

Georgetown University - Summer Session II – 2017  
**History 008-20 – World History II**

**Approaching Modern World History**  
**\*Draft Syllabus**

*\* This is a partial, provisional, tentative syllabus, provided in order to give a sense of what to expect in the course. It will change, and become much more precise, in the months ahead. I strongly encourage you to contact me, the instructor, if you have questions about the course and, in particular, before purchasing any of the books, as these are subject to additions and, possibly, subtractions.*

Instructor: Eric Gettig  
etg22@georgetown.edu

Office: History Department, ICC 600, Room #TBA  
Office Hours: TBA

Class Meetings: MTuWThF 10:45 AM – 12:15 PM  
First class: Monday, July 10, 2017  
Last class: Friday, August 11, 2017

Classroom: InterCultural Center (ICC) #119

**Course Description and Goals**

This course introduces students to the study of global history, particularly during the last five centuries. Given the condensed nature of the summer session, we will not attempt to comprehensively survey of all the events and patterns – environmental, economic, political, social, cultural – of human history all over the globe in the last five hundred-odd years. Rather, this course treats global history as a *question or problem to be addressed*, rather than as a *subject to be mastered*. How have historians approached the problem of doing global history in different ways? What frameworks or approaches to global history do we as readers and thinkers find useful or appealing? What makes a certain history "global?" And, having sampled some approaches to this problem, where do we, in our current contexts – geographical, economic, cultural... – find that we fit in "world" history?

The course has the following intellectual goals:

- To help students reflect on *how the world got to be the way it is*, and to put today's world (and tomorrow's) and their own lives into global historical perspective.
- To help students learn *to think historically*, to identify patterns and particularities over time; to pay attention to context, scale, cause and effect, and point of view.
- To expose students to some of the different ways in which historians "do" history, particularly world history.
- To help students *develop skills* as critical readers and fluent analytical writers.

- To encourage students to *value the study of history* and to pursue it further.

### **Attendance and Participation**

Though taught at the 00- level, the small size of this course in the summer session makes it very much a "discussion class" rather than a "lecture class" more familiar at that level. Students are expected to come to class every day well prepared by having done the assigned reading or other assignment, and ready and willing to participate actively and continuously in class.

Attendance at all class meetings is expected and mandatory except in case of a medical issue or unavoidable conflict. All absences need to be cleared with the instructor, in advance. Unexcused absences will be penalized from the student's participation grade.

### **Course Activities**

Each week, we will read and discuss books and articles by historians who engage with different themes and methods in global history; we will do the same with primary sources produced by people in the past that shed light on global trends or events, sources that provide the raw material on which historians base their work. Several times during the course we will also venture out of the classroom to engage with history in other places: at the University Archives and Special Collections and at local museums, for example.

### **Assignments and Grading**

Attendance and Participation - 30%

Map Exercise - 10%

3 Essays (c. 5 pages each) – 60% (20% each)

### **Readings\***

*\*Again, this is subject to change. I urge you to wait until June and reach out to me for an updated syllabus before purchasing any books.*

We will read the following books in their entirety, and they are recommended for purchase, either via the university bookstore or elsewhere. I will place a copy on reserve at the Lauinger Library as well.

Timothy Brook, *Vermeer's Hat: The Seventeenth Century and the Dawn of the Global World* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2008). ISBN 978-1596915992

Robert B. Marks, *The Origins of the Modern World: A Global and Environmental Narrative from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-First Century* **3rd Edition**. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015). ISBN 978-1442212404

J.R. McNeill and Peter Engelke, *The Great Acceleration: An Environmental History of the Anthropocene Since 1945*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016. ISBN 978-0674545038

Other readings – primary and secondary sources – will be made available through the course website and in class.

*Note:* This course assumes a basic, high-school-level knowledge of modern world history. Students who feel they would benefit from reading a traditional, narrative textbook as background or reinforcement for the assigned readings are urged to consult Bentley, Ziegler, and Streets-Salter, *Traditions and Encounters: A Global History*, Vol. II (any of the recent editions is fine).

**Course Schedule** (TBA)

**Week One**

M July 10 Classes Begin – Intro  
T July 11  
W July 12  
Th July 13  
F July 14

**Week Two**

M July 17  
T July 18  
W July 19  
Th July 20  
Fr July 21

**Week Three**

M July 24  
T July 25  
W July 26  
Th July 27  
Fr July 28

**Week Four**

M July 31  
T Aug 1  
W Aug 2  
Th Aug 3  
Fr Aug 4

**Week Five**

M Aug 7  
T Aug 8

W Aug 9

Th Aug 10

Fr Aug 11 Classes End

[Grades Due Fri Aug 18]