This class analyzes the history of the United States from 1900 to the present through the lens of women’s experiences. In doing so, we will consider the integral roles of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and class and their intersection with gender in shaping the history of the United States. This includes looking at not only textual sources, but also music, paintings, movies, novels, and other forms of expression. This is your opportunity to engage with women’s history in comprehensive and interactive ways. Assessment will consist of weekly reading responses and a final paper.
In this class we will explore the history of the Caribbean, Central and South America beginning with the independence era (19th Century) until today. Some of the key concepts through which we will explore Latin American modern history will be revolution, race, gender, state, political culture, and popular culture. Some of the central questions we will try to tackle are: How much influence did colonial structures play in the making of Latin American modern states? What large social changes were introduced by independence? Under what circumstances was the idea of “Latin America” shaped? How did Latin American societies confront the challenges of modernity? What has been the role of popular culture in shaping Latin American identities? In order to enrich our approaches to these and other questions we will analyze books, visual art, music, films and other kinds of texts produced along the Latin American 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. In addition to weekly quizzes related to readings and other sources, students are required to write a final, “integrative essay.” The course will also incorporate a discussion forum on Blackboard and utilize platforms as Padlet and Mural to present group discussions depending on the topics discussed.
How did science become such an instrumental part of our daily lives and the potential solution to our many individual and global problems? In this course, we will survey the development of modern science in the West and beyond from the French Revolution in 1789 to the present. Over the course of those over two centuries, how we conceive of science—how it is done, who does it, and what it means—has shifted dramatically in tandem with how we understand the world and society. We will examine several branches of science, including physics, biology, geology, anthropology, medicine, and ecology, in order to assess these changes. Readings will include academic articles and chapters, primary sources, and short videos or podcasts. Assessment will be based on short exercises, reading responses, and a final paper on a scientific, medical, or technological field of your choosing.
HIS 287
Crime and Criminal Justice in the U.S.
Satisfies: SBS, USA [DEC: F & 4]

Instructor: Willie Mack
Online Asynchronous

From seventeenth-century Colonial America to the George Floyd anti-police protests of 2020-21, this course will look at the evolution of the criminal justice system in United States’ history. This course will ask how have criminal justice institutions – specifically policing and incarceration - evolved since the seventeenth century, and why? It will do this by interrogating the ways in which historians and other social scientists have examined the criminal justice system, paying particular attention to how this institution has reflected specific eras of U.S. history. Moving chronologically, this course will look at criminal justice in Colonial America, the Antebellum South, Reconstruction and the post Reconstruction eras, the Progressive era, World War I, the 1920s-1950s, and into the modern era of militarized policing and mass incarceration. Lastly, it will pay particular attention to how policing and incarceration have interacted with and reacted to the post 1950s civil rights movements, post-1965 immigration, and the emergence of the New Right and neoliberalism in the 1980s. This course will also incorporate a transnational aspect to assess the ways the U.S. has implemented policing and incarceration to build and sustain U.S. empire. Finally, this course will examine the legacy of the criminal justice system in the U.S. and ask students to think critically about the ways it functions in our society and impact the ways in which live. Students will be assigned weekly essays and articles to read. They will demonstrate their understanding of the material by completing weekly short writing assignments. At the end of the course, they will submit a final essay.
Are you a slow or a fast person? Do you like to take your time or is rushing the lifestyle for you? This course can explain why you may be inclined to look at speed as a more valuable thing in comparison with slowness, which tends to be exiled to the Eastern part of the world by the modern culture. We will start as early as the 60,000s BCE, with the first time-keeping record, and continue through today by learning about the important connections between time keeping, organizing space and lifestyle. Technology, science and economic ideas will further add to the large portrait of speed’s influence on the global culture. Speed united remote places across the globe through better and faster technology (ships and planes) but it also created unsurpassable barriers between them due to the modern belief in speed as the final answer to everything. Speed shaped our countries, our cities, our relationships and our mind. Enclosed between space and time humans have tricked themselves to assign more value to fast living, especially in the Western world, but to also reserve the slow and exotic parts of the world for much needed relaxing moments, thus perpetuating a fragmented vision of our planet. Weekly responses and one final project will fulfill the need for speed in this summer/winter session.
While Afro descendent people represented a significant group of Latin American societies since the early years of the Atlantic slave trade, studies on Afro-Latinidad and race relations in the continent have only recently gained academic momentum. Following this new historiography, this course will explore the different ways that the African diaspora has shaped modern Latin America across the last couple of centuries. Questioning the very notion of blackness across different societies, we will examine Afro descendants’ role in building local and national identities, developing anti-racist political projects, and forging transnational networks of racial solidarity. To do so, the course will cover a wide set of cases. From spaces traditionally conceptualized by its African heritage, such as Brazil and Cuba, to the less studied territories of the Dominican Republic, Mexico, Chile, and Argentina. Students will read academic articles, listen to podcasts, watch lectures, and analyze primary sources. By completing the readings, writing weekly responses, and participating in class discussions students will develop a better understanding of the working of race at the local, regional, and global scales. In addition to short weekly responses, the course requires a final essay based on primary source analysis. No required textbook; all course materials will be uploaded on Blackboard.
We often say history is written by the winners. This course will flip that narrative on its head and asks, “what if history was written by the losers?” This course will investigate the history of the United States by focusing on major debates in American history. More specifically, this course will focus on the people and ideas who lost these important debates. We will start with the arguments over the creation of the Constitution and the founding of the United States. From there will examine other battles such as the lead up to the Civil War, the best approach to fight the Great Depression, conflicting views on Civil Rights, and disagreements over military interventions. In doing so, this class will discuss what alternative paths the United States might have taken, and why those proposals, even some that we would consider morally wrong today, were popular. Weekly assignments will include reading primary sources and journal articles, as well as listening to podcasts and the completion of unit quizzes. For a final assignment, students will place themselves into the mind of an “American loser” and reflect on how they would view their legacy in American history.
The United States has a fraught history when health is concerned. From George Washington’s losing battle against smallpox during the Revolution, to New Orleans endemic yellow fever throughout the 20th century, to the rise of anti-vax movement in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, and the most recent COVID-19 crisis, the country has struggled to mitigate disease while preserving the lives and livelihoods of its citizens. This course covers the trials and triumphs of the U.S., from the Revolutionary period to present, in the face of insidious invisible opposition. Students will develop an understanding of the way epidemics and disease have shaped U.S. history while honing their writing and research skills. This course entails weekly discussion assignments and quizzes. The final will be a research paper that students will work on throughout the session and an online asynchronous presentation.