



The Exeter College Oxford Summer Programme
at Exeter College in the University of Oxford

The History of International Slavery

Course Description

At the heart of the course will be a consideration of what is the institution of slavery, how it manifested itself across different contexts and the connections across various slave societies. There will be a specific, though not exclusive, focus on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery. The first part of this course will consider the origins, development and core characteristics of slavery from the ancient world to the early modern period. The second part of the course will explore the dismantling of the slave system beginning with a consideration of forms of enslaved resistance including a specific focus on the only successful slave revolt in the Atlantic World, the Haitian Revolution. From here, the course will examine the rise of the abolitionist movement and the emancipation of slavery. The final part of this course will consider the short and long-term legacies of slavery. First, it will consider what life looked like for formerly enslaved persons in postemancipation societies. Next, it will focus on the transition to other labour systems. The course will conclude with a reflection of some of the present-day legacies of slavery and current efforts to address concerns.

Through 12 lectures and 6 seminars and the required reading students will gain a fuller understanding of the rich global history of slavery and a deeper sense of the context of contemporary debates.

Course Objectives

The aim of the course is to develop students':

- understanding of the principal factors driving the origins, development and abolition of slavery
- understanding of the various debates historians have engaged in around the history of slavery
- ability to reflect critically on historical and contemporary issues surrounding slavery
- skills of source analysis and use of digital history databases on slavery
- construction of a persuasive argument in writing and oral discussion

The course is designed to be suitable for students of all academic disciplines who have an interest in history. There are no prerequisites, and no previous knowledge of history is necessary but would be an advantage.

Teaching Methods and Assessment

- 12 x 1.25hr Lectures (15hrs)
- 6 x 1.25hr Seminars (7.5hrs)
- 4 x 1.25hr Tutorials (5hrs)

Final assessment: An essay of no more than 3,000 words (40%), a final three-hour written examination (40%), oral presentation (10%) and participation in seminar discussion (10%).

Lecture Schedule

1. Introduction: The Global History of Slavery
 - a. Overview of the course
 - b. Comparison of slavery from the ancient world to the modern day
2. Slavery and the Construction of Race
3. Origins of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery
4. Comparing Forms of Slavery across the Atlantic World
5. Political Culture within Slave Societies
6. Slavery and the Development of Capitalism
7. Forms of Slave Resistance
8. Haitian Revolution and its Global Impact
9. The Rise of the Anti-Slavery Movement
10. The Abolition of Slavery
11. Legacies of Slavery I: Post-emancipation societies and the Transition to new Labour Systems
12. Legacies of Slavery II: Current Debates and Efforts on the Legacies of Slavery