

Major Issues of History of Science

Code: 42280
ECTS Credits: 15

Degree	Type	Year	Semester
4313223 History of Science: Science, History and Society	OT	0	1

The proposed teaching and assessment methodology that appear in the guide may be subject to changes as a result of the restrictions to face-to-face class attendance imposed by the health authorities.

Contact

Name: Monica Balltondre Pla
Email: Monica.Balltondre@uab.cat

Use of Languages

Principal working language: catalan (cat)

Other comments on languages

There could be some session in Spanish and some session in English

Teachers

Agustí Nieto-Galan
Jorge Molero Mesa
Jaume Sastre Juan
Miquel Carandell Baruzzi
Silvia Cora Levy Lazcano

External teachers

Antoni Malet (UPF)
Antoni Roca Rosell (UPC)
Daniele Cozzoli (UPF)
Emilia Calvo (UB)
Gemma Cirac (UPF)
Jaume Valentines Álvarez (UNL)
Jesús Galech (UB)
Jon Arrizabalaga (CSIC)
María Rosa Massa (UPC)
Oliver Hochadel (CSIC)
Pepe Pardo (CSIC)

Prerequisites

It is a mandatory module in the research (academic) itinerary. It trains the students for the research modules (M5 + M9) of the second semester.

Objectives and Contextualisation

How to write the History of Science at the beginning of the 21st century? To answer this complex question, the module provides students with a critical approach to the different schools, themes and problems on which the history of science has been working as an academic discipline. It invites students to draw useful conclusions for their education as historians of science today. It is a *historiographical* module, in which plural views of a specific event in the past have priority over consensus -the latter being worked in module M1.

Competences

- Analyse the multiple approaches to science's past taken by different authors and schools, and make reasoned choices between them.
- Apply historical knowledge of science to communication, material culture and science teaching.
- Apply this discipline's own analysis methods and techniques in the construction of various historical narratives.
- Develop an original, interdisciplinary historical narrative that integrates humanistic and scientific culture.
- Display a sound knowledge of history so as to pinpoint the great events of the past with accuracy: authors, theories, experiments, practices, etc., and their stages of stability and transformation.
- Gather and critically assess information for problem solving, in accordance with the discipline's own analysis methods and techniques.
- Interpret, comment on and edit scientific texts on science's past and place them rigorously within their historical context.
- Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.
- Use information and communication technologies appropriately in research and in professional activity.
- Work in interdisciplinary teams, showing leadership and initiative.
- Work independently: solving problems, taking decisions and making innovative proposals.

Learning Outcomes

1. "Identify areas of intersection between humanistic and scientific culture: science and religion; science and power; science and technology; science and gender."
2. Adopt knowledge advanced historiography science.
3. Analyse the historical dimension of a particular scientific theory from a cultural and social perspective.
4. Analyse a certain scientific theory in its historical dimension from a cultural and social perspective.
5. Construct a critical bibliography on a particular problem in the history of science, using databases and directories.
6. Correctly deconstruct footnotes when analysing the intellectual itinerary of a particular author in order to ascribe the author to a particular historiographic school.
7. Critically analyse the different schools of science historians that have arisen throughout in the 20th century: positivism, historicity, sociology.
8. Critically analyse the historical moments of change, transformation and even revolution in scientific thought.
9. Describe the great experiments in the history of science as seen in their historical context.
10. Develop various historical narrations (multiple approaches) of a single event in the science of the past.
11. Display methodological habits in commentaries on representative texts of the main historiographic schools .
12. Distinguish the great figures in the history of science as seen in their historical context.
13. Distinguish the main changes that have taken place in the history of science before and since the contribution of Thomas S. Kuhn.
14. Distinguish the recent historiographic trends that regard science as a cultural phenomenon of knowledge in transit.

15. Evaluate the contribution of the great paradigms the history of science: heliocentrism, geocentrism, creationism, evolutionism, etc.
16. Gather and critically assess information for problem solving, in accordance with the discipline's own analysis methods and techniques.
17. Integrate intellectual and material factors (internal and external) when developing a historical narrative of science.
18. Integrate new primary sources (scientific instruments, spaces of scientific practice, machines, etc.) as agents of a new social and cultural history of science.
19. Place secondary sources within the historical context in which they were written, disseminated and responded to.
20. Present the state of the art of a particular historiographic problem by identifying and analysing the relevant literature.
21. Relate these new material sources to the traditional textual primary sources.
22. Rigorously contextualise and analyse the different secondary sources.
23. Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.
24. Use information and communication technologies appropriately in research and in professional activity.
25. Work in interdisciplinary teams, showing leadership and initiative.
26. Work independently: solving problems, taking decisions and making innovative proposals.
27. Write critical analyses of representative works in the history of science.

Content

The course is organized in two blocks:

A. Methodology and development of the discipline: introduces the student into the bibliography, approaches and research methodology in the history of science. It also provides an overview of the development of the discipline throughout the 20th century.

B. Topics and problems: explores the relationship of science with certain issues and border problems, from a historiographic perspective.

A. METHODOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE DISCIPLINE

- Presentation. The history of science as an academic discipline: historiographical introduction. Sources and databases.
- The origins of the history of science (I): Sarton
- The origins of the history of science (II): Koyré
- The first sociology: Merton
- Thomas Kuhn and the Cold War
- The cultural and sociological turn (I)
- The cultural and sociological turn (II)
- Final session of block A

B. THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE: THEMES AND PROBLEMS

- Medicine
- Human Sciences
- Technology (I)

- Technology (II)
- Art
- Religion
- Mathematics and engineering (I)
- Mathematics and engineering (II)
- Gender (I)
- Gender (II)
- Oral Presentations
- Environmental history
- Global Science
- Big Science
- STS
- Publics (I)
- Publics (II)
- Global history
- Cultural hegemony studies
- HPS
- Final session

Methodology

The master classes of the professor prepare a set of readings that are discussed in presentations and debates at class.

The student prepares a historiographical essay during the module based on the weekly readings and debates, as well as his readings.

The students do a text analysis for each block.

The autonomous secondary literature research also allows the student to get acquainted with the historiographical state of the art in the topics and problems of his interest in the history of science.

Activities

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master classes	94	3.76	1, 8, 7, 15, 2, 9, 10, 13, 12, 3, 17, 16
Type: Supervised			

Oral presentations and mentoring	46	1.84	1, 8, 7, 15, 5, 2, 6, 9, 10, 13, 12, 20, 3, 17, 26, 25
Type: Autonomous			
Personal study, reading, analysis of articles and elaboration of written assignments	225	9	1, 8, 7, 15, 5, 2, 6, 9, 10, 13, 12, 20, 3, 17, 16, 26, 25, 24

Assessment

The evaluation will consist in the following activities:

Activity	Weight
<p>Elaboration of a historiographical essay (5000 words). The essay will analyze the work of a historian of science and his or her historiographical contribution. A list of eligible works is included in the bibliography.</p> <p>The essay must consist in the presentation of the author (500 words), a summary of the work (1000 words) and the description and discussion of its historiographical approach (3500 words). Once the historiographical approach has been analyzed, it must be critically compared to other approaches to the same topic (placing them in time): what are the implications of the historiographical approach? How does it build its object of study? What are the methodological issues involved? Etc.</p> <p>A model of an article will be provided so that it can set the style and format guidelines in the elaboration of the essay. Formal and linguistic correction will be evaluated.</p> <p>Supervision: a tutor assigned. Evaluation: the coordinators of the module.</p>	50%
<p>Oral presentation of the book chosen for the historiographical essay. Brief presentation of the author, the main ideas, and the historiographical approach of the book.</p> <p>Evaluation: coordinators of the module.</p>	20%
<p>Text analysis of a classical text of block A (1000 words)</p> <p>Evaluation: coordinators of the module</p>	15%
<p>Text analysis of a paper of block B (1000 words)</p> <p>Evaluation: coordinators of the module</p>	15%

If a student does not pass the activities, he or she can present a revised version at the end of the module. Oral presentations are not subject to this possibility.

In case that activities and tests or exams cannot be taken onsite, they will be adapted to an online format made available through the UAB's virtual tools (original weighting will be maintained). Homework, activities and class participation will be carried out through forums, wikis and/or discussion on TEAMS, etc. Lecturers will ensure that students are able to access these virtual tools, or will offer them feasible alternatives.

Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Elaboration of an historiographical essay	50%	2.5	0.1	1, 8, 7, 5, 22, 2, 11, 9, 10, 13, 14, 20, 3, 17, 18, 16, 21, 26, 19
Oral presentation	20%	2.5	0.1	4, 22, 6, 14, 18, 21, 26, 19, 24
Text analysis of a classical text of block A	15%	2.5	0.1	7, 15, 2, 13, 12, 27, 16, 26
Text analysis of a paper of block B	15%	2.5	0.1	2, 11, 13, 14, 3, 17, 23, 25

Bibliography

DATABASE "HISTORY OF SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND MEDICINE"

The UAB has a subscription to the database "History of Science, Technology and Medicine", which includes the bibliographic database of the journal ISIS and the History of Science Society (HSS). We have 4 simultaneous accesses. You can access from outside the campus in the following way:

- 1) Access the UAB Private Virtual Network <http://xpv.uab.cat/> using your NIU and password
- 2) Click on "Biblioteques" in order to access the website of the Library Services of the UAB
- 3) Search "History of Science and Technology" in the Catalog of the UAB. Among the results you will find:
History of science, technology, and medicine [Recurso electrónico]
- 4) Click on this reference and you will find the direct link to the database.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The website of the History of Science Society (HSS) includes a very good bibliographical resource: [Reading the History of Western Science: A List of Good Places to Start](#)

DICTIONARIES, GUIDES, ANTOLOGIES AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS

BYNUM, William F. & Roy PORTER (eds.) (1993). *Companion Encyclopedia of the History of Medicine*. London: Routledge, 2 vols.

BYNUM, William F.; BYNUM, Helen (eds.) (2006). *Dictionary of Medical Biography*. Westport: Greenwood, 5 volumes.

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[The Cambridge History of Science](#). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 8 vols. [Disponible online].

PESTRE, Domique (ed.) (2015). *Histoire des sciences et des savoirs*. Paris: Seuil, 3 vols.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Historiographic overviews are scarce. However, the following books might be useful as reference works:

DOEL, Ronald E., SÖDERQVIST, Thomas (2006). *The Historiography of Contemporary Science, Technology, and Medicine: Writing Recent Science*, London: Routledge.

GAVROGLU, Kostas (2007). *O Passado das Ciências como História*. Porto: Porto Editora.

GRAHAM, L. W. LEPENIES, P. WEINGART (eds.) (1987). *Functions and Uses of Disciplinary Histories*. Dordrecht: Springer.

GOLINSKI, Jan (1998). *Making Natural Knowledge. Constructivism and the History of Science*. Cambridge University Press.

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SOLÍS, Carlos (ed.) (1994). *Razones e intereses. La historia de la ciencia después de Kuhn*. Barcelona: Paidós.

SOLÍS, Carlos (ed.) (1998). *Alta tensión: historia, filosofía y sociología de la ciencia. Ensayos en honor de Thomas S. Kuhn*. Barcelona: Paidós.

BOOKS FOR THE HISTORIOGRAPHIC ESSAY

<https://hssonline.org/2019/11/25/hss-award-winning-books-in-the-history-of-science/>