COURSE NO.  
History 625

COURSE TITLE  
American Social History before 1860

INSTRUCTOR  
Maris Vinovskis

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The course will examine the antecedents of American social development in the Old World and analyze the transformations of the traditional family and the social structure in America. The course will focus on a series of topics in American social history that will be traced throughout this period. Particular attention will be paid to the impact of political, economic and social changes on the functioning of the family and on the social system as a whole.

A major objective of this course will be to teach students to analyze critically various approaches to American social history and to develop a useful perspective for contemporary American social development.

LECTURES:

Lectures twice weekly, supplemented by discussion meetings.

EXAMINATIONS:

Two preliminary examinations will be given as well as a final examination.

GRADING SYSTEM:

The two preliminary examinations will count for approximately fifty percent of the final grade and the final examination will be worth approximately fifty percent also. Active interest and participation in the discussion will be taken into consideration in the final grade.

REQUIRED READINGS:

See the attached course outline for the required readings.
WEEK ONE:

August 29: "Introduction to the Study of Social History"

August 31: "Spanish Settlement in the New World"


WEEK TWO:

September 5: "The English Background of Immigration to America"

September 7: "Patterns of Settlement in America: Virginia and Massachusetts"


3) *Louis B. Wright, Life in Colonial America, pp. 131-245.

WEEK THREE:

September 12: "Economic Development"

September 14: "Politics and the Social Structure"


WEEK FOUR:

September 19: "Religion and the Colonial Mind"

September 21: "Educational Development and Trends"

Read: 1) *David D. Hall, "Understanding the Puritans," in *Essays*, pp. 31-49.

WEEK FIVE:

September 26: "Development of the Family"

September 28: "Slaves and Indians"


WEEK SIX:

October 3: Examination

October 5: "Causes of the American Revolution"


WEEK SEVEN:

October 10: "Social Consequences of the American Revolution"

October 12: "Party Formation in the New Republic"


WEEK EIGHT:

October 17: "Economic Change in the New Republic"

October 19: "The War of 1812 and the Rise of American Nationalism"

WEEK NINE:

October 24: "Urban Growth and Life"

October 26: "Industrialization"

Read: 1) *James C. Bonner, "Profile of a Late Ante-Bellum Community," AHR, pp. 663-680 (Bobbs Merrill Reprint H-241)*


WEEK TEN:

October 31: "The American West"

November 2: "Immigration in the Ante-Bellum Period"


WEEK ELEVEN:

November 7: "Jacksonian Democracy"

November 9: "Religious Changes"

Read: 1) Barbara Welter, "The Cult of True Womanhood," American Quarterly (summer 1968)


WEEK TWELVE:

November 14: Examination

November 16: "Family Life"


WEEK THIRTEEN:

November 21: "Educational Practices and Changes"


WEEK FOURTEEN:

November 28: "Poverty in the New World"

November 30: "Slavery and Abolitionism"


WEEK FIFTEEN:

December 5: "Coming of the Civil War"

December 7: "Overview: 1630-1860"


* Indicates that the material may be purchased
Section meetings will be arranged after the beginning of classes.