

Modern World History  
Course Goals (2016)

1. To introduce students to the major historical developments that have given rise to our complex and intertwined global world by tracing the shifting patterns of interactions and exchanges among peoples, regions, states and empires from roughly 1300 to the present. To simultaneously address the distinct cultural traditions and experiences that shape and reshape these processes of contact, conquest, and interaction. Our world today is both intertwined and diverse and the historical patterns that “made” it continue to matter in the global negotiations of contemporary politics, whether over global economic development, environmental or human rights crises, or geopolitical tensions.
2. To communicate mostly to non history majors the value of historical methodologies, knowledge, and specific attention to time and place in thinking about events—whether past or present. To teach the value of cross-cultural and political comparisons—at the same moment in time and also over time.
3. To help students learn to read carefully and critically; teach them to distinguish between primary and secondary materials as well as use documentaries, videos, and novels as historical sources. In this way, help students learn to assemble evidence from a diverse set of source materials to make an informed and persuasive argument. Encourage mastery of diverse historical materials through themes and interpretations so students are not overwhelmed by facts and information.
4. To help students to learn to write cogent, clear, and complex prose.
5. To develop a critical understanding of the library and the Internet as necessarily complementary sources for reliable facts, figures, and information.