WORLD HISTORY CORE SEMINAR:
APPROACHES TO THE PRACTICE OF WORLD HISTORY

HIST 2718, SPRING 2014
PATRICK MANNING

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Hours: Tues. 1:00 – 3:00 pm
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This course examines recent exemplary research monographs in world history. Each week of the course we will read and discuss two monographs representing a particular approach to world historical research. Each week’s reading will also include chapters from the instructor’s synthetic interpretation of world history. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the overall world-historical discourse and identify an array of wider contexts that could potentially be relevant to their own research topics.

RESOURCES
Background Reading (all available in WHC, 3900 WWPH)
Manning, P., Navigating World History (2003) [WHC]
Stearns, Peter, World History: The Basics (2011)

Journals:
Comparativ
Comparative Studies in Society in History
Itinerario
Journal of Global History
Journal of World History
Journal of World-Systems Research
New Global Studies
Review
World History Connected

On-line Discussion List:
H-WORLD (h-net.msu.edu/~world)
ASSIGNMENTS
(1) Five short papers, 500-750 words each, on the readings in weeks of your choice.
(2) Three commentaries on other students’ papers (selected by lot).
(3) A final paper of 2000 words: a world-historical research design, due April 14.
(4) One or two introductory oral commentaries on the author and text of Category A readings for the week.
(5) One or two oral commentaries on the text of Category B readings for the week.
(6) Two postings to H-WORLD: one question, one bibliographical suggestion.

THEMATIC COURSE ORGANIZATION
This core course in world history is organized principally along thematic lines. Chronology, theory, and method, interpretation, and historiography, while included, are definitely subordinated to a review of the principal themes in world-historical discourse. To assist in discussion of the themes, the readings for each week are preceded by brief notes on framework and debate regarding the theme in question.

ORGANIZATION OF READINGS
Readings each work are labeled by categories A, B, C, and D.
A. Reading for all students to read and discuss; one student introduces the work & author. These assigned works give primary emphasis to world-historical monographs and secondary emphasis to synthetic works.
B. Reading by one student, who reports on it in the context of the main reading.
C. Additional readings, to be consulted and read when time is available. (Reports on books in this category might be made on a volunteer basis; otherwise, they are for later reading.)
D. This overview-in-process, to be scanned or read during the last half of the semester, provides a chronological interpretation of world history, and is to be discussed briefly in class during weeks 7 through 14.

FORMAT OF CLASS SESSIONS
Before class: students will prepare for each session by completing the A readings and, as appropriate, the B, C, and D readings. Students will write short response papers (for five of the sessions), and submit them at the beginning of class; in addition, students will write and submit three peer reviews of previous fellow student papers, as assigned.

In class: after introduction by one student, discussion will focus on the week’s A reading and on the accumulation of readings and discussions during the semester. There will be a report on the week’s B reading, plus periodic discussion on the concluding research design paper. From week 7 on, a small portion of class will focus on discussion of the chronological and thematic Manning “Synthesis.”

AVAILABILITY OF READINGS
Where possible, works on the syllabus are held on reserve at Hillman Library. Books available electronically through ULS are noted: [ULS electronic] Books in the World History Center are noted: [WHC]
**Weekly Schedule**

**Jan. 6. Week 1: Introduction**
*Frameworks: the range in types of “worlds”*
*Debates: Dynamics of growth? Dynamics of transformation?*


**Jan. 13. Week 2: Environmental History**
*Frameworks: geosphere, biosphere, human-natural interaction*
*Debates: contemporary global warming*


**Jan. 21. Week 3. Migration and Diaspora [class meets TUESDAY at time TBA]**
*Frameworks: communities; micro, meso, macro analysis*
*Debates: migration vs. immigration; meaning of return migration*


**Jan. 27. Week 4: Modernity**
*Frameworks: tradition, enlightenment, post-modernity*
*Debates: unique or plural modernity; secularization*

**FEB. 3. WEEK 5: SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

*Frameworks: class, ethnicity, gender, state*

*Debates: causes, links, consequences of social movements*


**FEB. 10. WEEK 6: GENDER**

*Frameworks: male, female, other roles; age groupings*

*Debates: short-term and long-term dynamics of gender roles*


**FEB. 17. WEEK 7: MARITIME HISTORY**

*Frameworks: oceans, inland seas, rivers; landside, littoral, maritime*

*Debates: technology, economy, and society; periodization*


**FEB. 24. WEEK 8: EMPIRE (AND NATION)**

*Frameworks: homeland, core, nation, periphery*

*Debates: dynamics of rise and fall; imperial interactions; empire and world*


**Mar. 3. Week 9: Religion**

*Frameworks: Big religions; spirituality at all levels*

*Debates: Dynamics of religious transformation and interaction?*

A. Schwartz, Stuart. *All can be saved: Religious tolerance and salvation in the Iberian Atlantic world.* Yale, 2008. [ULS electronic]


**Mar. 17. Week 10: Culture**

*Frameworks: Material, expressive, societal culture*

*Debates: cultural relativism*


D. Manning, “Humanity,” Ch 12-15

**Mar. 24. Week 11: Scale**

*Frameworks: Space, time, level of social aggregation, natural and social world*

*Debates: How do big scales affect the small? The reverse?*


MAR. 31. WEEK 12: SYSTEM
Frameworks: system, sub-system, open and closed system, emergent properties
Debates: systemic function, systemic change

APR. 7. WEEK 13: COMMERCE
Frameworks: networks, trade diasporas
Debates: commodity chains, management

APR. 14. WEEK 14: ECONOMY
Frameworks: technology, innovation, capital, growth
Debates: eastern vs. western growth
World History: Humanity in Movement
by Patrick Manning

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Introduction. What Is World History?

Part I. Four Ages to 1000 BCE: Foundation, Expansion, Production
1. Founders of Humankind and the Age of Expansion, 200,000 – 15,000 BP
2. Climate Change and the Age of Production, 25,000 – 5000 BP
3. Home Fires: The Rise and Fall of Communities, 9000 – 4000 BP
4. The Age of Civilizations and Elites, 4000 BCE – 1000 BCE
5. Perspectives: Humanity in Movement to 1000 BCE

Part II. The Afro-Eurasian Age, 1000 BCE to 1200 CE
7. Aqueducts and Outriggers: New Technology
8. Religion and Philosophy: Codes of Revelation, Salvation, and Ethics
9. Empires, 500 BCE – 1200 CE
10. Finding Greener Pastures: Migrations
11. Webs of Human Connection

Part III. Global Interactions, 1200 CE to 1650 CE
12. Mongol Conquests, 1200-1350
13. The Mongol Aftermath in Politics and Culture, 1350-1500
14. Oceanic Encounters in the Seven Seas, 1400-1600
15. Conflicts in Religion, 1500-1650
16. Silver Circles the World: The Global Economy, 1500-1650
17. Families and Communities, 1200-1650

Part IV. World System, 1650 to 1850 CE
18. New Models in Statecraft and Commerce, 1650-1750
20. Seizing the Able Hand: Slavery, 1650-1850
21. Flags and Anthems: Nation and Revolution, 1750-1850
22. Industrialization Worldwide, 1750 - 1850
23. Divergence: West and East, North and South, 1650-1850

Part V. The Age of Transformation and Inequality, 1850 to the present
24. Civilizations and Nations at War, 1850-1920
25. Migration: To Rural, Island, and Urban Frontiers, 1840-1940
26. Technology: The Power of Knowledge, 1850-1940
27. Ideology: Visions of the World, 1900-1960
30. Our Heritage, our Future