San Diego State University History Department  
Spring 2019 Topical Courses

History 400: The Global History of Everyday Objects: How Material Things Shaped Human History  
Professor Ranin Kazemi  
History 400 is the gateway course for the history major at San Diego State University. Structured principally as a seminar, this course is designed to introduce students to historical methods, theory, and writing through a close examination of one topic. The case study for this section of History 400 is the history of seemingly inconsequential material objects such as food, clothes, drugs, household items, work tools, fuel, luxury goods, and so on. We will use these commodities as entry points to discuss the history and historiography of economic, social, and political change across the world in the modern period.

History 400: Genocide in Comparative Perspective  
Professor Susanne Hillman  
History 400 is the gateway course for the history major at San Diego State University. Structured principally as a seminar, this course is designed to introduce majors to historical methods, theory, and writing. To provide further insights to these essentials of the historian’s craft, all sections of History 400 include a “case study” method by focusing on one or more specialized historical fields.

The topic of this section of History 400 is genocide in comparative perspective. We will begin with an overview of genocide from antiquity to the present, but our main focus will be on the twentieth century. Drawing predominantly on the Armenian and Rwandan genocide and the Holocaust, we explore basic concepts including ethnic cleansing, cultural genocide, and gendercide and assess the limits of the legal definition of genocide. To deepen our understanding of the phenomenon and its historiography, we also discuss “minor,” hidden, and forgotten genocides in their specific historical contexts and explore the topic of justice and restoration.

Readings likely include:
Christian Gerlach, Extremely Violent Societies  
Norman Naimark, Genocide: A World History  
Dan Stone, ed., The Historiography of Genocide

Hist 442: People from Our Past  
Professor David Cline  
People from Our Past: Picture the Revolution: A Study of Civil Rights, Black Power, and Revolution Through the Lens of the Graphic Novel. This course will draw on a recent trove of graphic novels concerning key figures in American and world social justice movements, as well as variety of other contextualizing texts.
History 450: Senior Seminar on History, Memory and Violence  
Professor Angel David Nieves  
This is the capstone course for the major in history at San Diego State University, preparing its students to author 20-page scholarly research papers based on original research by using primary and secondary source materials. These papers will seek to answer significant scholarly research questions as to how people from a particular time period, region, and culture responded to, explained, described, survived, made use of, remembered, and/or drew meaning from acts of racial hatred, genocide, civil war, forced migration, separation, and/or segregation – acts that, in turn, have resulted from varying forms of discrimination, institutional racism, and violence by the state, or other forces outside their particular communities. Individual, community-based, and organizational responses to forms of violence will be the focus of this research course.

History 581: Mestizo Metropolis  
Professor Angel David Nieves  
This course will consider the many ways that Latinx and African-descended peoples have impacted their urban environments. The course will examine primarily the ways in which these communities have made a place and space – i.e. a home-space – for themselves, while also confronting the many challenges of urban life in the U.S. Cities in question include Chicago, Houston, New York, Los Angeles, Miami, and San Diego. The course considers how ethnic communities establish and maintain distinctive social and cultural identities in the American metropolis. Through film, literature, art, architecture and social media we will examine the varying forms of cultural expression and representation of these individual communities.

History 620: Gender and Monarchy  
Professor Walter Penrose  
In this course, we will discuss the relationship between gender roles and representations of royalty in the broader context of ancient monarchies and their later reception in the Renaissance. We begin with an extended study of ancient Persian monarchy and its dynastic propaganda. From there, we will examine the history of Hellenistic and Roman monarchs. Finally, we will explore the reception of several ancient monarchs and their place in the propaganda of absolute royalty in the Renaissance. Keen attention will be paid to the role played by women in dynastic politics and propaganda. The course will include analyses of key historical figures such as Alexander the Great, Artemisia II, Catherine de’ Medici, and others. Readings will include both primary and secondary sources, with a focus on the historiography of monarchy.
History 650: Hotspots in Modern Chinese History  
Professor Kate Edgerton-Tarpley

History 650 engages graduate students in an intense inquiry into seminal themes and issues in nineteenth and twentieth-century Chinese History. Focal points include scholarly critiques of the China field; China-centered versus World History explanations of the “fall” of imperial China; multiple perspectives on the construction of Chinese national identity; debates over the origins and impact of the Chinese Communist Revolution; theories of causation concerning the Mao-era Great Leap Famine and Cultural Revolution; new paradigms on gender in twentieth-century China; and recent scholarship on the impact of China’s rise in the twenty-first century world.

In addition to introducing M.A. students interested in Asia to the questions and approaches that have generated the most interest and controversy in the modern China field during recent years, H650 also introduces theories, methodologies, and questions that can be applied to any field of history. In the words of Sinologist Paul Cohen, it aims to help graduate students and future teachers embrace historiography in general by “discovering history in China.”

*PLEASE NOTE: Graduate students without any background in Chinese or Asian history are more than welcome in H650. The course begins with a “teaching ourselves modern Chinese history” activity in which the class reads a thoughtful textbook overview of modern Chinese history, and key themes are cemented by having each student “teach” a particular chapter of that text to the rest of the class. The course is designed not only for History M.A. students who hope to take their exams in Chinese history or write their thesis on a China-related topic, but also for M.A. students who want more practice in reading and writing historiographically (each unit of the course is framed around an important historiographical debate in the China field), and for current or future teachers interested in integrating China into their World History courses more effectively.

Hist 680: Public History: Theories, Methods, and Practice  
Professor David Cline

Public History: Theories, Methods, and Practice is an introduction to the methodology, theory, and practice of the field of public history, with a community-based, service learning component working in public history venues throughout San Diego. This course provides an excellent "tool box" of skills for all historians, regardless of whether a future career will be in the public history sector. For those interested in museums, archives, documentaries, historic sites, historical fiction, public humanities, digital history or humanities, etc., this course is essential!