of a research topic. Required of EALC majors and minors. Majors should take this course before the senior year.
Tagged with:
- Comparative Literature at Bryn Mawr
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Writing in the Major: Writing Intensive
Typically Offered: Every Spring

EALC B231 Topics in Modern Chinese Culture (1 Unit)
This a topics course. Course topics vary.
Tagged with:
- Anthropology at Bryn Mawr
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

EALC B263 The Chinese Revolution (1 Unit)
Places the causes and consequences of the 20th century revolutions in historical perspective, by examining its late-imperial antecedents and tracing how the revolution has (and has not) transformed China, including the lives of such key revolutionary supporters as the peasantry, women, and intellectuals.
Tagged with:
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

EALC B264 Human Rights in China (1 Unit)
This course will examine China's human rights issues from a historical perspective. The topics include diverse perspectives on human rights, historical background, civil rights, religious practice, justice system, education, as well as the problems concerning some social groups such as migrant laborers, women, ethnic minorities and peasants.
Tagged with:
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Every Three Years

EALC B325 Topics in Chinese History and Culture (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies.
Tagged with:
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- International Studies

Typically Offered: Occasionally

ENGL B359 Dead Presidents (1 Unit)
Framed by the extravagant funerals of Presidents Washington and Lincoln, this course explores the cultural importance of the figure of the President and the Presidential body, and of the 19th-century preoccupations with death and mourning, in the U.S. cultural imaginary from the Revolutionary movement through the Civil War.
Tagged with:
- English at Haverford
- History

GERM B223 Topics in German Cultural Studies (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies. Taught in English.
Tagged with:
- German at Haverford
- History
- Political Science
- Political Science at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Writing in the Major: Writing Attentive
Typically Offered: Occasionally

HART B310 Topics in Medieval Art (1 Unit)
This is a topics course. Course content varies. Prerequisite: one course in History of Art at the 100- or 200-level or permission of the instructor. Enrollment preference given to majors and minors in History of Art.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History
- History at Haverford
- Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies
- Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies
- Middle Eastern, Central Asian & North African Stud
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies

College Requirement(s): Course does not meet an Approach

HEBR B207 Mobility and Modernity: A Jewish History of Migration (1 Unit)
This upper-level seminar, Mobility and Modernity: A Jewish History of Modern Migration, immerses students in the vibrant history of not only Jewish migration, but how Jewish mobility became intertwined with vital trends in international migration, ranging from the rise of mercantilist trade networks in the early modern period to the codification of international migration law in the mid-to-late twentieth century. Over the semester, students will follow Sephardi merchants who traversed the Mediterranean, working-class Jewish immigrants on the Lower East Side, and Holocaust survivors who confronted their newfound statelessness. Like their historical subjects, students will travel the globe, from seventeenth century Surinam to the Soviet Union. This seminar encourages students to ask incisive questions, as they deliberate the legal, social, and cultural history of not only Jewish migration, but global migration. What circumstances compelled Jews to move? How did migration place Jews in new political systems, power dynamics, and cultural milieus? And finally, how do narratives of Jewish movement enhance our understanding of provocative themes at the center of the history of migration, such as open borders, free trade, forced deportation, and assimilation?
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Writing in the Major: Writing Intensive
Typically Offered: Only Once

HEBR B271 Topics in Judaic Studies: Histories of Jewish Identity (1 Unit)
What makes one Jewish? Is it a matter of religion, ethnicity, race, nationality, culture, or kinship? Or, conversely, is being Jewish a symbolic, universal identity, associated with any person or collective that encounters persecution and dispossession? Must a Jew be religious? Must a Jew be a Zionist? Can a Jewish person be antisemitic? Can one choose to be Jewish, or not? In the modern world, with the emergence of both secularization and religious fundamentalism, internationalism and nation-states, capitalism and communism, the primary marker of Jew or Jewish as a member of a stateless, marginalized minority has undergone a fundamental revision. This course brings together historical and literary narratives that strive to answer these and related questions. We will engage myriad voices, Jewish and non-Jewish—including your own. Traversing three hundred years of Jewish history, we will encounter communities, individuals, and collectives across Europe, North America, the Middle East, North Africa, and Israel/Palestine. We aim to recognize not only the multiplicity of Jewish identities, but how such identities can be amalgamated, negotiated and reformed in different historical and cultural contexts.
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Every other Fall

ITAL B218 Early-Modern Intersections: A New Italian Renaissance (1 Unit)
The period or movement commonly referred to as the Renaissance remains one of the great iconic moments of global history: a time of remarkable innovation within artistic and intellectual culture, and a period still widely regarded as the crucible of modernity. Although lacking a political unity and being constantly colonized by European Empires, Italy was the original heartland of the Renaissance, and home to some of its most powerful and enduring figures, such as Leonardo and Michelangelo in art, Petrarch and Ariosto in literature, Machiavelli in political thought. This course provides an overview of Italian culture from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century by adopting a cross-cultural, intersectional, and inter-disciplinary approach. The course places otherness at the center of the picture rather than at its margins, with the main aim to look at pivotal events and phenomena (the rise of Humanism, courtly culture, the canonization of the language), not only from the point of view of its protagonists but also through the eyes of its non-male, non-white, non-Christian, and non-heterosexual witnesses. The course ultimately challenges traditional accounts of the Italian Renaissance by crossing also disciplinary boundaries, since it examines not only literary, artistic, and intellectual history, but also material culture, cartography, science, technology, and history of food and fashion. All readings and class discussion will be in English. Students seeking Italian credits will complete their assignments in the target language.
Tagged with:
- Africana Studies
- Gender and Sexuality Studies
- History
- History at Haverford
- History of Art
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

ITAL B221 What is Aesthetics? Theories on Art, Imagination, and Poetry (1 Unit)
This course investigates how global thinkers, poets, and artists reflected in their works on the roles and powers of art, poetry, and human creativity. The course approaches this theme through a cross-cultural and trans-historical approach, which encompasses the Italian Humanism, which argued for the first time for the importance of aesthetic knowledge, as well as the Age of Enlightenment, which founded 'aesthetics' as a specific scientific discipline. Readings from these writers will show how artistic products, human imagination, and poetry are not just light-hearted activities but powerful cognitive tools which can reveal aspects of human history. If the human being is deemed to be a combination of reason and feeling – soul and body – art and poetry, which border both the rational and irrational realms, appear the most appropriate scientific tool to reveal the human essence and its destiny. The discussion will focus on pivotal global writers and philosophers such as Giambattista Vico and Giacomo Leopardi, who pioneered aesthetic, historical, literary, and anthropological ideas which are still crucial in the current theoretical debate on arts and poetry. All readings and class discussion will be in English. Students will have an additional hour of class for Italian credit.
Tagged with:
- German
- German at Haverford
- History
- History of Art
- Middle Eastern, Central Asian & North African Stud
- Philosophy
- Philosophy at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

ITAL B240 Philadelphia the Global City: The Italian Legacy across Time (1 Unit)
This course investigates the history and evolution of Philadelphia as a globalized and multi-ethnic city, using as a case study for this analysis the impact and legacy of transnational Italian culture across the centuries. By adopting a cross-cultural, trans-historical, and interdisciplinary approach, the course explores the influence that — along with and in intersection with many other cultural inputs — also Italian arts and cultures have exerted on the city, making it become the cosmopolitan and transnational urban environment that it is today. Throughout the centuries and way before Italy even started existing as a state, Philadelphians traveled to the peninsula and brought back objects to display in emerging cultural institutions or studied the country's art and architecture styles to shape the evolving aspect of the city. Simultaneously, incoming immigration formed new neighborhoods — such as South Philly, home to the Italian Market — and Italian figures came to prominence and became part of the social fabric of the city. Nowadays, many non-profit organizations work to preserve the traces that Italian migrants left within Philadelphia's multi-ethnic urban environment as well as to extend the city's global profile and celebrate its heritage and diversity. Through specific field trips, on-site experiential activities, and forms of civic engagement this course highlights both the enduring fascination of Philadelphians with Italy (or with the idea thereof) across the centuries and the role that the Italian Diaspora played in the development of the city. The course ultimately challenges geographical, chronological, and cultural boundaries by showing how places, arts, identities that today are perceived as 'American' have in most cases an intersectional, multi-ethnic, and cross-cultural history to tell. This course will be taught in Philadelphia as part of the Tri-Co Philly Program. All readings and class discussion will be in English, and no knowledge of Italian is required. Students seeking Italian credits will complete their assignments in the target language.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History
- History at Haverford
- History of Art
- Museum Studies
- Praxis Program

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)
- Power, Inequity, and Justice (PIJ)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

ITAL B326 Love, Magic, and Medicine: Poetical-Philosophical Bonds (1 Unit)
The course investigates how the concepts of love, magic, and medicine emerged and developed throughout early modernity and beyond. In exploring the fields of Philosophy, Medicine, and Magic, global thinkers, poets, and artists drew not only from classical sources, but were also deeply influenced by a wide range of models, such as fictional ancient sources, Islamic philosophy, and the Jewish Kabbalah. In this interesting syncretism, love was considered as an inspiration experienced by the entire universe, and magical practice was understood as a philosophy in action, which had the power to establish a bond of a loving nature between the different realms of reality. Magicians were therefore conceived as wise philosophers capable of joining this network of correspondences and controlling them (art)ificially. As a result, the figures of poets and artists interestingly merged into those of magicians of physicians, and poetry was conceived both as a magic able to arouse mental images stronger than real visions, and as a medicine able to exert a mental and physiological agency on the body. The course will approach these themes through a multi-disciplinary and trans-historical approach, which will include in the discussion a wide variety of figures, such as global early modern and modern philosophers, physicians, poets, artists, and composers.All readings and class discussion will be in English. Students will have an additional hour of class for Italian credit.
Tagged with:
- Classical Culture and Society at Bryn Mawr
- Classical Languages at Bryn Mawr
- Classical Studies
- Health Studies
- Health Studies
- History
- History of Art
- Middle Eastern, Central Asian & North African Stud
- Philosophy
- Philosophy at Haverford

College Requirement(s): Course does not meet an Approach
Typically Offered: Occasionally

MEST B100 Introduction to Middle Eastern, Central Asian and North African Studies (1 Unit)
This course introduces the interdisciplinary field of Middle Eastern Studies with a focus on analytical approaches, methods, and tools. Students consider the dynamics of the region in the premodern and modern periods and become familiar with the major issues and debates that dominate various disciplinary approaches to the Middle East. Readings include both important canonical and alternative scholarship in order to examine the limits and possibilities of the field.
Tagged with:
- History
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies

College Requirement(s): Critical Interpretation (CI)
Typically Offered: Occasionally

MEST B202 The Legacy of Genghis Khan: The Mongols and Their Successors (1 Unit)
This course examines the political, intellectual, and social history of Genghis Khan, the Ilkhanid Mongols, and their successors in the Middle East and Central Asia from the thirteenth century to the sixteenth century CE. We will consider the formation of new political norms, changing trends in trade, and an increasingly hybrid cultural and artistic production that characterize this period.
Tagged with:
- East Asian Languages and Cultures
- History
- History at Haverford

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Every other Year

MEST B208 Introduction to the History of the Medieval Middle East (1 Unit)
This course will provide an overview of the political and social history of the Middle East and North Africa from the sixth century C.E., in the Late Antique Period, with the tensions between the Byzantine and Sasanian empires and the rise of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula, to the fourteenth century C.E., with the Mongol invasions marking the end of the Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad. While students will be introduced to the political figures and frameworks of this period, there will also be a focus on social and cultural developments among the diverse populations that lived in the medieval Middle East, Central Asia, and North Africa, their relationships with one another, and how they interacted with their neighbors. Issues of political and religious authority and legitimacy, the development of social and cultural institutions, the production of artistic and literary works will also be explored.
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)
- Inquiry into the Past (IP)

Typically Offered: Every other Fall

MEST B210 The Art and Architecture of Islamic Spirituality (1 Unit)
This course examines how Muslim societies across time and space have used art and architecture in different ways to express and understand inner dimensions of spirituality and mysticism. Topics to be studied include: the calligraphical remnants of the early Islamic period; inscriptions found on buildings and gravestones; the majestic architecture of mosques, shrines, seminaries, and Sufi lodges; the brilliant arts of the book; the commemorative iconography and passion plays of Ashura devotion; the souvenir culture of modern shrine visitation; and the modern art of twenty-first century Sufism. Readings include works from history, religious studies, anthropology, sociology, and the history of art and architecture.
Tagged with:
- Growth and Structure of Cities at Bryn Mawr
- History
- History at Haverford
- History of Art
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies
- Visual Studies

College Requirement(s):
- Critical Interpretation (CI)
- Cross-Cultural Analysis (CC)

Typically Offered: Occasionally

MEST B215 Iran: History, Culture, and Politics (1 Unit)
This course explores the history, cultures, and politics of Iran from the time of the Arab Conquest in the 7th Century CE to the Iranian Revolution in 1979 CE. It introduces students to Iranian civilization through its changing political systems, rich intellectual and religious movements, and vibrant cultural developments that spanned this long period of time. It will examine the various ethnic, religious, and cultural groups that have called Iran home and look at the ways that the diverse inhabitants of the region have interacted with one another. This course will also pay special attention to important religious and intellectual thinkers including the mystic Bayazid Bistami, the Illuminationist Shihab al-din al-Suhrawardi, the poet Sa'adi Shirazi, the philosopher Mulla Sadra, the founder of the Baha'i faith Baha'ullah, and modern social theorist Ali Shariati.
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies

College Requirement(s): Inquiry into the Past (IP)
Typically Offered: Occasionally

MEST B302 The Legacy of Genghis Khan: The Mongols & Their Successors (1 Unit)
This course examines the political, intellectual, and social history of Genghis Khan, the Ilkhanid Mongols, and their successors in the Middle East and Central Asia from the thirteenth century to the sixteenth century CE. We will consider the formation of new political norms, changing trends in trade, and an increasingly hybrid cultural and artistic production that characterize this period.
Tagged with:
- History
- Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies

Writing in the Major: Writing Attentive
Typically Offered: Occasionally

MEST B305 Merchants, Pilgrims & Rogues: Travels through the Mid East (1 Unit)
This course will critically approach the various ways that people have traveled to and within the Middle East, Central Asia, and North Africa in the medieval and modern periods. It will explore the many reasons that induced people to travel by looking at travelogues produced by these various travelers, the material culture of travel (e.g. pilgrimage scrolls, architecture and infrastructure that facilitated travel and lodging, movement of commodities, postcards, etc.), and scholarly work on travel, tourism, and migration more broadly. This course will include travels by merchants, pilgrims, adventurers, scholars, conquering armies, imperial powers, oil tycoons, and refugees.
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies

Writing in the Major: Writing Attentive
Typically Offered: Occasionally

MEST B315 Empire in the Premodern Middle East (1 Unit)
This course focuses on empire in Late Antique, medieval, and early modern Middle East, North Africa, and Central Asia, including that of the Sasanians, Umayyads, Abbasids, Fatimids, Ilkhanids, Safavids, and Ottomans. It will explore the rise, politics, economics, longevity, social relations, and cultural production of these empires. While examining the histories of these empires, students will also interrogate the very category of empire, its meanings, its institutions and actors, and its usefulness in studying the region. It will also consider how premodern empires differed from those of the modern period and how the legacies of these empires might continue into the present.
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford
- International Studies
- Middle Eastern/Central Asian/North African Studies

Writing in the Major: Writing Attentive
Typically Offered: Occasionally

POLS B378 Origins of American Constitutionalism (1 Unit)
Prerequisite(s): At least Sophomore standing
This course will explore some aspects of early American constitutional thought, particularly in the periods immediately preceding and following the American Revolution. The premise of the course is that many of the questions that arose during that period—concerning, for example, the nature of law, the idea of sovereignty, and the character of legitimate political authority—remain important questions for political, legal, and constitutional thought today, and that studying the debates of the revolutionary period can help sharpen our understanding of these issues. Prerequisites: sophomore standing and previous course work in American history, American government, political theory, or legal studies.
Tagged with:
- History
- History at Haverford
- Political Science at Haverford