

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

The University offers a number of courses in the history and philosophy of science, although it does not, at this time, offer a major or concentration to undergraduates in Columbia College or General Studies. The course listings bring together a variety of courses from different disciplines, which should be of interest to anyone wishing to pursue work in the history and philosophy of science. The list is not intended to be all inclusive; students interested in the history and philosophy of science should speak to members of the committee.

Interdepartmental Committee on History and Philosophy of Science

David Albert
Philosophy
706 Philosophy; 212-854-3519

Marwa Elshakry
History
512 Fayerweather; 212-851-5914

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History
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717 Philosophy; 212-854-4884

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Philosophy
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Alondra Nelson
Sociology
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Samuel Roberts
History/Sociomedical Sciences
322 Fayerweather; 212-854-2430

David Rosner
History/Sociomedical Sciences
420 Fayerweather; 212-854-4272

David Rothman
History/Sociomedical Sciences
622 West 168th Street; 212-305-4096

George Saliba (*emeritus*)
Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies
312 Knox; 212-854-4166

Pamela Smith
History
605 Fayerweather; 212-854-7662

Fall 2023

HIST UN2112 The Scientific Revolution in Western Europe: 1500-1750. 4 points.

Introduction to the cultural, social, and intellectual history of the upheavals of astronomy, anatomy, mathematics, alchemy from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment. *Field(s): EME*

HIST UN2523 HEALTH INEQUALITY: MODERN US. 4.00 points.

Through assigned readings and a group research project, students will gain familiarity with a range of historical and social science problems at the intersection of ethnic/racial/sexual formations, technological networks, and health politics since the turn of the twentieth century. Topics to be examined will include, but will not be limited to, black women's health organization and care; HIV/AIDS politics, policy, and community response; benign neglect; urban renewal and gentrification; medical abuses and the legacy of Tuskegee; tuberculosis control; and environmental justice. There are no required qualifications for enrollment, although students will find the material more accessible if they have had previous coursework experience in United States history, pre-health professional (pre-med, pre-nursing, or pre-public health), African-American Studies, Women and Gender Studies, Ethnic Studies, or American Studies

Fall 2023: HIST UN2523

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HIST 2523	001/10416	M W 10:10am - 11:25am 428 Pupin Laboratories	Samuel Roberts	4.00	83/105

HIST GU4588 RACE, DRUGS, AND INEQUALITY. 4.00 points.
Priority given to majors and concentrators, seniors, and juniors.

Prerequisites: the instructor's permission.

Note: Admission to this course is by application only. Please use the form found in the SSOL course message. Through a series of secondary- and primary-source readings, digital archive research, and writing assignments, we will explore the history of harm reduction from its origins in syringe exchange, health education, and condom distribution, to the current moment of decriminalization, safe consumption politics, and medically assisted treatment (MAT). At the same time, we will think about how harm reduction perspectives challenge us to rethink the histories and historiography of substance use, sexuality, health, and research science. Along with harm reduction theory and philosophy, relevant concepts and themes include syndemic and other epidemiological concepts theory; structural inequities (structural violence, structural racism); medicalization; biomedicalization; racialization; gender theory and queer theory; mass incarceration, hyperpolicing, and the carceral state; the “housing first” approach; political and other subjectivities; and historical constructions of “addiction”/“addicts”, rehabilitation/recovery, what are “drugs,” and the “(brain) disease model”/NIDA paradigm of addiction. Readings are multidisciplinary and include works in history, epidemiology, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and other disciplines, and the syllabus will include at least one field trip to a harm reduction organization. Students will complete a short research project. There are no official prerequisites. However, students should have some academic or professional background in public health, African-American/ethnic studies history or social science, and/or some other work related to the course material. Admission to this course is by application only. Please use the form found in the SSOL course message. Students may not enroll in this course on a pass/fail basis or as an auditor without instructor permission. Student assessment will be based on various criteria: Class discussion participation - 35# Presentation of the readings - 15# Writing assignments - 50#

Spring 2024: HIST GU4588

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HIST 4588	001/11652	T 10:10am - 12:00pm 401 Hamilton Hall	Samuel Roberts	4.00	17/15

Spring 2023

HSAM UN2901 DATA:PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE. 3.00 points.
Lect: 1.5. Lab: 1.5.

Data-empowered algorithms are reshaping our professional, personal, and political realities, for good—and for bad. Data: Past, Present, and Future moves from the birth of statistics in the 18th century to the surveillance capitalism of the present day, covering racist eugenics, World War II cryptography, and creepy personalized advertising along the way. Rather than looking at ethics and history as separate from the science and engineering, the course integrates the teaching of algorithms and data manipulation with the political whirlwinds and ethical controversies from which those techniques emerged. We pair the introduction of technical developments with the shifting political and economic powers that encouraged and benefited from new capabilities. We couple primary and secondary readings on the history and ethics of data with computational work done largely with user-friendly Jupyter notebooks in Python

Spring 2024: HSAM UN2901

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HSAM 2901	001/17061	M W 11:40am - 12:55pm 303 Seeley W. Mudd Building	Chris Wiggins, Madison Whitman	3.00	21/70

HIST GU4588 RACE, DRUGS, AND INEQUALITY. 4.00 points.

Priority given to majors and concentrators, seniors, and juniors.

Prerequisites: the instructor's permission.

Note: Admission to this course is by application only. Please use the form found in the SSOL course message. Through a series of secondary- and primary-source readings, digital archive research, and writing assignments, we will explore the history of harm reduction from its origins in syringe exchange, health education, and condom distribution, to the current moment of decriminalization, safe consumption politics, and medically assisted treatment (MAT). At the same time, we will think about how harm reduction perspectives challenge us to rethink the histories and historiography of substance use, sexuality, health, and research science. Along with harm reduction theory and philosophy, relevant concepts and themes include syndemic and other epidemiological concepts theory; structural inequities (structural violence, structural racism); medicalization; biomedicalization; racialization; gender theory and queer theory; mass incarceration, hyperpolicing, and the carceral state; the "housing first" approach; political and other subjectivities; and historical constructions of "addiction"/"addicts", rehabilitation/recovery, what are "drugs," and the "(brain) disease model"/NIDA paradigm of addiction. Readings are multidisciplinary and include works in history, epidemiology, anthropology, sociology, psychology, and other disciplines, and the syllabus will include at least one field trip to a harm reduction organization. Students will complete a short research project. There are no official prerequisites. However, students should have some academic or professional background in public health, African-American/ethnic studies history or social science, and/or some other work related to the course material. Admission to this course is by application only. Please use the form found in the SSOL course message. Students may not enroll in this course on a pass/fail basis or as an auditor without instructor permission. Student assessment will be based on various criteria: Class discussion participation - 35# Presentation of the readings - 15# Writing assignments - 50#

Spring 2024: HIST GU4588

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HIST 4588	001/11652	T 10:10am - 12:00pm 401 Hamilton Hall	Samuel Roberts	4.00	17/15

CPLS GU4320 Marginalization in Medicine: A Practical Understanding of the Social Implications of Race . 4 points.

There is a significant correlation between race and health in the United States. People of color and those from underserved populations have higher mortality rates and a greater burden of chronic disease than their white counterparts. Differences in health outcomes have been attributed to biological factors as race has been naturalized. In this class we will explore the history of the idea of "race" in the context of changing biomedical knowledge formations. We will then focus on the impact that social determinants like poverty, structural violence, racism and geography have on health. Ultimately, this course will address the social implications of race on health both within the classroom and beyond. In addition to the seminar, there will also be a significant service component. Students will be expected to volunteer at a community organization for a minimum of 3 hours a week. This volunteer work will open an avenue for students to go beyond the walls of their classrooms while learning from and positively impacting their community.

HIST UN3437 CORP BEHAVIOR # PUBLIC HEALTH. 4.00 points.

Priority given to majors and concentrators, seniors, and juniors.

In the decades since the publication of Silent Spring and the rise of the environmental movement, public awareness of the impact of industrial products on human health has grown enormously. There is growing concern over BPA, lead, PCBs, asbestos, and synthetic materials that make up the world around us. This course will focus on environmental history, industrial and labor history as well as on how twentieth century consumer culture shapes popular and professional understanding of disease. Throughout the term the class will trace the historical transformation of the origins of disease through primary sources such as documents gathered in lawsuits, and medical and public health literature. Students will be asked to evaluate historical debates about the causes of modern epidemics of cancer, heart disease, lead poisoning, asbestos-related illnesses and other chronic conditions. They will also consider where responsibility for these new concerns lies, particularly as they have emerged in law suits. Together, we will explore the rise of modern environmental movement in the last 75 years

Spring 2024: HIST UN3437

Course Number	Section/Call Number	Times/Location	Instructor	Points	Enrollment
HIST 3437	001/11661	W 8:10am - 10:00am 302 Fayerweather	David Rosner	4.00	15/15

INSM UN3921 Nobility and Civility II. 4 points.

CC/GS/SEAS: Partial Fulfillment of Global Core Requirement

Prerequisites: one semester of Contemporary Civilization or Literature Humanities, or an equivalent course, and the instructor's permission. A team-taught multicultural, interdisciplinary course examining traditions of leadership and citizenship as they appear in the key texts of early Indian, Islamic, Far Eastern, and Western civilizations. One goal is to identify and examine common human values and issues evident in these texts while also recognizing key cultural differences

HIST GU4031 Transforming Texts: Textual Analysis, Literary Modeling, and Visualization . 4 points.

Designed for graduate and advanced undergraduate students in the social sciences, humanities, and computer science, this hybrid course is situated at the crossroads of historical exploration and computer sciences. Students will be exposed to digital literacy tools and computational skills through the lens of the Making and Knowing Project. The edition will draw on collaboration with and research done by the Making and Knowing Project <http://www.makingandknowing.org/> on an anonymous 16th-century French compilation of artistic and technical recipes (BnF Ms. Fr. 640). Students will work from the encoded English translation of the manuscript, prepared by the Spring 2017 course *"HIST GR8975 What is a Book in the 21st Century? Working with Historical Texts in a Digital Environment."* This course will also utilize the concepts and prototypes developed by computer science students in the Spring 2018 *"COMS W4172: 3D User Interfaces and Augmented Reality (AR)." The skills students will learn over the course of the semester are widely applicable to other types of Digital Humanities projects, and indeed, in many fields outside of traditional academic study.*

For the final project, students will collaborate to investigate linguistic features of Ms. Fr. 640 using natural language processing and text mining techniques. These projects will shed light on topics of interest within the manuscript and uncover connections within the textual data. By using the tools prototypes in a Spring 2018 *COMS W4172* course, and working alongside computer science students, the groups will learn to adapt and recode data sets, and to view them into a variety of visualizations.

Of Related Interest

Biological Sciences

Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race

CSER W3222	Nature and Power: Environmental History of the US
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Colloquia, Interdepartmental Seminars, and Professional School Offerings

INSM C3940	Science Across Cultures
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History

HIST UN2222	NATURE # POWER: ENV HIST NORTH AMERICA
HSPB UN2950	Social History of U.S. Public Health
HIST UN3437	CORP BEHAVIOR # PUBLIC HEALTH
HIST GU4588	RACE, DRUGS, AND INEQUALITY

History (Barnard)

HIST BC2366	CLIMATE # HISTORY: INTERSECTING SCIENCE, ENVIRONMENT # SOCIETY
HIST BC2402	Science and Society: From Galileo to Climate Change

Philosophy

PHIL UN2101	HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY I
PHIL UN2201	HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY II
PHIL UN3251	Kant

Women's Studies (Barnard)

WMST BC3509	Gender, Knowledge and Science in Modern European History
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