

SSNet Website Course Descriptions

Dept of History Courses

Instructors: Simon Werrett, Bruce Hevly

HIST 311 Science in Civilization: Antiquity to 1543.

Contact: History Undergraduate Advising Office

This survey lecture course typically takes place every year in the Fall Quarter, beginning the series of survey courses in the history of science offered by the History Department (see also HIST 312 and HIST 313). The course follows the development of natural knowledge in human cultures from ancient times to the end of the middle ages. We explore the different ways the Greeks, Romans, Chinese, Christians and Muslims sought to understand the Natural World, and how their beliefs helped shape the natural sciences in the middle ages, leading ultimately to modern science. The course examines theories and debates in astronomy, cosmology, medicine, natural history, and mathematics and the work of figures such as Plato, Aristotle, Galen, Ptolemy, Confucius, Ibn Sina, and Aquinas. Using a comparative approach, the course asks how the history of ancient science was related to its local social, religious, and political context, and how these contexts shaped, and were shaped by, different regional traditions of science.

Course Website: <http://faculty.washington.edu/werrett/hist311.html>

HIST 312 Science in Civilization: 1543 to c. 1900.

Contact: History Undergraduate Advising Office

This survey lecture course typically takes place every year in the Winter Quarter, continuing the series of survey courses in the history of science offered by the History Department (see also HIST 311 and HIST 313). This year the class will focus on three major topics in the history of modern European science, all subjects of interpretive contention, with emphasis on both command of a working narrative and the critical skills involved in reinterpreting it. Those periods are: the Scientific Revolution of the early modern period, the production of natural knowledge in the Enlightenment, and the definition, establishment and professionalization of science in the nineteenth century. We will deal with developments in the sciences of astronomy, mechanics, electricity and magnetism, geology and terrestrial science more generally, and natural history, including the creation and acceptance of Darwin's theories. Most attention will be paid to history of Britain, France, Germany, and the United States.

HIST 313/ ASTRON 313 Science in Civilization: Physics and Astrophysics Since 1850

Contact: History Undergraduate Advising Office

This course is taught in spring quarter every year, alternately by Woody Sullivan (astronomy, adjunct in history) and Bruce Hevly (history). While typically some attention is paid to the seventeenth and eighteenth-century

background (more fully covered in History 312), this course is meant to serve as an introduction to the main themes and problems in the history of physics and astrophysics from the late eighteenth century to the second half of the twentieth century. While topics vary, in general the course deals with the definition of 'physics' at the beginning of the nineteenth century and the comparative histories of the field's intellectual and institutional development in Germany, the Netherlands, France, Britain, and the United States. Introduction to histories of cosmology, stellar evolution and planetary theories, of electricity, magnetism, thermodynamics and mechanics, and to the emergence and assimilation of modern physics (atomic and nuclear physics, quantum theory and relativity) as well as topics in the history of geophysics.

Other History of Science Courses

We also offer annually HIST 390: Jr. colloquium in history of science, an introduction to historiography and research methods for undergraduates.

Bruce Hevly also teaches courses which do not take place every year, but are regularly offered:

HIST 215: The History of Nuclear Weapons

HIST 217: The Space Age

HIST 310: Science and Religion

HIST 315: Introduction to the History of Technology

HISTAA 316: History of American Science

Simon Werrett also teaches courses which do not take place every year, but are regularly offered:

HIST 219: Science and Art in European History

HIST 245: Exploration and Empire: Art, Science and Global Power, 1300-2000

HIST 388: Newton & Newtonianism

HIST 494: Science in Russia and the Soviet Union

For full History Department course listings, go to:
<http://www.washington.edu/students/crscat/hist.html>

The History Department also offers numerous graduate fields in the history of science and science studies. See:

<http://depts.washington.edu/history/studying/graduate/faculty/hevly2.html>
<http://depts.washington.edu/history/studying/graduate/faculty/werrett2.html>