



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
School of Continuing Studies

BLHV-402 Discover: The History, Politics and Future of Human Exploration

Dates: January 13 to May 15, 2021

Location: This course takes place online. Georgetown University School of Continuing Studies (SCS) uses Canvas as its Learning Management System. This course will be taught entirely through the Canvas platform. To learn more about Canvas, please go through the [Canvas Guide for Students](#).

Faculty: Mark M. Gray

Contact Information: mmg34@georgetown.edu, 202-687-0885

Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course uses a multi-disciplinary approach, incorporating the sciences (social and physical) and the humanities, to explore the history and future of human exploration and discovery. It begins with the most distant story we can tell of early Homo sapiens venturing out of Africa some 60,000 years ago and ends with our reach into space—speculating on the future of human exploration. What are the catalysts for human beings to leave one place for another into the unknown? Often this has come as a response to climate changes, disasters, disease, and/or changes in food sources. In other cases the movement is caused by human conflict, seeking out new wealth and trade, or the development of a new technology that reduces the risks of travel. On some occasions the impetus was simple human curiosity. In most cases these movements have had lasting effects on human politics and culture. This course takes a global approach—in some cases literally out of this world—to study the causes and effects of these human journeys. It also looks to the future to all that has not yet been explored to answer where we might go next and what impacts this may have. Texts include scientific studies, historical narratives, and primary source document excerpts.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Utilize physical anthropology and biology to understand evolution and mobility of early humans and their biological ancestors
2. Explain economic and political motivations behind human journeys of discovery
3. Describe cultural and political problems arising from migration and contact between civilizations
4. Compare travel literatures to known historical experience. Describe the impact of these narratives on popular cultures
5. Explain the development of colonial systems and international slavery as well as the historical, social, and economic consequences arising from these institutional designs
6. Compare and contrast the history of human explorations undersea and in air/space. Describe the impact of military conflict on the development of undersea and air/space technologies
7. Describe the circular connection between technological development and “discovery cultures”

REQUIRED READINGS

The following are the required reading material for this course:

Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind

Yuval Noah Harari

Harper; 1st edition (February 10, 2015)

ISBN-10: 0062316095

Pathfinders: A Global History of Exploration

Felipe Fernández-Armesto

W. W. Norton & Company (October 17, 2007)

ISBN-10: 0393330915 / ISBN-13: 978-0393330915

Mankind Beyond Earth: The History, Science, and Future of Human Space Exploration

Claude A. Piantadosi

Columbia University Press (January 1, 2013)

ISBN-10: 0231162421 / ISBN-13: 978-0231162425

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Technical Requirements

As an online student your "classroom" experience will be very different than a traditional student. As part of your online experience, you can expect to:

1. Communicate via email including sending attachments.

2. Navigate the internet using a Web browser.
3. Use office applications such as Microsoft Office or Google Docs to create documents..
4. Learn how to submit assignments in Canvas.
5. Communicate with peers using discussion boards and other platforms.
6. Upload and download saved files.
7. Have easy access to the Internet.
8. Navigate Canvas, including using the email component within Canvas.
9. Use a microphone to record audio through your computer.
10. Use an internal or external camera to record video through your computer.

In this course we will use TurnItIn and Zoom.

- TurnItIn is a writing assessment tool that is used to detect plagiarism and allows teachers to provide assignment feedback to students. [Instructions for TurnItIn are available here.](#)
- Zoom enables users to conduct synchronous (“real-time”) conferences, presentations, lectures, meetings, office hours and group chats via audio, video, text chat and content sharing. [Instructions for Zoom are available here.](#)

Computer Requirements

Students need to have sufficient technology and Internet access to complete this course. The requirements are listed by [Canvas in the Instructure Guides.](#)

Audio and Video Capability

- You will need an internal or external microphone. Most computers now come with them built in.
- You will need an internal or external camera. Most computers now come with them built in.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

This course is conducted entirely online, which means students do not have to be on campus to complete any portion of it. Students will participate in the course using Georgetown University's online learning management system called Canvas.

Student Expectations

This course consists of 14 weeks. You are expected to do the readings, watch the lecture videos, and to engage with the course material in depth. Your responsibilities include completing all the assignments. Participation is essential to your success in this class. In order to get full credit for participation, you will have to complete all of your discussions.

Time Expectations

Our online classes are designed to meet the same academic standards as our place-based (face-to-face) courses. You can think of each module equal to the same level of participation, commitment, and academic rigor as a face-to-face class. Students should plan on spending approximately 12-15 hours per week on the work for each online module.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic and personal integrity in pursuit of their education at Georgetown. Academic dishonesty in any form is a serious offense, and students found in violation are subject to academic penalties that include, but are not limited to, failure of the course, termination from the program, and revocation of degrees already conferred. All students are held to the Honor Code.

The Honor Code pledge follows:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and To conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Plagiarism

Stealing someone else's work is a terminal offense in the workplace, and it will wreck your career in academia, too. Students are expected to work with integrity and honesty in all their assignments. The Georgetown University Honor System defines plagiarism as "the act of passing off as one's own the ideas or writings of another." More guidance is available through the [Gervase Programs](#). If you have any doubts about plagiarism, paraphrasing, and the need to credit, check out [Plagiarism.org](#).

COURSE ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

Written work is due by the assigned due date on Canvas. **DO NOT SEND YOUR PAPERS TO OTHER PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL EMAIL ADDRESSES.** Follow-ups and class participation are contingent on the timely submission of your initial responses.

Late Submission Policy:

As stated in the [Student Handbook](#), you must notify me and obtain my approval if you are unable to complete any assignment by the published submission deadline. I will gladly consider granting extensions for assignments as long as the request is made by e-mail at least 24 hours before the due date/time. The request must include the date and time when you intend to submit the assignment. If you fail to give both a date and a time, however, the request will not be honored. However, no late submissions or extensions are available for the last week of class or for any Discussion Board participation. Late responses with no previous arrangements for all

assignments will be penalized by 10% for each day or portion of a day that the assignment is late, unless previous arrangements have been made.

Discussions and Assignments

Class assignments (including discussions) represent 25% of your overall grade. These assignments include a 1) travel writing essay, 2) an analysis of travel/exploration literature, 3) a comparative film study essay, 4) an essay on technology and travel, 5) a biographical essay about an explorer, and 6) an essay on the future of exploration. These assignments will be given every other week. One exam will be given at the end of the semester gauging your grasp of the material. This is 20% of your grade. The examination is open-book and open-note. The centerpiece of the course is a research project. The topic will be determined by you or your group in consultation with your professor. Each project will be summarized in a research paper. Throughout the semester we will be discussing and developing these projects together as a class. Results will be presented at the end of the semester in an informal presentation session. This presentation and other online participation will account for 15% of your grade. The final paper should consist of a minimum of 3,000 words and is worth 40% of your grade (due by May 14).

Citation Style

This course uses APA or Chicago style for all writing and research assignments. Resources for this citation style are available through

[Georgetown Library Citation Guide](#)

[APA Style Guidebook](#)

GRADING

Grading in this course will be determined by the following grading scale:

- A: 93% to 100%
- A-: 90% to 92%
- B+: 87% to 89%
- B: 83% to 86%
- B-: 80% to 82%
- C+: 77% to 79%
- C: 73% to 76%
- C-: 70% to 72%
- D+: 67% to 69%
- D: 63% to 66%
- F: 62% and below

ACCOMMODATIONS

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, individuals with disabilities are provided reasonable accommodations to ensure equity and access to programs and facilities. Students are responsible for communicating their needs to the Academic Resource Center, the office that oversees [disability support services](#), (202-687-8354; arc@georgetown.edu;) before the start of classes to allow time to review the documentation and make recommendations for appropriate accommodations. The University is not responsible for making special accommodations for students who have not declared their disabilities and have not requested an accommodation in a timely manner. Also, the University need not modify course or degree requirements considered to be an essential requirement of the program of instruction. For the most current and up-to-date policy information, please refer to the [Georgetown University Academic Resource Center website](#). Students are highly encouraged to discuss the documentation and accommodation process with an Academic Resource Center administrator.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Services

SCS offers a variety of support systems for students that can be accessed online, at the School of Continuing Studies downtown location, and on the main Georgetown campus:

- [Academic Resource Center](#)
- 202-687-8354 | arc@georgetown.edu
- [Counseling and Psychiatric Services](#)
- 202-687-6985
- [Institutional Diversity, Equity & Affirmative Action \(IDEAA\)](#)
- (202) 687-4798

Georgetown Library

Students enrolled in online School of Continuing Studies SCS coursework have access to the University Library System's eResources, including 500+ research databases, 1.5+ million ebooks, and thousands of periodicals and other multimedia files (films, webinars, music, and images). Students can access these resources through the [Library's Homepage](#) by using their University

username (NetID) and password (this is the same login information used to access email, BlackBoard, etc.). The Library does not mail physical items to students.

SCS students may make an appointment with a librarian to discuss a research topic, develop a search strategy, or examine resources for projects and papers. Librarians offer an overview of and in-depth assistance with important resources for senior or master's theses, dissertations, papers and other types of research. Appointments are conducted using Google Hangout (video-conferencing function) through the Georgetown Gmail System or by telephone. This service is available to currently enrolled students who need assistance with Georgetown-assigned projects and papers. Please review the [Services & Resources Guide for Online Students](#) for additional information.

Research Guide

The Project Management program has an extensive online [Library Research Guide](#) designed for the subject and research specifications of our program. This Guide will give you direct access to the library resources central to your course research work.

Learning Resources

SCS offers a host of [learning resources](#) to its students. Two that you might find particularly helpful in this course are the [Writing Center](#) and [Refworks](#).

- The [Writing Center](#) offers professional writing support through its online peer tutoring service.
- [Refworks](#) is an online research management tool that aids in organizing, storing, and presenting citation sources for papers and projects.

Technical Support

Click on the Help link (on the bottom-left corner in Canvas) to reach Canvas Support, including the [Canvas Student Guide](#) and 24 hour Canvas Support Hotline at 855-338-2770.

In this course we will use VoiceThread, TurnItIn and Zoom.

- VoiceThread is a tool that enables teachers and students to upload and asynchronously present images, video, and/or other media and respond to others presentations with audio, video, and/or text comments. [Technical support for VoiceThread is available.](#)
- TurnItIn is a writing assessment tool that is used to detect plagiarism and allows teachers to provide assignment feedback to students. [Technical support for TurnItIn is available.](#)
- Zoom enables users to conduct synchronous (“real-time”) conferences, presentations, lectures, meetings, office hours and group chats via audio, video, text chat and content sharing. [Technical support for Zoom is available.](#)

COMMUNICATIONS GUIDELINES

Netiquette Guidelines

To promote the highest degree of education possible, we ask each student to respect the opinions and thoughts of other students and be courteous in the way that you choose to express yourself. The topics in this course can be controversial and promote debate. Students should be respectful and considerate of all opinions.

In order for us to have meaningful discussions, we must learn to genuinely try to understand what others are saying and be open-minded about others' opinions. If you want to persuade someone to see things differently, it is much more effective to do so in a polite, non-threatening way rather than to do so antagonistically. Everyone has insights to offer based on his/her experiences, and we can all learn from each other. Civility is essential.

Statement of Student Conduct, Civility, and Engagement

The School of Continuing Studies offers students the opportunity to engage with faculty, staff, and peers in ways that foster intellectual growth and development in their chosen field of study. It is important to recognize that each member of our community brings his or her own values, thoughts, perspectives, and experiences into each interaction. We expect students to behave in a manner that is civil and respectful of others, and appreciate the learning opportunities that come from engaging pluralistic perspectives in a dynamic educational environment.

Engagement within the SCS Georgetown community takes place in on-campus meeting spaces and classrooms, and extends to online learning platforms and forums. Students should be particularly mindful that participation in class discussions, group assignments, emails, blogs, and social media reflect upon them personally, academically, and professionally. All viewpoints, editorials, and opinions expressed by students represent those students exclusively – and not the students' instructors, classmates, academic program, School, or University – even in cases when students are using Georgetown-affiliated systems like email, blogs, and online portfolios. The expectations for respect and civility are consistent for on-campus classes and spaces, as well as cyber, virtual, and online environments. Thus, civility and cybercivility are expected of all students, in all campus spaces.

SCS students are expected to adhere to the SCS guidelines for student conduct and the University Code of Student Conduct. In the event that a student's behavior is perceived to fall outside the stated SCS guidelines or may be a violation of the Code of Student Conduct, the matter may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for further review and possible sanctioning. Such instances can include but are not limited to: disruption of official university functions (including teaching, research, administration), failure to comply with a directive issued by a University official, harassment and bullying, and incivility. For questions regarding the SCS student conduct expectations please review the policy in-full found in the [Graduate Professional Studies Student Handbook](#). For questions about the Code of Student Conduct, please review the information provided by the [Office of Student Conduct](#).

Communication with Peers

Notifications

In this course we will use Canvas to send email for private messages. You can either check your messages in the Canvas system or set your notifications to your preferred method of contact. Please check your messages at least once per day. When submitting messages, please do the following:

- Put a subject in the subject box that describes the email content with your name and module.
- Do not send messages asking general information about the class, please post those in the General Questions Discussion Board Forum.

Turnaround and Feedback

If you have a concern and send me a message, you can expect a response within one business days. Please allow two business days for assessment submission feedback.

Copyright

The materials used in Georgetown University courses ("Course Materials") generally represent the intellectual property of course instructors which may not be disseminated or reproduced in any form for public distribution (e.g., sale, exchange, etc.) without the written permission of the course instructor. Course Materials include all written or electronic documents and materials, including syllabi, current and past examination questions/answers, and presentations such as lectures, videos, PowerPoints, etc., provided by a course instructor. Course Materials may only be used by students enrolled in the course for academic (course-related) purposes.

Published course readings (book chapters, articles, reports, etc.) available in Canvas are copyrighted material. These works are made available to students through licensed databases or fair use. They are protected by copyright law, and may not be further disseminated or reproduced in any form for distribution (e.g., uploading to websites, sale, exchange, etc.) without permission of the copyright owner.

More information about intellectual property and copyright can be found here:

<https://www.library.georgetown.edu/copyright>

More information about computer acceptable use policy and intellectual property can be found here: <https://security.georgetown.edu/it-policies-procedures/computer-systems-aup>

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

Georgetown University and its faculty are committed to supporting survivors and those impacted by sexual misconduct, which includes sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, and stalking. Georgetown requires faculty members, unless otherwise designated as confidential, to report all disclosures of sexual misconduct to the University Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. If you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a professor in or outside of the classroom (with the exception of disclosures in papers), that faculty member must report the incident to the Title IX Coordinator, or Deputy Title IX Coordinator. The coordinator, will, in turn, reach out to the student to provide support, resources, and the option to meet. [Please note that the student is not required to meet with the Title IX coordinator.]. More information about reporting options and resources can be found on the [Sexual Misconduct Website](#).

If you would prefer to speak to someone confidentially, Georgetown has a number of fully confidential professional resources that can provide support and assistance. These resources include:

1. Health Education Services for Sexual Assault Response and Prevention: confidential email sarp@georgetown.edu
2. Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS): 202. 687.6985 or after hours, call 202. 444.7243 and ask for the on-call CAPS clinician.

Thank you for supporting our students impacted by sexual violence. If interested, other helpful more general resources are included below:

- [Georgetown Self-Care Resource Guide](#)
- [Georgetown Wellness Wheel](#)
- [Georgetown Guide to Recognizing Students in Distress](#)

PREGNANCY ADJUSTMENTS AND ACCOMMODATION

Georgetown University is committed to creating an accessible and inclusive environment for pregnant and parenting students. Students may request adjustments based on general pregnancy needs or accommodations based on a pregnancy-related complication. Specific adjustments will be handled on a case by case basis and will depend on medical need and academic requirements.

Students seeking a pregnancy adjustment or accommodation should follow the process laid out at the [Pregnancy Adjustments and Accommodations for Students webpage](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Class</u>	<u>Topics and readings</u>
Distant Journeys	

Jan. 13-17: I. Introduction; The George Bailey-Walter Mitty Factor; II. The “Unremembered” Journey Out of Africa; Physical Anthropology, Human Origin, and Migration

Readings: Harari Chs. 1-3; Roberts, Chs. 1-3; Ward article

Media discussion: The Incredible Human Journey

Jan. 18-24: I. Ancient Seas: Early Asian and European Explorers; II. On Ancient Roads; III. Growing Empires and War; IV. Encounters with the “Other”

Readings: Harari Chs. 4-6; Roberts, Chs. 4-5; Chang-Qun article

Media discussion: Tower of Babel

Jan. 25-31: I. Exploration in Early Literature; II. Spread of Salvation Religions: Evangelization and Pilgrimage

Readings: Harari Chs. 7-9; Fernández-Armesto, Chs. 1-2; Christian and Davies articles

Media discussion: The Art of War, Journey to Mecca: In the Footsteps of Ibn Battuta, Arabian Nights

Classical Explorations

Feb. 1-7: I. Europeans Meet “New Worlds”; II. Globalization and the Spread of Disease

Readings: Harari Chs. 10-12; Fernández-Armesto, Chs. 14-15; Zumthor and McGhee articles

Media discussion: Life and Voyages of Columbus, The New World, Apocalypto,

Feb. 8-14: Theater of the Mind: The printing press in Asia and Europe, expanding literacy, and the travel tale

Readings: Harari Chs. 13-16; Fernández-Armesto, Ch. 4; Clanchy and McElroy articles

Media discussion: Arthurian Legends and Quests

Feb. 15-21: Frontiers: Colonialism and culture clash around the world; International slavery

Readings: Harari Chs. 17-19; Fernández-Armesto, Ch. 5; Wheeler article

Media discussion: The Mission, Amistad

Feb. 22-26: I. Enlightenment age and travel technology; II. Emergence of global capital markets, commodities, and trade

Readings: Fernández-Armesto, Ch. 6

Media discussion: Moby Dick, The Voyage of the Beagle, Two Years Before the Mast, Gulliver’s Travels

SPRING BREAK

Modern Explorations

Mar. 8-14: I. A New World Below: Under the seas, The National Geographic Generation; II. Travel in the Industrial Age

Readings: Fernández-Armesto, Ch. 7; Roland and Corbin articles

Media discussion: *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea*, *Around the World in Eighty Days*

Mar. 15-21: I. Dawn of Flight: balloons, dirigibles, gliders, and planes; II. World at War; I. Race to the Poles: North and South; II. World at War, cont.

Readings: Fernández-Armesto, Ch. 8-9; van Muffling article; Amundsen article

Media discussion: Wings, High Road to China, Lawrence of Arabia, Seven Years in Tibet

Mar. 22-29: Other Modern “Journeys”: Quantum worlds, birth of the vacation, ideas of afterlife, “tripping out”

Readings: Fernández-Armesto, Ch. 9; Piantadosi, Intro & Chs.1-2; McLaughlin article, Amundsen article

Media discussion: Lawrence of Arabia, Seven Years in Tibet, Altered States, Flatliners, The Elegant Universe

EASTER BREAK

Journeys Ahead

Apr. 6-11: The Final Frontier: Early journeys into space; International competition and the “Space Race”

Readings: Harari Chs. 20, Afterword; Piantadosi, Chs. 3-5; Koman article

Media discussion: A Trip to the Moon, 2001: A Space Odyssey, Interstellar

Apr. 12-18: Second Lives: Traveling in digital worlds; II. Post-modern Globalization; What’s Next?: The global race to get off the planet;

Readings: Piantadosi, Chs. 6-13; Stone article, Fong article

Media discussion: The Matrix, Digital Nation, Plato’s Allegory of the Cave

Apr. 19-25: The Long-term future of Human Exploration: What is possible and probable? Connecting past to future

Exam

Apr. 26-May 5: Presentations

Presentations

Paper due by May 14

*Course schedule will be followed but is not a contract.

Additional Journal Articles to Be Discussed in Class (sequential order; all available on JSTOR)

Ward, Carol. 2004. “The Evolution of Human Origins” in *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 105, No. 1, (Mar., 2003), pp. 77-88.

Chang-Qun, Duan, Gan Xue-Chun, Jeanny Wang, and Paul K. Chien. 1998. “Relocation of Civilization Centers in Ancient China: Environmental Factors” in *Ambio*, Vol. 27, No. 7 (Nov., 1998), pp. 572-575.

Christian, David. 2000. “Silk Roads or Steppe Roads? The Silk Roads in World History” in *Journal of World History*, Vol. 11, No. 1 (Spring, 2000), pp. 1-26.

Davies, Hugh E. H. 1998. “Designing Roman Roads” in *Britannia*, Vol. 29 (1998), pp. 1-16.

Zumthor, Paul and Catherine Peebles. 1994. “The Medieval Travel Narrative” in *New Literary History*, Vol. 25, No. 4, 25th Anniversary Issue (Part 2) (Autumn, 1994), pp. 809-824.

McGhee, Robert. 1984. “Contact between Native North Americans and the Medieval Norse: A Review of the Evidence” in *American Antiquity*, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Jan., 1984), pp. 4-26.

Clanchy, M.T. 1982. "Looking Back from the Invention of Printing" in *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress*, Vol. 39, No. 3 (SUMMER 1982), pp. 168-183

McElroy, John Harmon. 1978. "The Integrity of Irving's Columbus" in *American Literature*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Mar., 1978), pp. 1-16.

Wheeler, Valerie. 1986. "Travelers' Tales: Observations on the Travel Book and Ethnography" in *Anthropological Quarterly*, Vol. 59, No. 2, Ethnographic Realities/Authorial Ambiguities (Apr., 1986), pp. 52-63.

Roland, Alex. 1977. "Bushnell's Submarine: American Original or European Import?" in *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Apr., 1977), pp. 157-174.

van Muffling, Adrian. 1927. "Human Flight throughout the Ages" in *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 131, Aviation (May, 1927), pp. 1-6.

Amundsen, Roald. 1912. "Amundsen's Expedition to the South Pole" in *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, Vol. 44, No. 11 (1912), pp. 822-838.

McLaughlin, Steven A. and H. Newton Malony. 1984. "Near-Death Experiences and Religion: A Further Investigation" in *Journal of Religion and Health*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Summer, 1984), pp. 149-159.

Koman, Rita G. 1994. "Man on the Moon: The U.S. Space Program as a Cold War Maneuver" in *Organization of American Historians (OAH) Magazine of History*, Vol. 8, No. 2, Rethinking the Cold War (Winter, 1994), pp. 42-50.

Stone, Richard. 2012. "A New Dawn for China's Space Scientists" in *Science, New Series*, Vol. 336, No. 6089 (29 June 2012), pp. 1630-1635, 1637.

Fong, Kevin. 2004. "The Next Small Step" in *BMJ: British Medical Journal*, Vol. 329, No. 7480 (Dec. 18 - 25, 2004), pp. 1441-1444.