OVERVIEW

This guide highlights six courses that are typically featured within undergraduate history programs, along with their corresponding lecture topics. Each lecture includes both primary and secondary sources that correspond to the topic, with discussion prompts that facilitate deeper engagement with the content. Where appropriate, we’ve included activities that encourage the use of the digital humanities tools found on the Wiley Digital Archives platform to better contextualize search results and visualize data.

The aim of this course guide is to demonstrate how newly digitized primary sources can be seamlessly integrated into course curriculum, whether on-site or virtual, and illustrate how digital archives can directly support critical learning objectives and outcomes.

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COURSE

INTRODUCTION TO THE ATLANTIC WORLD

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course will introduce students to the Atlantic World as a historical and historiographical concept. “The Atlantic World” is a term used to refer to the interactions between and among peoples living around the Atlantic Ocean in the early modern period. Colonial incursions by European imperial powers in the Americas and the rise of the transatlantic slave trade lay the groundwork for what historians call the Atlantic World. It comprised a series of encounters, incursions, connections, and exchanges between and among diverse groups of people. This course will focus specifically on networks that shaped the Atlantic World and the people, goods, and ideas that circulated within these networks.

Lecture 1: What is the Atlantic World?


• Read the Introduction and Chapter 1 (pages 3-35).


• Read pages 260-272. How does Falconer describe Native Americans in relation to ancient Europeans like the Gauls? What does he write about the customs and practices of his European contemporaries?

Discussion prompt: Does this primary source describe “the Atlantic World”? Why or why not?

Lecture 2: Reading Against the Grain for Indigenous Perspectives


• Read the notes on colonization on pages 1-5.

Discussion prompt: What does it mean to read a source against the grain? When you read this source against the grain, what do you find?
Lecture 3:
Gender & Power in the Atlantic World


**Discussion prompt:** How do the authors of the primary and secondary source readings for this week approach the issue of power? Do you think that the primary source makes a coherent argument? How does this compare to Barr’s argument and why?

Lecture 4:
The Transatlantic Slave Trade


- Read pages 3-24. You can read the first half of the pamphlet more closely and skim the second half.


- Read page 1 and pages 3-8 (skip page 2).

**Discussion prompt:** How do the perspectives on the slave trade presented in these documents compare with each other?

Lecture 5:
Religion & Interactions in the Atlantic World


- Read pages 8-25.

**Discussion prompt:** What role does religion play in this primary source? How did religion mediate Atlantic interactions and shape Atlantic networks?
COURSE

REVOLUTIONARY IDEAS IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Between 1500 and 1800, Europeans began changing the ways that they thought about medicine, mathematics, magic, natural history, and the cosmos. Taken together, these changes are often called “The Scientific Revolution.” The Scientific Revolution coincided with a period of colonial exploration and incursion by European powers into territories that were previously unknown to them. The Scientific Revolution and the changes in thinking that it heralded preceded a period sometimes called “the Age of Revolutions,” which began in the eighteenth century and radically re-shaped Europe’s political landscape. This course will examine these two kinds of revolutions – scientific and political - and the relationships between them in the early modern period. It aims to contextualize and explore how revolutionary ideas shaped early modern European society.
Lecture 1: Revolutionary Beginnings

- Read the introduction and the first part of chapter one until the heading marked “The Natural Machine.”

- Read “Prima Liber,” from page 9 to page 20.

Discussion prompt: Taken together, what can these sources tell us about how Europeans mythologized their cultural past? What was the foundation of these myths?

Lecture 2: Making Sense of the Body and the Cosmos


- Look closely at the images on page 4 and page 14.

Discussion prompt: In the primary source above, how does Vesalius present himself? His audience and contemporaries? His profession?

Lecture 3: Exploration, Danger & Disease


Discussion prompt: How does this remedy reflect the shifts in the means of knowledge production and circulation that helped to make revolutionary movements possible?
Lecture 4: Creating Change with Myths and Magic


• Read from pages 9-32.

Discussion prompt: Consider what Gonzalez Sachez writes about the importance of identity in revolutionary politics. In light of this, what conclusions can we draw about Myres’ thesis on the nature of mankind? Do you agree with Myres’ assessment? Why or why not?

Lecture 5: Eighteenth-Century Radicals


• Look closely at questions 4 and 14.

Discussion prompt: Think about your reading of Truillot’s work and consider: what is not said in this reply from Port Au Prince? How does the author of the primary source document present Haitians to his audience?
COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course covers a hundred years of African history, from 1870 to 1970. It will introduce students to the history and political organization of the African continent during this period. We will explore ideas and narratives about the past using a conceptual framework that highlights issues of gender and power, and pays particular attention to the distribution of labor and wealth. The course is organized thematically. Students will learn to read primary sources with and against the grain, construct reasoned arguments and support these arguments with textual evidence, and critically analyze source materials. No prior knowledge of African history is required to be successful in this course.
Lecture 1: Gender in Context


Discussion prompt: How does this newspaper article treat (or, as the authors of today’s secondary source readings might say, “construct”) gender in an African context? In a British context? Why do you think this is? Consider how a twenty-first century writer might retell the events recounted in this newspaper article from a decolonial or anti-colonial perspective.

Lecture 2: Colonialism & Resistance


Discussion prompt: Consider these two sources. One is a photographic source from before the British occupation of Egypt; the other, a colonial-era source about French-occupied places in West Africa. What can they tell us about “native” African women before and during colonial rule? What do you observe in the photograph? In the descriptive language used in the Cust report?

Lecture 3: Women’s Work


Discussion prompt: This document describes labor practices, but it also describes some rules that govern behavior in the Ikwo community (a subset of the Igbo ethnic group in Nigeria). How do these two issues – rules about labor and rules about conduct – intersect in this document? What might the author of this week’s secondary source reading comment about how labor practices and behavior are presented here?
Lecture 4:
Marriage & Power


  • Read pages 16-20.

Discussion prompt: What can this excerpt tell us about marriage and power in Uganda in the early to mid-20th century? How does this compare to what Stephens’ article discusses? What kinds of power dynamics are at play in each reading?

Lecture 5:
Comparative Perspectives on Culture


  • Read the first 2 pages of this document (the letter from William Fagg to the ambassador).

  • This document is 44 pages long, so you don’t have to read all of it. Read pages 1-12 and pages 42-44 closely. You can skim the rest, but make sure you get an idea of the authors’ main ideas and arguments.

Discussion prompt: Based on his letter, how do you think that William Butler Fagg saw Ethiopia? How does he describe Ethiopia in his letter to the ambassador? Compare this to how Ethiopia is depicted in the Ethiopia Today periodical published by the Ethiopian ministry of education. Why do these differences matter?
COURSE

SCIENCE AND EXPLORATION IN THE BRITISH EMPIRE

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course will provide students with a historical introduction to the feats of discovery, exploration, and scientific advancement that took place within the British empire between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries. Students will understand how what we today call science developed, from its beginnings in early modern natural philosophy and natural history to its nineteenth-century legacy of exploration (and often exploitation). We will challenge and interrogate ideas of scientific progress and study how knowledge was generated and disseminated in the British empire.

Lecture 1: Bacon’s “Empire of Knowledge”


Discussion prompt: How did Bacon’s view of knowledge production as hierarchical reflect or challenge the social norms of his day? Do you see this reflected in the primary source readings for today?

Lecture 2: Science as a Means of Control


- Read pages 14-16 entitled “Objects of the Association.” Spend at least 20 minutes looking through the rest of the report. What kinds of things are included in this report? What is left out? (The report is over 600 pages long, so I don't expect you to read it comprehensively, but I do expect you to choose one part and read it as carefully as you can. Be prepared to share your observations with a classmate.)

Discussion prompt: How does this primary source engage with historiography on the topic? Why do you think this is?

Lecture 3: Science & Religion


- Read the section entitled “An Irenicum: A Plea for Peace and Co-operation Between Science and Theology,” on pages 3-17.

Discussion prompt: How and why does Mullan reconcile his conceptions of science and theology?
Lecture 4: Making Maps, Making Meaning


- Read pages 7-18.


- Flip through this primary source, paying close attention to the maps on pages 11, 12, 25, 26, 33, and 37.

Use the map limiter tool on [app.wileydigitalarchives.com/wiley/explorer/map](http://app.wileydigitalarchives.com/wiley/explorer/map) to search for maps of India. What do you find? Why do you think this is?

**Discussion prompt:** Do you think that these primary sources, especially the maps in primary source #2, support Matthew Edney’s argument? Why or why not? How can we relate the pamphlet “Our Indian Empire” to the geographical project that Edney describes?

Lecture 5: Local Knowledge


This will give you important context for understanding this week’s primary source material.


**Discussion prompt:** In this correspondence, do you think that Edward Steere showed local knowledge of the Zanzibarian context he described? How was his writing informed by his role as a British subject?
COURSE

POSTCOLONIAL LATIN AMERICA

COURSE OVERVIEW:
This course will introduce students to the history of postcolonial Latin America (dating from the mid-nineteenth century). Students will come to understand the historical factors that shaped colonial powers there, and their ultimate dissolution. We will also explore the legacy of Latin American empires that pre-dated European incursion and the cultures that shaped South and Central America as we know them today, including material culture and social culture. Students will learn to think critically and carefully analyze both written and visual sources. No prior knowledge of Latin American history is required to be successful in this course.

Lecture 1: Imperial Legacies and Postcolonial Power


- Read the text on pages 1-9. Pay careful attention to the page marked “Argument.” Note that the imperial power described on this page might not be what you expect!

Discussion prompt: Do you agree with the author’s use of the term “vassalage” in this text? What kind of power dynamic does it describe?

Lecture 2: Perspectives on Trade & Transit


- Read the text on pages 22-32 (every other page is blank). Begin with the line that reads “I have given a succinct sketch of the history...”


- Look at pages 1-21 and read the text on these pages.

Discussion prompt: How and why do these primary sources provide differing accounts of the history of Panama and Colombia?

Lecture 3: Travelers’ Accounts


- Look at pages 1-30 (ending with the entry marked “December 30th.”).

Discussion prompt: What trends do you notice in this diary? How does it differ from the account(s) that Perez Mejia describes in her book?
Lecture 4:
Race and Gender in Latin America


*Look at pages 1-24.*

**Discussion prompt:** How are various groups of people – such as indigenous people, Chinese people, and Europeans – described in the text? Compare this account to the travelers’ accounts from last week. What change over time do you see?

Lecture 5:
The Long Aftermath of Colonialism


Using the map explorer tool on app.wileydigitalarchives.com, seek out images of “Spanish America.”

**Discussion prompt:** Where are/were the political borders of “Spanish America”? What about its cultural borders? Why do you think this?
COURSE OVERVIEW:
This course explores the social, economic and political history of Britain and its colonies during the long nineteenth century. During this time, Britain – and the world – experienced considerable change and industrialization. Queen Victoria, then a young German-speaking woman, ascended the throne and ruled for six decades. This course will pay particular attention to perspectives on empire, including decolonial perspectives. It will complicate notions of "Britishness" both within the United Kingdom and outside of it. Students will learn how to read and analyze both primary and secondary sources. We will also practice constructing – and defending – strong historical arguments.
Lecture 1: Perspectives on Empire


**Discussion prompt:** What changes or continuities in British imperialism do you notice in these primary sources? Why do they matter?

Lecture 2: A United Kingdom?


**Primary Source:** “Wales.” No Date. Sir Arthur Keith Collection. No Date. [http://WDAgo.com/s/51428511](http://WDAgo.com/s/51428511)

**Discussion prompt:** Are you surprised by the ways that Welsh people are described in this primary source? Why or why not?

Lecture 3: The Industrial Revolution


**Discussion prompt:** Based on your reading of the text and our class discussion so far, why do you think Garstang wrote this? Be prepared to explain your answer. How does this text compare to Kelly, Mokyr and Ó Gráda’s argument about the quality of life that British workers experienced during the Industrial Revolution?
Lecture 4:
Women and Men in the Age of Victoria


https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/51882. This will give you context for this week’s primary source material.


• Read pages 1-17.

Discussion prompt: What gendered language is used to describe Smith? What about Queen Victoria? What made this case “sensational”?

Lecture 5:
Victorian Identity and Views of the “Other”

Secondary Source: Kathryn Walchester, “‘Every article of my dress was a wonder to them’: Reflexivity in Nineteenth-Century Travel Accounts by British Women Travellers in Norway,” *Comparative Critical Studies* 9, no. 2 (2012): 151-165.


Discussion prompt: How does reflexivity feature in Walchester’s article? In Merivale’s letter? What about Milroy’s “despatch”? What strikes you about how Milroy writes about lepers? What about how Merivale writes about lepers?

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British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS)

*Years Covered:* 1830s-1970s

*Core:* Complete BAAS archive and connected collections from British Universities on the successful efforts of the British scientific community to transform science into a government-funded profession.

*Subjects:* Agricultural Science, Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Engineering, Industrial Design, Mathematics, Meteorology, Physics, Technology

New York Academy of Sciences (NYAS)

*Years Covered:* 1803-2013

*Core:* Files on the Committee on the Human Rights of Scientists, the 1946 conference on antibiotics, the 1984 conference on AIDS, the Survey of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, the Harbor Project.

*Subjects:* Botany, Chemistry, Climate Science, Ecology, Environmental Studies, Human Rights, Medical Research, Natural History, Natural Sciences, Public Health

Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI)

*Years Covered:* 1763-2016

*Core:* Two million unique pieces, including previously uncatalogued content, a 150,000-image library of ethnographic photographs taken by anthropologists around the world.

*Subjects:* Anthropology, Archaeology, Colonial History, Cultural Studies, Ethnic and Gender Studies, Geography, Area Studies

Royal College of Physicians (RCP)

*Years Covered:* 1205-1980

*Core:* Two million pages documenting seven centuries of medical history, medicine and culture, religion, and government, the establishment of public health systems, medical education and practice.

*Subjects:* Anatomy, History of Medicine and Mental Health, Medical Humanities, Medical Treatments, Military Medicine, Pharmacology, Public Health and Policy, Vaccinations

Royal Geographical Society (RGS with IBG)

*Years Covered:* 1478-1953

*Core:* 100K+ maps and charts complemented by manuscripts, field notes, correspondence, drawings, and chronicles from the great expeditions of the 19th and 20th centuries.

*Subjects:* Borders, Climate Change, Cultures & Identities, Colonial & De-Colonization, Geo and Spatial Humanities, Geopolitics, International Law, Trade and Relations, Resources, Land Use

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