Convocation 2017/2018

“This year’s Convocation asks each member of our community to question ourselves, our society, our institutions and our leaders. What is the essence of liberty, if not the freedom of everyone—from the most privileged to the most vulnerable—to live as decent human beings, in America?”

Upcoming Convocation events include: “Equality, Democracy, and Higher Education” (11/1); “First Light: Film Screening and Interactive Discussion” (11/2); “The 2nd Annual W.E.B. DuBois Lecture on Race and Democracy” (11/6); “Does/Has Participatory Democracy (Ever) Existed?” (11/30)

Please go to the usm.maine.edu/convocation site for details and upcoming programs.

German Election 2017 Event.

On October 3rd in the UER the Dept sponsored the event “The 2017 German Election”. Moderated by Political Science Professor Francesca Vassallo, the program drew thousands of attendees (count provided by the Trump Administration). Adrian Kendall, Esq. Honorory Consul of Germany shared slides of political ads in Germany and gave an analysis of the election results. Political Science Professor Scott Erb from Umaine Farmington lectured on trends in populism in Germany and Europe.

On October 19th, Dr. Eric L. Goldstein, Associate Professor in the Department of History and Institute for Jewish Studies at Emory University and author of The Price of Whiteness: Jews, Race, and American Identity (Princeton, 2006) lectured on the topic of Jewish identity in the United States from the historical to the present. The lecture looked at Jewish identity from the beginnings of mass migration to the US and how Jews have both identified as white to assimilate to American culture and how they also have maintained a separate cultural identity from the white majority. Special thanks go out to Professor of History Abraham Peck for helping to bring Professor Goldstein to USM and for his opening remarks at the lecture.

This year’s conference: May 16th-18th, 2018

The Maine Model United Nations Program hosts an annual conference where college and high school students participate in a simulation of United Nations procedures and enables students to practice organization, debate, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills. The conference is fun, challenging, and provides a hands-on experience in the workings of world diplomacy while researching and analyzing current events.

History Courses Offered in Portland Spring 2018

HTY 142 African American History From 1865, TR 11:45-1:00, Leroy Rowe
HTY 172 Modern East Asia, MW 8:45-10:00, Jie Zhao
HTY 200 Reference, Research, and Report Writing, MW 10:15-11:30, Jie Zhao
HTY 330 Germany: Bismarck to Hitler, TR 11:45-1:00, Abe Peck
HTY 339 European Women’s History, T 4:10-6:40, Lacey Sparks
HTY 346 The Civil Rights Movement, W 5:35-8:05, Leroy Rowe
HTY 394 Topic: Black Women in History and Culture, TH 4:10-6:40, Leroy Rowe
HTY 394 Topic: Beyond the Clash of Civ. : The Am. Encounter Between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, TR 1:15-2:30, Abe Peck
HTY 394 Topic: The Vietnam War, TR 2:45-4:00, Chris Beam
HTY 400 Topic: Cultures of War, MW 1:15-2:30, Jie Zhao

History Courses Offered in Gorham Spring 2018

HTY 102 Western Civ II, TR 9:30-10:45, Lacey Sparks
HTY 123 United States History Since 1900, MW 9:30-10:45, Ashley Towle
HTY 200 Reference, Research, and Report Writing, M 4:10-6:40, Lacey Sparks
HTY 375 History of American Popular Culture, MW 2:00-3:15, Libby Bischof
HTY 394 Topic: Race and Slavery in the Roman Empire, MW 11:00-12:15, Gary Johnson

History Courses Offered Online Spring 2018

HTY 101 Western Civilization I, Gary Johnson
HTY 102 Western Civilization II, Seth Rogoff
HTY 182 Latin America I, John Paton
HTY 303 History of Ancient Near East and Greece, Gary Johnson
HTY 394 Topic: Global History in Age of World Wars: 1914-1945, Seth Rogoff

History Internship Spring 2018

HTY 300, Libby Bischof
Political Science Courses Offered in Portland Spring 2018

POS 101 Intro to American Government, T 4:10-6:40, Ronald Schmidt
POS 101 Intro to American Government, TR 1:15-2:30, Manuel Avalos
POS 104 Intro to International Relations, MW 2:45-4:00, Mahmud Faksh
POS 120 Government and Politics of Maine, M 4:10-6:40, Robert Klotz
POS 203 Intro to Political Science Research, MW 10:15-11:30, Robert Klotz
POS 290 Intro to Political Theory, TR 2:45-4:00, Ronald Schmidt
POS 374 U.S. Foreign Policy, TR 1:15-2:30, Tim Ruback
POS 380 Urban Fortunes and City Politics of Portland, TR 8:45-10:00, Manuel Avalos
POS 380/HTY394 Islam: Religion, Society, and Politics, MW 11:45-1:00, Mahmud Faksh
POS 380 Topics: Civil Rights Movement, W 5:35-8:05, Leroy Rowe
POS 390 Ancient and Medieval Political Theory, TR 11:45-1:00, Ron Schmidt
POS 399 Latino Politics, TR 10:15-11:30, Manuel Avalos
POS 399 1919: A Year in the Life, MW 11:45-1:00, Ron Schmidt
POS 399 Social Media and Revolutions, TR 10:15-11:30, Francesca Vassallo
POS 405 European Union, T 4:10-6:40, Francesca Vassallo

Political Science Courses Offered in Gorham Spring 2018

POS 104 Intro to International Relations, MW 11:00-12:15, Tim Ruback
POS 445 MeMUNC Conference Planners, W 4:10-6:40, Tim Ruback

Political Science Courses Offered Online Spring 2018

POS 104 Intro to International Relations, Steven Shirley
POS 299 Civic Engagement and Political Science, Vanessa Perez
POS 310 Internet and Politics, Robert Klotz

Political Science Internship Spring 2018

POS 475 Political Science Internship, T 4:10-6:40, James Messerschmidt
RCE 199 Introduction to Race and Ethnic Studies  Lance Gibbs
This course introduces students to the academic field of Race & Ethnic Studies, raising questions about the ways that race and racism shape our experiences and world across a range of time and places. Questions to be explored include: When and how did the concept of race arise? How does race connect with other forms of difference such as class, gender and sexuality? How do our personal experiences with racial/ethnic identity shape our sense of self and the structure of our society? We will be reading a variety of academic and cultural texts which illustrate the interdisciplinarity of the work undertaken in Race & Ethnic Studies. We will explore these issues through readings, discussions, lectures, films, short stories, and music.

POS 380 Urban Fortunes and City Politics of Portland  Manuel Avalos
This course focuses on the politics of metropolitan areas (with an emphasis on Portland) and analyzes a variety of local policy issues, such as rent control, waterfront redevelopment, the homeless, diversity of new immigrant populations, and the city master plan.

POS 380 Islam: Religion, Society, and Politics  Mahmoud Faksh
This is a survey course with an interdisciplinary epistemology encompassing a wide range of academic fields and theoretical discourse. It focuses on Islam as a religion, a social order, a legal corpus, and a political system. Today the global reach of Islam as a universal religion covers 57 Muslim-majority countries with more than 1.1 billion people from Morocco in the Maghreb to the Sultanate of Brunei, with the Arab-Muslim world as its heartland.

POS 380/HTY Civil Rights Movement  Leroy Rowe
This course examines the creation of legalized discrimination in the United States and the process used by selected individuals and organizations to dismantle segregation. By illuminating the fight for social justice, economic opportunities, and educational advances, the course analyzes how the dynamics of the Civil Rights Movement changed the face of America. Cr 3.

POS 399 Latino Politics  Manuel Avalos
This course examines Latino political history and the scope of Latino political participation in the United States. According to the US Census there are over 55 million Latinos in the U.S., or 17.3% of the national population. Latinos are the largest minority in the U.S., and are expected to be the majority of the population in some states such as California by 2050. The purpose of the course is to learn both the history and scope of Latino political participation in the United States, but it will also probe deeper theoretical questions of ethnicity.

POS 399 1919: A Year in the Life  Ronald Schmidt
In this course, we will examine life in one particular calendar year. As a class, we will examine newspaper stories, legal cases, popular art, philosophy, political theory, literature, all original source material from the year in question. While politicians will be emphasized, a broad range of topics will be covered. The majority of the grade will rest upon a final research paper, providing an analysis of any topic linked to independent research on original materials from the year we will study. Our year this term is 1919. The “Great War” had displaced a broad number of certainties, and, as people struggled to make sense of the post-war world and to expand on their own sovereignty and power, the result was a year of personal, political, and even artistic revolutions. Students will need to complete reading assignments and attend all class sessions; student should also participate in discussion whenever possible. This course is designed to be a POS capstone course but is open to HTY students as well.

POS 399 Social Media and Revolutions  Francesca Vassallo
How do you learn how to run your own revolution? How do social media platforms free people from totalitarian regimes? This course merges political behavior, digital activism and social media studies into a learning opportunity about how countries and movements have used or resisted social media, when people employed them to fight for democracy and freedom. This class looks at theories of online political activism and comparative cases of social media use from different countries around the world: from the Arab Spring to the Umbrella Movement.

HTY 394 Race and Slavery in the Roman Empire  Gary Johnson
Contact gjohnson@maine.edu for description and syllabus.

HTY 394 Black Women in History and Culture  Leroy Rowe
Contact Leroy.rowe@maine.edu for description and syllabus.

HTY 394 Beyond the Clash of Civilizations: The American Encounter Between Christianity, Judaism, and Islam  Abraham Peck
The course will examine the state of religion in America today. Does the much-vaunted “Judeo-Christian” ethic present the moral compass of America in the 21st century? Or does that ethic need to reflect a new constellation of faith communities just waiting to become a part of the new religious America? The course will also discuss the historical relationship between Islam and its two sister religions, and seek to understand the historical experience of Muslims in America and how, in the past three decades, the third and youngest of the Abrahamic religious communities has sought to interact with Christianity and Judaism and, in that effort, to create a distinctly American expression of Islam.

HTY 394 Global History in the Age of World Wars: 1914-1945  Seth Rogoff
This course provides a survey of key military, political, social, and cultural developments in world history leading up to the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 and ending with the allied victory in 1945 and the beginnings of the Cold War. The course examines, among other topics, extremism in Russia, Germany and Japan, the Indian independence movement, westernization and reaction in the Middle East, the collapse of the Qing Dynasty in China, and European and American imperialism. Important social and political concepts like colonialism, nationalism, westernization, communism and fascism will be explored in their historical contexts.

HTY 400 Cultures of War  Jie Zhao
John Dower, in his book Cultures of War, compares the onset, prosecution, and the aftermath of World War II in the Pacific and the recent war in Iraq. He finds, despite the very different times and circumstances, common threads of what he calls “cultures of war”: pro-war rhetoric, “groupthink,” poor intelligence, short-term horizon, holy war, war of choice and more. This seminar uses the cultures of war concept as a point of departure to unravel the discourse on these issues and examine larger implications of war.