

# History

## Requirements:

- Grade 9:** Modern World History (HIST 211)  
**Grade 10:** United States History (HIST 220)  
**Grade 11 or 12:** One history elective

## Elective Courses Offered in 2024-25

### 300-level

- Religion in History (HIST 313)
- East Asian History (HIST 314)
- Latin American History (HIST 316)
- United States Legal History (HIST 317)
- Voices of Protest: The Progressives to the Present (HIST 319)
- African American History (HIST 324)

### 400-level

- Global Environmental History (HIST 420)
- The Global Cold War (HIST 421)
- Contemporary U.S. History, 1945 to the present (HIST 423)
- African History (HIST 426)
- LGBT American History (HIST 428)

## **Courses Not Offered in 2024-25**

- Classical World Civilizations (HIST 310)
- Comparative Race and Ethnicity (HIST 312)
- History of the Silk Roads (HIST 315)
- Vast Early American History (HIST 322)
- History of the Islamic World (HIST 327)
- History of Medicine (HIST 329)

## History

The History Department equips students to examine their own lives and the development, goals, and values of their society. Designed to convey a basic understanding of both Western and non-Western history from the pre-modern world to the present, the curriculum emphasizes economic and social forces as well as political and cultural factors. Throughout the curriculum, students are asked to grapple with the complexity of historical causality, to analyze and discuss primary and secondary sources, and to construct sophisticated historical arguments.

The History Department strongly recommends that before graduation students take at least one course with a focus on geographic regions outside the United States and Europe.

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Grade 10:	United States History (HIST 220)
Grade 11 or 12:	One History elective

### **A note on 300- and 400-level History electives**

Elective courses in the History Department may be offered at either the 300- or 400-level, depending on the year. 400-level courses cover a similar range of content as their 300-level counterparts, but in these courses students read additional scholarly articles, write a year-long research paper, consider how historians seek to understand history through the methodological approaches they take, and examine how historians study and interpret history (i.e. historiography). 400-level courses meet five days/week, while 300-level courses meet four days/week. During program planning, students should refer to the Master List of Courses addendum, which lists which courses will run at each level in the upcoming academic year, and which are anticipated to run at each level the following year (subject to teacher availability and enrollment). Admission to 400-level History electives is based on the permission of the History Department. Rising seniors who applied to a 400-level elective and were not admitted for the current year are still eligible to apply for next year, but the Department will expect to see significant improvement in the 300-level history elective during the student's junior year.

**HIST 211 - Modern World History**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: None*

This course focuses on the history of the making of the modern world since 1650. Students will trace the historical developments that reorganized peoples, reshaped cultures, and generated new economies because of the interactions between major regions of the world. Bigger questions

addressed include: how did states pursue security and stability for their people? To what extent did people feel a sense of belonging to these states? How did the rise of industrialization shift the global economy, disrupt societies, impact the balance of power, and change conceptions of the natural world? A focus of the course will be to investigate the events of world history from non-western perspectives, and to analyze how historians have interpreted the global past in different ways. Students will learn how to weigh evidence and balance these multiple perspectives to develop historical arguments and interpretations. A key component of the course will be establishing a strong foundation for analytical writing, with students learning how to structure a paper through several stages of a well-defined writing process.

**HIST 220 - United States History**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) or Modern World History (HIST 211)*

This course surveys the United States' past from the colonial period through the modern era. The curriculum examines the physical, demographic, and bureaucratic growth of the nation alongside the development of its political, social, economic, and cultural institutions and traditions. Students consider the changing roles that gender, race and class have played throughout American history. Exams evaluate conceptual skills as well as analytical abilities and mastery of historical content. Students will complete research and writing assessments during the year.

**Elective Courses:**

**HIST 313 - Religion in History**

*[Course to be offered at the 400 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

Why are we here? And how do we find meaning in life under the looming shadow of mortality? Wrestling with these questions is arguably the basis of what we call religion. This course will examine religious traditions historically, with attention to their substance, origins, development, and context. Among many other themes, we will consider questions of institutionalization, underlying purposes, animating ideas and values, and historical trajectories across time and space. We will consider how and why traditions purporting to offer timelessness adapt and change with the times. Students will read articles and essays about religion in history as well as foundational religious texts, including (but not limited to) the *Hebrew Bible*, the *New Testament*, the *Tao Te Ching*, and *The Qur'an*. Through careful study of these texts, we will consider both their value as sources of history and as a point of access to human experiences, worldviews, and responses to the human condition likely quite alien to us. Engaging in this work, should help us develop our capacities for empathy, imagination, and making sense of the unfamiliar. Finally, having done this work students should come away with a clearer, deeper, and more nuanced understanding of how and why our modern world came to be our modern world and what has been both lost and gained in its forging.

**HIST 314 - East Asian History**

*[Course to be offered at the 400 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

The rise of East Asia's geopolitical power will very likely be among the most important structural changes of the twenty-first century. To understand this monumental shift, we need to know when it started, how it happened, and why this development was neither inevitable nor unprecedented. After all, East Asia has been a geopolitical center before. Part of our task in this course will be to understand how the three regions of East Asia—China, Korea, and Japan—are interconnected cultures with shared social, economic, religious, and political traditions. At the same time, we'll investigate how each region stood apart from the others, with unique characteristics that flourished inside its borders. We'll also track continuity and change in East Asia, both before and after contact with Europe and the United States, to establish a more informed historical understanding of current events. In our study of the twentieth century, we'll discuss the wrenching – and often traumatic – impact of World War II, which realigned the status quo and ushered in a period of rapid and startling shifts; the

emergence of a communist China and North Korea, a demilitarized Japan, and a democratic South Korea.

**HIST 316 - Latin American History**

*[Course will not be offered in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

Latin America is a term that describes the majority of the Western Hemisphere and contains vast cultural, racial, and national diversity. What unifies this region? What makes each country within it unique? These are the questions we will answer as we explore the region's past and present. This class is structured as a survey course covering historical material from the late 1400's to the present day, thus linking directly with Horace Mann's ninth-grade History curriculum. Over the course of two semesters, students will learn about the rise and fall of multiracial colonial empires, the emergence of modern nation states, the rise of popular revolutionary movements, and Latin America's pivotal role in the global Cold War. Moreover, through in-class discussion and research assignments, students will develop the knowledge and skills necessary to understand the historical roots of dilemmas in Latin America today.

**HIST 317 - United States Legal History**

*[Course to be offered at the 400 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

This course examines the relationship between law and society in the United States. The focus of our study will be the question of how law both shapes, and is shaped by, the political, economic, and cultural context in which it is formed. The course will explore such topics as the creation and enforcement of law, access to and interaction with the legal system, and the changing nature of punishment throughout American history. Through the study of critical court decisions, we will also examine how historical cultural and political forces have contributed to contemporary ideas about civil and constitutional rights. Important topics such as citizenship and the role of law in enforcing social norms related to race, gender, sexuality, and religion will be at the center of our exploration. Students will engage with current events through the lens of legal history with the goal of deepening analysis and understanding. Students will also have the opportunity to pursue independent research projects in the field of US legal history.

**HIST 319 - Voices of Protest: The Progressives to the Present**

*[Course to be offered at the 400 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

Throughout American history, protest movements have challenged Americans to live up to their professed ideals. Voices of Protest studies the last century through those protest movements, analyzing how citizens have attacked the status quo and formulated new alternatives. The class will consider the ways dissent is articulated and its complex influence on society – from the Suffragists through NFL’s kneeling controversy. We will analyze and engage with the history of various protest movements, as well as the responses to them, through a variety of sources, some rarely considered in history classes: portions of novels, short stories, even plays and poetry. Using literature to probe history incorporates an interdisciplinary approach to the class; however, more traditional primary and secondary sources (essays, articles, manifestos, speeches, and images) will be key components of the readings and discussions. We will move through the material thematically and chronologically, and address the following six units:

- (1) Capitalism's Discontents: from Industrialization to a “Fight for a \$15 Minimum Wage”
- (2) Civil Rights: from Jim Crow to “Black Lives Matter”
- (3) War Protests: from World War I to the Surveillance State
- (4) Women's Rights: from Suffragism to #MeToo
- (5) Gay Rights: from Pre-Stonewall to Trans Activism
- (6) Environmentalism: from the Disappearing West to #FridaysForFuture

**HIST 324 African American History**

*[Course to be offered at the 400 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

This course will survey the history of African American experiences from the arrival of Africans in the Americas to the present. Through a chronological study, students will investigate how African Americans, individually and collectively, gave shape to political dynamics, cultural expressions, economic trends, social movements, and geo-spatial developments in America. They will interrogate the ways in which race, class, gender, sexuality, and region constructed diverse Black identities and experiences, challenging the notion of a singular Black American experience. The course will also explore the varied ways Black Americans have mobilized in pursuit of self-determination, examining the tensions and interconnections between various freedom struggles and strategies, and will consider how campaigns for Black liberation

continue to be forged in our present moment. Through a close examination of primary and secondary sources and active discussion in a seminar-style format, students will learn to think critically about conceptions of race and processes of racialization as historically contingent, contextually specific formations, but with very real consequences that produced, and continue to shape, the world they inhabit today. Students will also have the opportunity to pursue independent research projects in the field of African American history.

**400-level courses:**

**HIST 420 - Global Environmental History**

*[Course to be offered at the 300 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 5 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210), US History (HIST 220), and departmental approval based on the following criteria: History grades that average A- or higher for all years and class citizenship. Students with History averages higher than B+, but not A-, will be considered on an individual basis; more weight will be given to grade averages in years 10 and 11.*

Global Environmental History surveys the history of the human relationship with non-human nature, beginning with fire-wielding hunter gatherers and ending with present-day concerns about global climate change and debates about the “Anthropocene era” (the claim that anthropogenic, or human-made, climate change constitutes a new geologic era). The course will raise major questions about the human role in changing the environment on a global scale *and* the environment’s role in shaping human societies and culture. The course is structured around four major turning points in human interaction with non-human nature: the transition to agro-ecology (around 10,000 BCE); the reconnection and exchange between Afro-Eurasia and the Americas (1492 CE and thereafter); the industrial revolution and the fossil fuel economy (~1750 CE and thereafter); and the dawn of the nuclear era (1945 CE and thereafter). Focusing on such topics as agro-ecology, trans-ecological exchange, the role of disease, energy sources and use, urbanization, the environmental impacts of empire, the commodification of nature, nuclear weapons and energy, climate change, and sustainability, the course emphasizes new global perspectives on environmental history in an effort to investigate the environmental past and help us plan for our shared future. In addition to exploring these themes through current events, simulations of environmental debates where students will take the roles of various stakeholders, short analytical papers, and a project that asks students to research and present solutions to climate change, the course will also support students as they conduct research into an environmental history topic of their own choosing.

**HIST 421 - The Global Cold War**

*[Course will not be offered in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 5 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210), US History (HIST 220), and departmental approval based on the following criteria: History grades that average A- or higher for all years and class citizenship. Students with History averages higher than B+, but not A-, will be considered on an individual basis; more weight will be given to grade averages in years 10 and 11.*

While the Cold War is often depicted as a struggle between the US and USSR mainly over control of Europe, this course takes into consideration more recent scholarship which argues that the most important centers of conflict and the struggle of ideas occurred in the rest of the world, particularly in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, just as countries were gaining their independence in the wake of World War II. We will study factors such as decolonization, race, political alliances, diplomacy, the nuclear arms race, espionage, cultural programs, activism by ordinary people, and popular culture, including film, music, and literature. Lastly, the course will weigh political theories that were tested throughout the Cold War, especially capitalism, democracy, non-alignment with the superpowers, socialism, and communism. Current events will help us connect past and present. This course will be run seminar-style. Students will have the opportunity to work collaboratively, make class presentations, conduct historical research, and participate actively in class discussion.

**HIST 423 - Contemporary U.S. History, 1945 to the present**

*[Course to be offered at the 300 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 5 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210), US History (HIST 220), and departmental approval based on the following criteria: History grades that average A- or higher for all years and class citizenship. Students with History averages higher than B+, but not A-, will be considered on an individual basis; more weight will be given to grade averages in years 10 and 11.*

This course will examine the major influences on American life from the end of World War II until the present. Drawing on scholarly writings, essays, fiction, music, films, and websites, students will learn about the major factors that helped make the United States what it is today, economically, socially, politically, and culturally. We will look at the intersection of politics, culture, and society in recent American history. Topics covered will include Cold War politics and culture, the rise and fall of New Deal liberalism, and social movements on the Right and the Left. The course will push well into the twenty-first century. Students are expected to complete the course with a sense of how these events shaped the nation and the world in which they live now.



**HIST 426 - African History**

*[Course to be offered at the 300 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 5 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210), US History (HIST 220), and departmental approval based on the following criteria: History grades that average A- or higher for all years and class citizenship. Students with History averages higher than B+, but not A-, will be considered on an individual basis; more weight will be given to grade averages in years 10 and 11.*

Despite being the oldest continent and home to the greatest diversity of life on the planet, Africa remains a largely misunderstood region of the world. Western media continues to bombard us with negative or misleading stereotypes and tropes about Africa, such as reducing the complexity of a continent to a single, homogeneous “country.” This course offers a broad introduction to the peoples and events which have shaped the continent’s past. From prehistory to present, students will learn the ways in which Africans have contributed to, and have been caught up in, global historical processes, undermining the prevalent western notion that Africa remained cut off from the world until the start of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. This course will also rely on diverse African voices to tell their stories and histories. This course will also not shy away from the series of very real crises that have plagued the continent over the past centuries; however, it addresses these problems in a constructive manner that helps students contextualize the roots of Africa’s issues. They will come to view them as global problems, and not simply as African problems. Finally, this course will center African solutions to the challenges that Africans have faced over time.

**HIST 428 - LGBT American History**

*[Course to be offered at the 300 level in 2025-26]*

*Full credit, meets 5 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210), US History (HIST 220), and departmental approval based on the following criteria: History grades that average A- or higher for all years and class citizenship. Students with History averages higher than B+, but not A-, will be considered on an individual basis; more weight will be given to grade averages in years 10 and 11.*

This course will survey United States history through the lens of “queerness,” broadly defined as going against a prescribed “norm,” from pre-colonial times to the present. After spending some time defining LGBT history, the course will then move chronologically and thematically through United States history with a focus on defining norms of gender and sexuality, moments of gender ambiguity or “transing” gender (to borrow a phrase from historian Jen Manion), and

the history of same-sex relationships, as well as how those relationships have been understood and recognized by society. While this course is geographically centered in the United States, the course will also pay close attention to moments when LGBT history crosses national borders, in terms of either immigration policies, US imperialism, or global cultural influences, to name just a few examples.

**Courses Not Offered in 2024-25:**

**HIST 310 - Classical World Civilizations**

**[Course not offered 2024-25. Course to be offered at the 300 level in 2025-26.]**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

This course on Classical World Civilizations will focus on some of the seminal ancient civilizations of the world. Topics will include the following:

- 1) Fifth-Century Greece
- 2) The Egyptian and Near Eastern Empires of the Hellenistic World
- 3) The Mauryan and Gupta Empires of India
- 4) The Roman Republic and the Empire through Nero
- 5) The Zhou, Qin, and Han dynasties of China

The course will then cover a number of important regions across the globe, and will highlight many of the unique features that account for the importance of these civilizations. Indeed, within each major civilization we will explore the traditional aspects of historical study – the political, economic and diplomatic. However, there will also be an examination of social and cultural themes to give a more full and thorough examination of these civilizations. While textbooks and other traditional historical readings will be used for this type of coverage, we'll use primary sources, art, and literature as well.

**HIST 312 - Comparative Race and Ethnicity**

**[Course not offered 2024-25]**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

This course examines race and ethnic relations in the United States and in other contemporary multiethnic/multiracial societies in the Americas (Brazil, Canada, the Caribbean), Asia, and Africa. It will also emphasize how to analyze current events with a deeper historical grounding. Our approach to the topic begins with the examination of

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some basic concepts, such as ethnicity and race, racism and ethnocentrism, racial and ethnic stratification, prejudice and discrimination, and the theoretical models of race relations—i.e., assimilation and pluralism. From these introductory sessions, the course will move to specific group studies. We will consider patterns of race and ethnic relations in heterogeneous societies while adopting a comparative perspective. Our global approach will emphasize the prevalence of intergroup conflict in the modern world.

### **HIST 315 - History of the Silk Roads**

**[Course not offered 2024-25. Course to be offered at the 300 level in 2025-26.]**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

The Silk Roads, a series of overland trade routes stretching from East Asia to Southern Europe, with tributary routes reaching as far south as Eastern Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and the Indian subcontinent, were some of the most important trade routes in human history. In this history elective, students will use the Silk Roads as a lens through which they can examine the histories of individual cultures and their connections to broader historical networks. The course is structured around three major historical eras. In the first part of the year, we'll focus on the Silk Roads in the Classical period, approximately 200 BCE - 600 CE, including not only the Roman Empire and the Han Dynasty but also other major territorial states of the time, such as the Parthians and Sogdians, as well as the various pastoralist societies on the margins. In the middle part of the year, we'll look at the age of the Mongols, approximately 1200-1400. In the spring, we will pick up the story of the Silk Road territories in the modern day. The primary focus of this final part of the course will be modern-day economic development along the old Silk Road routes, including a major focus on China's Belt and Road Initiative. Throughout the year, students will read both primary and secondary sources, and will engage in a number of independent research projects. Assessments will consist of in-class essays, research papers, and class presentations, along with shorter writing assignments designed to build key historical interpretation skills.

### **HIST 322 - Vast Early American History**

**[Course not offered 2024-25]**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

Vast Early America reimagines the creation of what will become the United States by taking a continental approach to the study of the past. This course moves beyond the Anglo-centric view of American history that prioritizes the English experience and goes east to west. Colonial

America was settled North to South in the French Empire and South to North in the Spanish Empire. Russia settled Alaska and pushed into northern California. All those regions eventually became part of the United States. Vast Early America also includes the Caribbean in its scope. The racial, gender, and class power dynamics that we are conscious of today took root in the first centuries of settlement. Vast Early America incorporates Native American history as part of the narrative. Vast Early America offers a new and provocative way of understanding our national story.

**HIST 327 - History of the Islamic World**

**[Course not offered 2024-25]**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

Outside of violent images of revolution and fundamentalists that we see in the media, many of us know very little about the peoples and cultures of the Islamic world. This course seeks to explore the history of the Middle East and Islamic World so that we may better understand the complexities of one of the world's most important regions. The culture and religion of Islam have acted as a unifying force across large sections of Africa, Asia, and Europe, creating essentially a single world-system that included West Africa, the Middle East, and India, as well as parts of Europe and China. The shared religion of Islam, which often carried with it a shared priority on literacy and education, created the basis for a level of cultural exchange and technological development unprecedented in world history. This class will examine the Islamic world system in three distinct periods in its history: the rise of Islam and the development of Islamic Empires; the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when empires such as the Ottomans faced external political and intellectual challenges from a rising Europe as well as from internal reform movements; and finally the rise of nation-states after World War I. The spread of Islam brought new ideas in art and architecture, revived and expanded on Greek philosophy, and introduced an unprecedented level of religious tolerance to the medieval world. The latter two sections will also lead us to examine topics that students have been exposed to before—the Enlightenment, absolutism and constitutionalism, gender relations, colonialism, nationalism, and socialism—but we will study them in a new context.

**HIST 329 - History of Medicine**

**[Course not offered 2024-25. Course to be offered at the 300 level in 2025-26.]**

*Full credit, meets 4 days/week*

*Prerequisites: Atlantic World History (HIST 210) and US History (HIST 220)*

This course is a global history of medical knowledge and practices from ancient times to the modern day. The class asks, through comparative and chronological approaches, how individuals and societies have understood health and disease, and how individuals have practiced medicine and had medicine practiced on them. Students will consider the perspectives and histories of patient, practitioner, and society together in the same frame in order to consider how medical ideas and practices have acted as a form of power, used both to great achievements and grave abuses.