

Areas Studies: Discover New Worlds

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Summer Institute in the Arts & Humanities, Faculty of Arts (HKU)

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Course Description:

Our world is increasingly global and increasingly small. This five-day course introduces students to the study of several different regions of the world, including the Atlantic, Europe, the Americas and Southeast Asia. Each of these regions has elements that are distinctive and elements which they share. We use the disciplines of history, literary studies, anthropology, cultural studies, and international relations, among others to understand them. This course assumes no previous background or knowledge about any of these regions. Students will encounter these regions through in-class exercises, discussion, lecture, and readings, learning to think more deeply about them.

Course Outline:

Day 1 Jul 29 (Mon): Atlantic Worlds. The idea of “Atlantic” studies, Columbus and the Columbian Exchange. Global disease regimes and other ocean worlds.

Day 2: Jul 30 (Tues): European Studies. What is Europe? How is national identity formed? European conflicts and the war in Ukraine. Nation and identity in other contexts.

Day 3 Jul 31 (Wed): American Studies. What is race? How has it defined the societies of North and South America, particularly the United States? How can this idea help (or hurt) our understanding of other societies? What other lenses can be used to make sense of the Americas?

Day 4 (Aug 1): The 20th Century Atlantic. The First World War, the Holocaust, the creation of “the West,” NATO.

Day 5 (Aug 2): Southeast Asia. What makes a region? Identity and Culture in Southeast Asia. Overseas Chinese.

Course Objectives and Outcomes:

Students will be able to:

- 1) Be introduced to the regions of study covered in this course
- 2) Consider how these regions interact in a global context
- 3) Engage with the various disciplines/frames of analysis at an introductory level

Assessment:

30% Class participation and engagement

50% in class exercises

20% quizzes