

BENTLEY HISTORY DEPARTMENT

List of Courses for Fall 2026

HI 200: The Making of Our Contemporary World

Section 01, Wednesday 6:30 PM – 9:10 PM | INSTRUCTOR: David Albanese

Section 02, Online Asynchronous | INSTRUCTOR: Leonid Trofimov

Section 03, Online Asynchronous | INSTRUCTOR: Leonid Trofimov

This course is designed to provide a broad conceptual grasp of the modern world by examining the major developments and events of the past century. Two world wars, a cold war, decolonization and ethnic conflicts have made the 20th century one of the most tumultuous in world history. The growth of the global economy has produced fundamental changes in lifestyles and in the types of issues that confront us. Rapid urbanization, the changing roles of women, the communications revolution and the spread of consumer societies have created conditions unknown to earlier generations. But not all cultures have created conditions unknown to earlier generations. Not all have benefited equally, and this has created tensions between the "haves" and "have nots." The world's different societies share the globe uneasily but know they must coexist. The challenge is to make that happen.

HI 279: Modern South Asia (Honors)

Section 01-H, Monday & Thursday 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Angma Jhala

This course provides a general overview of Modern South Asian history for students with no prior background in the study of the subcontinent or its history. After a brief introduction to ancient and pre-modern India, the course will address the rise and decline of the Mughal empire; the advent of British colonial rule and subsequent cultural and social change under the British Raj; race, gender and caste during the colonial period; the emergence of nationalism and the freedom struggle, with particular emphasis on Gandhi; Independence, Partition and decolonization; the colonial and postcolonial economic history of the region; and popular perceptions of South Asia by western and diasporic communities. It will engage with the larger processes of social change in South Asia by focusing on the interrelated themes of politics, economics, religion, race and gender.

HI 280: The Caribbean: Past, Present, Future

Section 01, Tuesday & Friday 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Cyrus Veaser

This course will build an understanding of the insular Caribbean using traditional historical sources as well as fiction, film, and the Internet. The focus will be on the

societies of the Greater Antilles-Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and Jamaica-although the smaller islands will also be considered. About two-thirds of the semester will highlight historical events that have shaped the modern Caribbean-slavery, the plantation system, the transition to free labor, independence movements and relations with the United States, to name a few. The last month of the course will examine current trends, including democratization, the growth of tourism, free trade zones, drug trafficking, and migration, as well as attempts at regional integration. Those discussions will help us forecast what the future of a small, poor, underdeveloped region like the Caribbean might be.

HI 304: History of Espionage

Section 01, Monday 6:30 PM – 9:10 PM | INSTRUCTOR: David Albanese

This course surveys the world of espionage from ancient times to the present. Students will study historically important spies, spymasters and organizations and their methods and motivations. In the final analysis students will attempt to understand the role espionage has played in shaping international relations, the modern state, military operations and more recently, the corporate world. To that end, the course will attempt to understand the kinds of motivations for spying, the evolution of and professionalization of espionage organizations, how the spy is regarded in society at large. Additional themes to be explored include the differences between the realities of espionage and how it is portrayed in fiction and film, and ethical questions surrounding both corporate and state espionage.

HI 306: War and Society

Section 01, Monday & Wednesday 5:00 PM – 6:20 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Steve Corvi

War has had a decisive impact on past civilizations and is a preoccupation in our own. This course explores a community's hopes, pretenses and fears; its social structure and level of technology; and its sense of honor and capacity for sacrifice. The course examines the place and practice of war in five different settings; the medieval West, 17th-century England and the English Civil war, 18th-century France and the French revolutionary army, Western Europe and World War I, and America in the nuclear age. A variety of books, films and other materials are used to present a vivid and thoughtful account of each culture and its involvements with war.

HI 317: South Asian Religions

Section 01, Monday & Thursday 12:30 PM – 1:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Angma Jhala

South Asia has a rich cultural legacy, which has spread around the world. Not only did it birth several world religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism, but it is also home to ancient communities of Muslims, Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians. In an interdisciplinary manner, students will engage with a broad history of the region through examining the origins, cultural practices and political influences of different religious

traditions. Students will examine the development of Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism in the time of antiquity, the rise of a unique Indo-Islamic culture during the medieval period, the influence of British colonialism on indigenous religious practice and law, the emergence of religiously oriented nationalism in South Asia during the 20th century and the practice of religion by diasporic South Asian communities today. The emphasis will be placed on reading a wide variety of sources at the crossroads between history, literature and scripture.

HI 323: The Medieval West

Section 01, Tuesday & Friday 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Carolyn Corretti

Section 02, Monday & Wednesday 3:30 PM – 4:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Steve Corvi

This course covers approximately 1,000 years of Western history, from the decline of the Roman Empire to the beginnings of the Italian Renaissance. It includes topics such as early Christianity, Germanic invasions, Byzantine and Islamic cultural influences, Carolingians, feudalism and manorialism, Vikings, church-state controversies, monasticism, Romanesque and Gothic architecture, Crusades, growth of towns and universities, Scholasticism, the Black Death, and everyday life.

HI 334: The Soviet Union and After

Section 01, Wednesday 11:00 AM – 1:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Leonid Trofimov

Section 02, Tuesday 6:30 PM – 9:10 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Leonid Trofimov

This course introduces the main currents of Soviet and Russian history, from the fall of the Russian Empire and Bolshevik Revolution to the present. Treats social and cultural factors and their interrelation with politics, Stalinism, World War II, growth and expansion of the Soviet bloc, and the post-Stalin era. It also discusses the breakup of the Soviet Union and the development of Russia, Ukraine, and other successor states.

HI 343: Modern United States History (1920-present) (Honors)

Section 01, Monday & Wednesday 3:30 PM – 4:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Dylan Gottlieb

This course provides an overview of U.S. history from the aftermath of World War I to the present. As we move through the past century, we will address some of the most dramatic developments in American history: massive internal migrations; the Great Depression; World War II; the Cold War and McCarthyism; a range of movements for civil, environmental, labor, and social rights; the Vietnam War and several other global military interventions; deindustrialization; revolutions in sex, identity, and gender; the rise of conservatism; surging economic and social inequality; the War on Terror; and the uneven emergence of postindustrial society. Individually, these are fascinating stories. Taken together, they help us make sense of how the U.S. transformed itself into the nation we know today.

HI 344: Constitutional History of the United States

Section 01, Tuesday & Friday 9:30 AM – 10:50 AM | INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Alpert
Section 02, Tuesday & Friday 12:30 PM – 1:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Alpert

This course focuses on America at the time of the break with England. It looks at constitutional documents their sources and their inclusions. It also includes the development of constitutional aspects of order in the United States as the country grew from an agrarian and simple commercial republic to an urban and industrialized world power, and from a homogeneous to a widely diversified people.

HI 351: The American Religious Experience

Section 01, Monday & Wednesday 9:30 AM – 10:50 AM | INSTRUCTOR: Adam Reynolds

This course explores the role of religion in American life from the colonial settlements of the early 17th century to the present.

HI 356: The United States: From Nation to Empire (1865-1920)

Section 01, Monday & Thursday 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Cliff Putney
Section 02, Monday & Thursday 2:00 PM – 3:20 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Cliff Putney

This course focuses on the history of the United States in the "Gilded Age" and "Progressive Era" periods. It begins with an overview of Reconstruction in the South and ends with an account of World War I. Along the way, topics for discussion include immigration, urbanization, business, art, religion, literature, technology, organized labor, machine politics, women's suffrage, the Populist movement, the status of African-Americans, the displacement of Native Americans in the West, range wars in the West, and the Spanish-American War.

HI 357: America and Its Arts

Section 01, Thursday 6:30 PM – 9:10 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Charlie Riggs

An introduction to the arts of America (painting, sculpture, decorative arts, architecture, photography, prints and print advertising) as they relate to the unfolding of American history from the time of the American Revolution to the present.

HI 360: American Urban History

Section 01, Monday & Wednesday 9:30 AM – 10:50 AM | INSTRUCTOR: Dylan Gottlieb

By 1920, the number of Americans living in metropolitan areas surpassed the number in rural areas for the first time. In the century that followed, the metropolitan experience

influenced every facet of life in the U.S. And each transformation in politics, culture, labor, and economy in turn remade America's cities and suburbs. This class will follow the movement of people, capital, and ideas across the metropolitan landscape during the twentieth century: from the influx of immigrants and African-Americans to northern cities, to the flight of predominantly-white residents to the suburbs, to the exodus to the Sunbelt, to the return of middle-class knowledge workers and immigrants to downtowns over the past four decades. And we will learn how various actors and institutions—from the federal government, real estate developers, to individual homeowners—shaped the fate of the places we live.

HI 362: Ten Ideas that Shook the World

Section 01, Tuesday & Friday 12:30 PM – 1:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Carolyn Corretti

Ideas have power in the world. This course explores the influence of ideas on events of the 20th and 21st centuries. Focusing primarily on European ideas and thinkers, such as Darwin, Marx and Freud, nationalism, socialism, evolution, it makes connections between political and social movements and the ideas that inspired or justified them. The ideas may be old, but their effects continue.

HI 363: Ancient Mediterranean Civilizations

Section 01, Tuesday & Friday 8:00 AM – 9:20 AM | INSTRUCTOR: Patrick Killeen
Section 02, Tuesday & Friday 9:30 AM – 10:50 AM | INSTRUCTOR: Patrick Killeen

This course will serve as an introduction to classical history, focusing on the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Greece, and Rome and their trading partners. These civilizations have long held a special place in the imagination of people across the world—in this course, students will encounter these civilizations through primary sources and writings from and on these periods. Additionally, students will watch popular films about the different civilizations. Through class discussions, students will learn more about these civilizations, compare these insights to these contemporary representations, be able to discuss the ongoing relevance and allure of these past civilizations in our world today, and develop their skills in historical analysis and writing.

HI 374: History of Medicine

Section 01, Tuesday & Thursday 3:30 PM – 4:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Michael Ortiz-Castro

Section 02, Online Asynchronous | INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Alpert

Section 03, Online Asynchronous | INSTRUCTOR: Jennifer Alpert

In this course, we examine themes of current interest in the history of medicine through historical lenses. Topics to be covered may vary and currently include 1. Disease and

imperialism, 2. The management of epidemics, 3. The epidemiological transition, and 4. Personal health management.

HI 377: Citizenship: An American Drama

Section 01, Tuesday & Thursday 5:00 PM – 6:20 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Michael Ortiz-Castro

Legally speaking, citizenship refers to a set of rights and privileges that come along with membership in a political community. However, cultural & social attitudes about citizenship and equality can reflect but also contradict the legal realities of inclusion—and the history of the United States has been shaped by these reinforcing and at times contradictory impulses for inclusion and exclusion. In this course, we will investigate the broad history of citizenship, focusing on the complex relationship between different views of the concept and bring to light the fundamental questions at the heart of these debates: who counts as American? What exactly are the rights of the American? We will focus on citizenship across U.S. history, from the era of the early republic to the late 20th century Civil Rights movement. We will place particular emphasis on the relationship between citizenship and sovereignty—or, better put, ideas of national right and rule—as well as on what citizenship means.

HI 381: The Civil War

Section 01, Tuesday & Thursday 3:30 PM – 4:50 PM | INSTRUCTOR: Charlie Riggs

The Civil War was arguably the most cataclysmic event in American history. This course explores reasons for the war, the war itself, and the consequences of the war.