

Fall 2023

**Hist 641: Interdisciplinary Global Readings:  
History at the Intersection with Psychology, Economics, Sports, Literature, and Art**

Thursday, 6:30-9:20, UNIV 319

Prof. Ariel de la Fuente

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by appointment

This **reading** seminar intends to feed the methodological imagination of students by showing them how economics, psychology, literature, and art can enhance their historical research. It may help them learn, for example, how developments in psychology can prepare scholars to deal with the problem of bias that all researchers (regardless of discipline) permanently face in their own investigations. At the same time, readings will show how the historical method has been applied to other fields and used to challenge accepted explanations of problems as varied as the behavior of the market economy or the origins of photography. In short, one of the major goals of the seminar is to encourage methodological cross-fertilizations that potentially may lead to innovative contributions in the students' respective fields. In addition, the readings are global in scope and cover cases and processes in Europe, Asia, Africa, the US, and Latin America.

**Any aspect of this syllabus and schedule (including but not limited to assignment dates and readings) is subject to change. If a change is necessary it will be announced in class and/or through Brightspace and it is the student's responsibility to be informed about them.**

**Recording of classes or consultation meetings with the instructor by students is strictly prohibited and any violation in this respect will be reported to the corresponding office.**

Also, in order to allow for a robust and open class experience, students are asked to refrain from posting any images, chats, or videos from our class—including, but not limited to, class discussions, presentations, and lectures--without prior consent of the instructor and every student in our class. **Any student who posts images, chats, or videos from our class without permission will receive in an automatic F (failure) for the semester and the corresponding office will be informed.** In addition, content published on Brightspace might be the instructor's intellectual property, therefore, do not publish any content found on Brightspace without prior authorization from said instructor.

**Subjects, Bibliography, and Class Schedule:**

**Week 1 (8/24)**

Introduction to the mechanics and subjects of the course. Goals and expectations.

**Subjectivity, Bias, and Rationality in Research and Interpretation:  
Physics, Psychology, Art, Literature, and History (2 weeks).**

**Week 2 (8/31)**

-Carlo Rovelli, *The Order of Time*, 1-17, 151-155, 171-192

-Thomas Gilovich, *How we Know What it Isn't So: The Fallibility of Human Reason in Everyday Life*, 9-61.

-Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, 156-165.

-Ilan Stavans and Jorge Gracia, *Thirteen Ways of Looking at Latino Art*, 74-91

-Shorter pieces: "The Case for Teaching Ignorance", "Scientific Pride and Prejudice", "The Problem with Slow Motion", "How Politics Shaped General Relativity", "Your Brain Has Tricked You Into Thinking Everything Is Worse".

**Week 3 (9/7)**

-Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History*, 1-33, 223-235.

-Patrick Modiano, *Dora Bruder*

**Economists and the Historical Method: the Study of Capitalism (3 weeks)**

**Week 4 (9/14)**

Jürgen Kocka, *Capitalism: A Short History*, 1-24, 49-161.

**Week 5 (9/21)**

Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 1-35, 237-304, 377-381, 411-429.

**Week 6 (9/28)**

Robert Gordon, *The Rise and Fall of American Growth*, viii-xii, 1-23, 94-128, 535-565, 566-604.  
Suggested: 129-171.

**History and Historical Research as Political Argument: Imperialism (2 weeks)**

**Week 7 (10/5)**

Niall Ferguson, *Empire: How Britain Made the World*, IX-XXVI, 137-184, 303-317.

Mark Twain, "To the Person Sitting in Darkness".

**Week 8 (10/12)**

Shashi Tharoor, *An Era of Darkness: The British Empire in India*, XVII-XXVI, 2-41, 94-118, 176-204, 250-291.

**History + Analytics, or How to Study Sports: the Case of Soccer (1 week)**

**Week 9 (10/19)**

Simon Kuper, *Soccer Against the Enemy*, 248-266.

Peter Alegi, *African Soccerescapes*, 36-53.

Chris Anderson and David Sally, *The Numbers Game*, 1-92. Suggested: 93-109.

**Interpretation and Historical Research in Literature and Art (4 weeks)**

**Week 10 (10/26)**

James Shapiro, *Contested Will: Who Wrote Shakespeare?*, 1-110, 223-259. Suggested: 263-280.

**Week 11 (11/2)**

John Fuller, *Who is Ozymandias? and other Puzzles in Poetry*, VII-VIII, 1-79, 157-202, 234-239.

**Week 12 (11/9)**

Ruth Yeazell, *Picture Titles: How and Why Western Paintings Acquired their Names*, 1-15, 19-24, 81-139, 143-183, 243-263

**Week 13 (11/16)**

David Hockney, *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters*, 12-231. Suggested: Edgar A. Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition".

**Week 14 (11/23)**

**Thanksgiving**

**Weeks 15-16 (11/30; 12/7)**

Consultation and **papers due (12/7)**.

**GRADES AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Grade Scale:

100-90=A

80-89=B

70-79=C

60-69=D

0-59=F

**Grades will be determined as follows:** weekly quizzes on assigned readings (60 %); attendance (5%); one class presentation (15%); two 2,400-word papers (20%). Students must complete all the assignments to pass the course.

**Weekly Quizzes (60%):** **This is a reading seminar** and reading is a fundamental component of our work. The purpose of the quizzes is to encourage students to keep up with the assigned readings, to engage with them meaningfully, and to come well prepared for class participation. Questions will focus on both concepts and relevant information. Quizzes will be in an essay format, handwritten, and **they will be taken at the beginning of class (please, be punctual).** Students will be allowed to work with printed copies of the readings but no electronic devices (computers, phones, e-readers, etc) are permitted while writing the quiz. Students are allowed to drop or miss one quiz during the semester.

**Attendance (5%):** Students are allowed two absences (excused or not) without penalty. A third absence will mean the loss of all attendance points (5% of final grade). Incurring in a fourth absence (including excused ones) automatically translates into failing the course. Late arrivals to or early departures from class will be counted as absences.

**Class Presentation (15%):** one 20-30 minutes presentation. In a week of their choice students will introduce and frame the corresponding reading assignments. **Preferences should be communicated to the instructor by the end of the third week (9/7).**

**Two Papers (20%):** The 2,400-word papers should explore two different subjects/ disciplines among the ones studied in class (eg., while one of the papers may engage the questions studied by economists the other may consider the methodology of art scholars, etc). They will primarily rely on the assigned readings but attempt to expand beyond them. Students should consult with the instructor to define the scope of their papers before starting to write. **Papers are due on 12/7.**

**Class Participation:** **Informed and active class participation is a must.** This is a fundamental component of our collective work and students should come to class well prepared for a meaningful participation. I will not assign a specific grade for participation, however I might factor it in your final grade or any other overall assessment of your class performance.

In the case of health or family emergency, please contact the Office of the Dean of Students to document your situation. Regardless of the reason for the absence it is always the student's responsibility to be aware of the topics covered in class, assignments, deadlines, exam dates, and any other information pertaining to the course and to contact the instructor in this respect.

**Brightspace:** Students are expected to get from Brightspace the reading material that the instructor assigns. If any technical problem appears with Brightspace, [Itap@purdue.edu](mailto:Itap@purdue.edu) should be contacted.

**Conduct and ethics:** Students are expected to follow the code of honor and academic ethics as set forth in University regulations. Violations of these codes will be penalized according to university regulations.

Academic integrity is one of the highest values that Purdue University holds. Individuals are encouraged to alert university officials to potential breaches of this value by either emailing

integrity@purdue.edu or by calling 765-494-8778. While information may be submitted anonymously, the more information is submitted the greater the opportunity for the university to investigate the concern. More details are available on our course Brightspace table of contents, under University Policies.

Incidents of academic misconduct in this course will be addressed by the course instructor and referred to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSRR) for review at the university level. Any violation of course policies as it relates to academic integrity will result minimally in a failing or zero grade for that particular assignment, and at the instructor's discretion may result in a failing grade for the course. In addition, all incidents of academic misconduct will be forwarded to OSRR, where university penalties, including removal from the university, may be considered.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted onto the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructors or TAs via email or phone. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.

Diversity and inclusion: Purdue University is committed to fostering diversity and inclusion and welcomes individuals of all ages, religions, sex, sexual orientations, races, nationalities, languages, military experience, disabilities, family statuses, gender identities and expressions, political views, and socioeconomic statuses. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by everyone in this course. Behaviors that threaten, harass, discriminate or that are disrespectful of others will not be tolerated. Inappropriate behaviors will be addressed with disciplinary action, which may include being referred to the Office of the Dean of Students.

If you become quarantined or isolated at any point in time during the semester, in addition to support from the Protect Purdue Health Center, you will also have access to an Academic Case Manager who can provide you academic support during this time. Your Academic Case Manager can be reached at acmq@purdue.edu and will provide you with general guidelines/resources around communicating with your instructors, be available for academic support, and offer suggestions for how to be successful when learning remotely. Importantly, if you find yourself too sick to progress in the course, notify your academic case manager and notify me via email or Brightspace. We will make arrangements based on your particular situation. The Office of the Dean of Students (odos@purdue.edu) is also available to support you should this situation occur.

For unanticipated or emergency conflict, when advance notification to an instructor is not possible, the student should contact the instructor as soon as possible by email, through Brightspace, or by phone. When the student is unable to make direct contact with the instructor and is unable to leave word with the instructor's department because of circumstances beyond the student's control, and in cases of bereavement, quarantine, or isolation, the student or the student's representative should contact the Office of the Dean of Students via email or phone at 765-494-1747. Our course Brightspace includes a link on Attendance and Grief Absence policies under the University Policies menu.

If you find yourself beginning to feel some stress, anxiety and/or feeling slightly overwhelmed, try

WellTrack. Sign in and find information and tools at your fingertips, available to you at any time.

If you need support and information about options and resources, please contact or see the Office of the Dean of Students. Call 765-494-1747. Hours of operation are M-F, 8 am- 5 pm.

If you find yourself struggling to find a healthy balance between academics, social life, stress, etc. sign up for free one-on-one virtual or in-person sessions with a Purdue Wellness Coach at RecWell. Student coaches can help you navigate through barriers and challenges toward your goals throughout the semester. Sign up is completely free and can be done on BoilerConnect. If you have any questions, please contact Purdue Wellness at [evans240@purdue.edu](mailto:evans240@purdue.edu).

If you're struggling and need mental health services: Purdue University is committed to advancing the mental health and well-being of its students. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of mental health support, services are available. For help, such individuals should contact Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 765-494-6995 during and after hours, on weekends and holidays, or by going to the CAPS office of the second floor of the Purdue University Student Health Center (PUSH) during business hours.

Any student with special needs or a health issue that may affect her/his performance in this course should speak in private with the instructor after class to make the necessary arrangements.