INTRODUCTION

This course aims at exploring the concept of the sea in history. How has the sea figured in historical studies? Can a sea have a history? Should it? What is at stake in maritime history? How does it differ in its formulations and sources from histories of nation-states or empires? The course will follow a number of authors who focus on the sea as coherent areas of inquiry. By examining the conditions of possibility and genealogies of writing the sea in history, the objective of the course is to introduce students to a new and exciting domain in the field, as well as to reflect on the nature and practice of a discipline that is traditionally associated to the concept of the territorial state.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Students will compose a critical and thoughtful 10-page (12 font, double-spaced) review of a book drawn from a list to be distributed in class (or another book upon consultation with the professor). A first version of the review will be presented by the author in class (May 10th-21st), and the final version of the review is due on the last day of class, May 28th. This assignment will be worth 25% of the final grade.

The midterm exam, consisting of a number of short writing exercises, will be worth 25% of the final grade. It will take place in class on April 9th.

The final exam, consisting of broad essay questions on the primary themes of the course, will be worth 30% of the final grade.

Finally, because of the nature of this course, it is imperative for students to attend class assiduously and to come prepared for informed discussion. Attendance and participation will be worth 20% of the grade. It will be impossible to do well in this course without such a commitment.

COURSE POLICY

In line with the University principles and policies regarding academic honesty as outlined in the Student Handbook, any form of cheating or plagiarism will be regarded as a most serious offense and will be brought to the attention of the Faculty Disciplinary Committee. Rules and regulations governing class attendance and examinations are found in the University Catalogue.
Feb 15-17-19: Week 1. What is a Sea? What is History?


Feb 22-24: Week 2. Space, Time and the Subject of History


No class Feb 26th (Prophet’s Birthday)

Mar 1-3-5: Week 3. Writing History


Mar 8-10-12: Week 4. At the Beginning there was Hegel: World-History, the State and the Sea


Mar 15-17-19: Week 5. A Science for the Sea


Mar 22-24-26: Week 6. An Anthropomorphic Vision of the Sea


Mar 29-31: Week 7. Seas and Oceans in Geopolitics


April 1st – April 5th: No class (Easter Holiday)

April 7th. Review session

April 9th. Midterm Exam


Apr 19-21-23: Week 10. The Mediterranean and its Discontents I


Apr 26-28-30: Week 11. The Mediterranean and its Discontents II


May 3-5-7: Week 12. Thalassology Unbound


May 10-12-14: Week 13. Student Presentations.

