COURSE NO. 573
COURSE TITLE Undergraduate Seminar:
Resistance and Adaptation to Slavery in the Americas
INSTRUCTOR Stern

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will study the ways in which Africans and Afro-Americans resisted and adapted to slavery in the Americas. We will look closely at patterns of accommodation and resistance, and their complex and subtle interplay in a variety of slave-based societies. In doing so, we will begin to enter the world of the slaves themselves. We will explore the culture and social networks they created under adverse conditions; the functions and significance of slave adaptations; how and why insurrections took place; and more generally, the impact of the slaves and their initiatives upon society at large.

The first unit of the seminar will provide a broad overview of slavery and slave societies in the Americas; the second and longest unit will study patterns of resistance and accommodation intensively; the third will examine the slave experience in the United States in light of the earlier two units. Our method will be comparative—the Latin American mainland, the Caribbean, and the United States—and our materials will include primary documents (in English Translation) as well as secondary sources.

LECTURES

Since this is a seminar, it will rely on intensive weekly discussion rather than lectures.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMINATIONS

There will be NO exams.

Required written work, tentatively, will be one short paper and one longer one (total: ca. 20 pages).

GRADING SYSTEM

/Tentative weighting: discussion—40%
short paper—20%
long paper—40%.

REQUIRED READINGS

A tentative syllabus listing readings will be available shortly.