History 701 has three broad goals. First, to encourage you to think about history and about your work from a global perspective. Second, to introduce you to faculty outside your area of study and incite you to work with a spectrum of historians during your studies. And finally, to promote a greater sense of intellectual and personal community among graduate students and foster links among students in different fields.

This year the seminar will focus on comparison in history. Comparison is essential to place your own work (and the research of others) in a global perspective. Why and how does one compare, and to what end? What is to be gained by comparison and what are the problems associated with it? How does comparing help historians in a wide variety of temporal and thematic fields think about their materials in fresh and novel ways? Historians have often called for more comparing and more comparative history, with modest results. Why is this so?

While most of you will not become comparative historians the vast majority of you will practice comparison in order to situate and define your work. The seminar will introduce you to how history department faculty approach about the process of comparison, and evaluate its problems and pitfalls.

Given the size of the class (20 + students) and the limited time at our disposal (50 minutes per week) our discussions will be suggestive and illustrative rather than comprehensive. The goal is to help all students think about new questions and approaches. Like every course you will take while in Madison, what you get out of the seminar is dependent on the investment you make in it.

**Requirements and class mechanics:**

We meet on Thursdays from 12:05 to 12:55 in the Curti Lounge. Please arrive a few minutes early so that we may begin on time. Most seminars will be led by a faculty member who will discuss a topic or methodology related to comparing. Readings consist of one or two articles chosen by the visiting faculty, and will be posted on the class Learn@UW page one week in advance. Guests will speak for approximately 15 minutes and we will then open up the floor to questions and debate. Your participation is essential. The requirements for this course are modest. Do the readings and come to seminar prepared with questions. In addition, you should:
• Write up a 2 page research proposal that is comparative in nature (due December 19.)

• Write short reflections about the readings or about the faculty presentation and seminar. Your comments can take the form of a short critique, a series of questions, or an evaluation of the texts. I’m looking for no more than one paragraph (7-10 lines). Your comments should be posted on the class “discussion” site by the Friday following our seminar. Please post comments for 8 of the 12 weeks of readings and presentations.

**Grading** is based on attendance (please notify me if you will be absent; an unreasonable number of absences will be noted), contributions to discussion (both written and oral), and your research proposal.

*History 701 website: Go to your Learn@UW → locate your class list and click History 701 → then click on “content” (for the readings) or “Discussion” (to post your comments) in the upper left hand corner.*

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September 8. Laird Boswell. **Introduction. Should Historians Compare and to What End?**

Peter Baldwin, “Comparing and Generalizing: Why all History is Comparative, Yet No History is Sociology” in Deborah Cohen and Maura O’Connor eds., *Comparison and History: Europe in Cross-National Perspective* (Routledge, 2004), 1-22, 41-56.

September 15. Leonora Neville. **Comparing Religions**


September 22. Louise Young. **Comparing Empires: the Japanese Case**


September 29. David McDonald. **Comparing Empires--Russian vs. "European" Colonialism in the Nineteenth Century**

“Forum: Colonialism and Technocracy at the End of the Tsarist Era,” *Slavic Review* (Spring 2010): 120-188. The forum is comprised of four articles. Prof.
McDonald suggest you pay attention to the articles in following order of emphasis: Sunderland, Geraci comment, Holquist, and his comment.


October 13. Lee Palmer Wandel. Ways of Knowing


October 20. Leslie Abadie and Christine Lamberson: Managing time to degree and crafting a CV as an emerging scholar

October 27. Suzanne Desan. Comparisons in the Age of Revolutions.


November 3. Colleen Dunlavy. How not to Compare Apples and Oranges

Readings TBA


Frederick Cooper "Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History" *American Historical Review* (December 1994)

November 17. Laird Boswell. Comparing Genocide


November 24. Thanksgiving

December 1. Steve Kantrowitz. *The ‘Race Relations’ Paradigm and U.S.-South Africa Comparisons*


December 15. Joe Dennis. *Comparing the History of Chinese and European Print Cultures*

  Readings TBA