



GL 425: Senior Global Seminar
Catalogue of Topics 2019 - 2020

Fall 2019

M2: The Middle East

Marlaina Leppert-Wahl, M 6–9 pm

This particular course examines the Middle East. Students will be introduced to the Jews, Arabs, Kurds, and Persians of this region. They will learn about the religious and cultural traditions of these peoples and the significant political and social issues of the Middle East. Attention will be given to US involvement in the region, the impact of Middle Eastern issues on Americans, and American reactions in the post-9/11 world.

M3: The Global Cold War

Keith Orajel, W 6–9 pm

In the traditional viewpoint, the Cold War was an epic superpower showdown, a great “twilight struggle” (as JFK put it) that pitted the United States against the Soviet Union. In recent years, however, scholars have greatly complicated this understanding of the Cold War, giving due attention to historical actors who participated in this conflict yet operated outside of the superpower binary. Alongside traditional Cold War icons like Harry Truman, John F. Kennedy, Ronald Reagan, Nikita Khrushchev and Mikhail Gorbachev, this course will examine national leaders like Egypt’s Gamal Abdel Nasser, North Vietnam’s Ho Chi Minh, Ghana’s Kwame Nkrumah, Cuba’s Fidel Castro, and Western Germany’s Willy Brandt. These were individuals who navigated the Cold War’s treacherous terrain, for better or worse, without letting the contest totally define their politics. This course will also approach the study of the Cold War from both “top down” and “bottom up” perspectives, examining the dialectical relationship between world leaders and policymakers on one end of the spectrum, and individuals, social groups, and communities who did not control the levers of power but still attempted to influence geopolitical events in ways large and small.

M4: Global Olympics and International Competition

Terry Rupert, TR 9:40–11:10

This course examines the historical backgrounds and philosophies of both the ancient and modern Olympic Games and its international competition. Its intent is for one to develop an understanding and appreciation of selected political world events as they were influenced by international sport competition. The interconnectedness of the global community with sport will also be examined.

M5: Witchcraft

Peggy Hill, MWF 11:30–12:30

A belief in human assistants to an evil spirit encapsulates one of the great fears of nearly every civilization throughout world history. We are exhorted in the Bible “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (Exodus 22:18) In Europe, “witchcraft” became prominent in the Middle Ages and lasted through the Early Modern period. In Massachusetts, the witch trials of Salem in the 17th century form part of cultural traditions and national consciousness. In

Africa, belief in witchcraft continues to grow, even as education levels increase, and each year thousands of people – especially women – die as accused witches.

What, exactly, is a witch? For the purposes of this course, we will define a “witch” in its historical terminology -- as one who is perceived to practice evil magic -- while recognizing that the term can also be used in a modern sense to reference those who practice Wicca and good or benign magic. We will attempt to understand a “witch” within the contexts of religion, politics, and society in general. We will investigate both primary and secondary sources in public documents, literature, music, and art in a study of the attributes, causes, contexts, and outcomes of a belief in the “black arts” of witchcraft.

GL 425H: Capitalism and Late Modernity (limited to honors students only)
Evan Farr, W 6–9 pm
Description TBA

Spring 2020

M2: The Middle East

Marlaina Leppert-Wahl, M 6–9 pm

This particular course examines the Middle East. Students will be introduced to the Jews, Arabs, Kurds, and Persians of this region. They will learn about the religious and cultural traditions of these peoples and the significant political and social issues of the Middle East. Attention will be given to US involvement in the region, the impact of Middle Eastern issues on Americans, and American reactions in the post-9/11 world.

M4: Democracy

Evan Farr, W 6–9 pm

Our class will explore global issues through the lens of the related concepts of democracy and dissent. Over the course of the term, we will explore the ways in which democracy both demands and repels dissent. Readings will focus on both the theory and practice of democracy and dissent, with earlier reading focusing on abstract philosophy and later readings focusing on both political and artistic applications in Latin America, the Middle East, and elsewhere.

In addition to regular papers and a substantial final testimonial/reflection, you will be asked to independently join and/or track a dissenting movement. This might be a group you are already affiliated with, but it can also be a movement you are interested in learning more about. This project can largely be completed through social media, but you will be asked to physically attend at least *one* event that relates to the movement you select. This could be a rally, a march, a lecture, a film showing, a public forum, or any other range of events.

M5: Israel & Palestine

Michael Snarr, TR 11:20–12:50

This section of GL425 will focus on the conflict between Israel and Palestine. This complex conflict revolves around land and religion and has local, regional, and international implications. Many scholars and policymakers believe the Israeli–Palestinian conflict is at the heart of the contemporary struggles in the Middle East.

M6: Travel Class, Spain & Portugal (students enrolled on trip only)

Jim Fitzsimmons, Angela Mitchell, T 6–9 pm

The course will explore the culture and history of both Spain & Portugal through class lectures, student-led class discussions, student presentations, and the trip field experience to the two countries during Spring Break. Through the trip field experience and the class work, students learn about the following global issues: Catalonia's proposed independence and its significance to Spain and the EU; Spain & Portugal's response to the current EU refugee crisis; and Impact of Brexit on the tourism economies of Spain & Portugal. This unique experience will immerse the students in the two cultures for 8 days allowing them the opportunity gain a better understanding of Spain and Portugal's role in world history.

M7: Travel Class, London & Paris (students enrolled on trip only)

Marta Wilkinson

This is the companion course for those traveling to London & Paris during spring break. The goal of this course is to prepare you for some of the ins-and-outs of international travel and also inform you about the sights and locales to be visited. Our weekly schedule will isolate each of the locations and sites on the itinerary. You will learn some of the history of each city, and its most significant historical moments and the cultural contributions of each country with excerpts of its most important literary works as well as films that memorialize significant contributions to western culture. Students will choose independent readings selected to bridge the gap between some of the more ancient history of each place, the global transition that came of two world wars, and be asked to reflect on the relationship between those events and our world today.

M8: Travel Class, Greece (students enrolled on trip only)

Kendra Cipollini

Description TBA