

History 3760F/G

THE MEDITERRANEAN: ANCIENT TO MODERN TIMES

Fall 2025

Tuesday 2:30-4:30

Instructor: Professor Maya Shatzmiller

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Office: **Department of History, Lawson Hall**

Office Hours: **TBA**

This is a **draft** outline. Please see the course site on OWL Brightspace for a final version.

Course Description

Over the last fifty years there has been a resurgence in scholarly interest in the Mediterranean Sea and its land mass. Old questions were re-examined and new hypotheses proposed about every theme, offered and discussed in attempts to provide a unified history of the Mediterranean. New data was mined, and innovative methodologies were used to investigate them. The lived experiences around the Mediterranean, the settlement - ancient, medieval and modern – and the glorious past of Mediterranean people, was questioned in light of rise of the Atlantic world, two world wars and the role of institutions. Indeed, there is a lot there for historians to contemplate and rethink.

This course surveys the history of the Mediterranean from Ancient to modern times, emphasizing political and economic themes. The course aims to study through lectures and research papers important historical questions, among them, what makes Mediterranean history, what made the Mediterranean creator and transmitter of intellectual achievements from Greek philosophy to the Renaissance and three monotheistic religions, political composition and political disintegration from colonialism to city states and nation states, the Mediterranean contribution to economic institutions and the role of navigation and trade in Mediterranean history, how were trade centers formed and how they functioned, how did this environment contribute to individualism, creativity, and property rights.

Course Syllabus

I. Introduction (1 meeting)

II. Part One: The Best Environment Ever (2 meetings)

Climate, Geography, Crops, Islands and sea, Maritime and land connectivity, the demographics, the three monotheistic religions

III. Part Two: Political History and Institutions (4 meetings)

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Colonialism and Imperialism, Byzantium and the Islamic Mediterranean, the Crusades to the Holy Land, Mediterranean Feudalism, the Ottoman Empire

IV. Part Three: The Mediterranean Economy (3 meetings)

Agricultural cultivation, the problem with economic growth and Productivity, Manufacturing, the commercial revolution and trade, living standards, financial institutions

V. Part Four: Society, Institutions and the Individual (2 meetings)

Technological innovation, the Renaissance, women's status, law and legal institutions, from city states to ethnic nations

On completion of this course students will be able to:

- Explain and interpret events, movements, and topics from the history of the Mediterranean from ancient to modern times.
- Use historical evidence, including both primary and secondary sources, to construct and support historical arguments.
- Articulate, evaluate, and defend historical arguments and interpretations, orally and in writing.
- Conduct historical research, presenting arguments and receiving peer reviews.

On the whole the course will provide a thorough knowledge of a specific topic while enhancing research skills, train students in constructing knowledge through research and essay writing. Students will also become able to pursue individual interest with a research essay and enhance their knowledge in this way. Students will be asked to write a research essay with guidance including historical research methodologies, the structure of the paper, and will be provided with a list of essay topics to choose from, although students can choose their own topic.

Assignments include Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography, due sometime in early October, Research paper due after Reading Week and a final exam during exam period.

Prerequisite(s): Registration in third year or above, any module

Methods of Evaluation

Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (3-5 pp)	15%
Research Paper (10-15 pp)	30%
Attendance and Participation	20%

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Final Exam

35%

Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Advising. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

Essays may be submitted **up to three days late** (by 11:55pm) with a 10% deduction. Thereafter, essays will not be accepted without a formal consideration *Social Science Academic Advising on [Absence & Academic Consideration](#), the university's policies on [Academic Consideration for Medical Illness](#), and the Department of History's own [Undergraduate Policies and Statements](#)*

Students must complete all course assignments in order to pass the course. Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Advising. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

Students must attend at least seven of our twelve seminar meetings in order to pass this course, regardless of grades received for other assignments.

Course Materials Course Schedule and Readings

TBA

Additional Statements

Consultation with the instructor over research essay maybe undertaken via e-mail. Office hours to be announced later.

Use of electronic devices:

No cellphone in class, no electronic devices in lecture or tutorial (no use of the internet, no use of audio or video recording device

No eating in class

Use of generative artificial intelligence (AI):

You may not make any use of generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, in this course. Any use of such tools for assignments in this course may be considered a form of academic misconduct.

Please review the Department of History's shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html

for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.