

HIST 3311.001
The Study of History
 Spring 2026
 M/W 4:00 to 5:15 pm
 LH 201

Instructor: Kendra K. DeHart, Ph.D.

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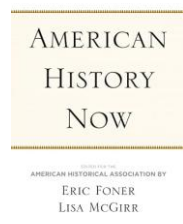
Office: LH 208

Office Hours: Tuesday 10 am to 12 pm; Tuesday 3:30 to 5 pm; or by appointment. *Note: I will be in my office unless I have required meetings or unforeseen emergencies. Scheduling office hours ahead of time is always encouraged.*

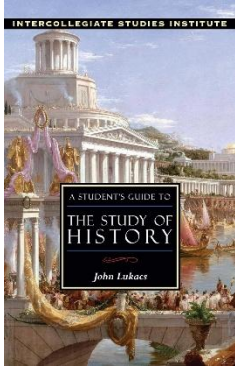
Course Description:

What is history? If it is simply a collection of facts, why are there so many different books written about the American Revolution, the American Civil War, or other events in American history? The Study of History prepares history majors and minors to be better able to answer these questions. This seminar introduces students to a range of historical methods and topics. We will examine our current and past assumptions about progress, the reliability of primary and secondary sources, historical objectivity, and the purpose of the historical profession. By its nature, such a course can never be “complete,” but we will read widely across temporal borders, sample a range of perspectives on the writing of history, and consider a number of theoretical approaches that have been influential in the field. Students will also hone skills essential to the historian’s craft—reading, writing, and critical thinking.

Required Texts:



Foner, Eric and Lisa McGirr, eds. *American History Now: Critical Perspectives on the Past*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.



Lukacs, John. *A Student's Guide to the Study of History*. Washington, D.C.: ISI Books, 2000.

Suggested Text:

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writing Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. ISBN 978-0-226-82336-2. Can also be found online.

Course Objectives:

1. Understand the major historiographical trends in American history over the course of the twentieth century.
2. Define primary and secondary sources and the differences between them.
3. Identify and write a thesis.
4. Compare and contrast multiple points of view and historical interpretations.
5. Write effectively, logically, and persuasively about topics and individuals in American history with proper citations.
6. Determine and evaluate how historians locate, gather, organize, analyze, interpret, and report information using various methodologies.
7. Understand the professional role that historians play in contemporary society, both as academics and as public historians.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The graduating student in history will be able to:

SLO 1—The history student will demonstrate historical research skills in a logically organized, written paper that is mechanically correct and supported by relevant documentation of historical content.

Marketable skills: Students can identify useful resources from a pool of data.
Students can select and organize data in a relevant manner.
Students can make written presentations to various audiences.

SLO 2—The history student will demonstrate the ability to write about topics in historiography and how those topics are interpreted.

Marketable skills: Students can utilize data to persuade various audiences.
Students can utilize data to generate and strengthen ideas.
Students can decipher stances adopted by various individuals.

SLO 3—The history student will demonstrate knowledge of American History, World History, and Non-American History.

Marketable Skills: Students can meet deadlines in a successful manner.

Students can discharge responsibilities in an adequate manner.

Students can manage the absorption of data.

The Student Learning Outcomes will be measured by the administration of daily quizzes, exams, book reviews, research papers, and group presentations.

Course Policies:

1. **Attendance at class meetings:** You are expected to attend every class! Regular attendance and punctuality are vital to academic success. This class is designed to encourage students' participation and discussion; therefore, any student that expects to do well in this course must be present with the material read. Students whose work schedules or personal obligations prevent regular attendance should enroll in a section with more convenient meeting times.

I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. Please make every effort to be on time. Arriving late and leaving early are very disruptive to your fellow colleagues as well as to the professor.

Responsibilities for notifying faculty of absences and for arranging potential make-ups rest with the students. If you miss class due to illness, car trouble, a death in the family, etc., you must contact me directly via email or in person with an explanation of your absence. Even in the case of documented emergencies, I reserve the right to not excuse the absence.

The University attendance policy states that instructors shall drop students for excessive absences with a resulting grade of F. **FOUR absences are considered excessive.** I do not anticipate needing to drop students in this class for excessive absences, but I will do so if absenteeism becomes a problem.

2. **Contacting the Instructor:** The instructor's email is the preferred method of contact. Students should use the phone number only for emergency situations.

All email messages to the instructor should include your name, your class section number, and a simple message stating the reason you are contacting the instructor. During the week, emails will normally be answered within twenty-four hours. Emails that arrive late Friday afternoon, Saturday, or Sunday most likely will not receive a reply until Monday, but you may send an email at any time. Questions such as "What did we cover in class?" will normally not be answered.

3. **Make-Up Policy:** I will give make-up assignments only in extreme cases. Make-up assignments are allowed only in cases of documented, unavoidable events that prevent attendance. Students who do not give such notification and provide documentation will not be allowed to make-up the assignment.
4. **Academic Integrity:** Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. A scholar is expected to be punctual,

prepared, and focused; meaningful and pertinent participation is appreciated. Examples of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to: Turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden.

5. **Classroom Climate of Respect**

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

6. **Copyright Notice:**

My lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials I create. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own use. You may not and may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly whether or not a fee is charged without my express written consent. Similarly, you own copyright in your original papers and exam essays. If I am interested in posting your answers or papers on the course website, I will ask for your written permission.

Assignments:

1. **"Cast of Characters" Paragraphs:** You will write one paragraph describing two key figures who has been influential to the historical profession. These individuals' names tend to pop up frequently in discussions of history. Your job is to identify their ideas and how they have influenced the practice of history, so that collectively you will generate a sort of Cliff's Notes of major thinkers. Summarize their ideas and contributions in a carefully constructed 200-300 word paragraph and give a presentation on your character to the class.
2. **Weekly Reflections:** Most of our meetings will include the discussion of common readings that are required for everyone. For each of these common readings, you will be required to write a two-page reflection of the reading. In this reflection, I encourage you to write about ideas, questions, observations, or comparisons that are worth bringing up for discussion. This is not a formal piece of writing but rather something that indicates that you have read and thought about the material. That said, I expect you to write complete sentences with proper grammar and use citations where appropriate. There is a total of 10 reflections assigned, but you are only required to submit eight. If you would like to submit the full ten, the extra two will count as extra credit.
3. **Quizzes:** Quizzes will be randomly assigned in class. In most cases, these quizzes will NOT be announced prior to their administration. You will be allowed to use notes on quizzes, so I encourage you to take notes while you read. There is no make-up policy for quizzes. These will count toward your attendance/participation points.

4. **Book Review:** Each of you will be required to select and read a book of your choosing. Note: you must clear your book with me beforehand. You will then write a formal book review. These book reviews must be no more or no less than three pages. A handout will be provided for tips on how to write a successful book review. You will also be required to submit the paper through SafeAssign on Blackboard to check for plagiarism. On the day the book review is due, you will give a five-to-ten minute presentation to the class.
5. **250th Anniversary Exhibit:** This is an exciting year for US History! The nation will be celebrating its 250th birthday. Together as a class, we will design an exhibit to be feature in the Library to commemorate the occasion.
6. **Historiographical Essay:** The major assignment for this class will be a historiographical essay, which you will turn in at the end of the semester. The paper should be between eight-to-ten pages, double-spaced with standard margins and twelve-point font. For this paper, you can choose any event, individual, idea, or policy you would like to analyze in American history. You will then pick three historical monographs (books) that explore your topic. In the paper, include a brief summary of each, but focus on using the books to explain the trajectory of the field and how interpretations of your topic have changed over time. How has the study of this topic evolved? How many different sources and approaches have been used? What's been left out and why? You will also be required to use three primary sources in your essay, proving that you can analyze primary source material as well as place primary source material within the context of secondary source material.

This assignment is worth a total of 400 points (40% of your grade). There will be four different grades associated with this major assignment. The first is a bibliography of the books you chose along with a brief description of why you chose them. For the second grade, you will turn in a copy of your reading notes on the books. The third will be a rough draft of your paper. The final essay will serve as the fourth grade. Here is the breakdown.

Bibliography & Reading Notes	50 pts.
Rough Draft	50 pts.
Final Essay	200 pts.
Total	300 pts.

GRADES:

Students can earn a possible 1,000 points by the end of this course.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

Historiographical Essay	300 pts.
Attendance/Quizzes	100 pts.
“Cast of Characters”	100 pts.
Book Review	200 pts.
250 Anniversary Exhibit	200 pts.
<u>Weekly Reflections</u>	<u>100 pts.</u>
Total Possible	1,000 pts.

Grade Breakdown:

1,000 to 900 pts.	A
899 to 800 pts.	B
799 to 700 pts.	C
699 to 600 pts.	D
599 <	F

A Range = Outstanding. All assignments are turned in on time and reflect thoughtful and analytical thinking with a thorough understanding of historical events and trends.

B Range = All assignments are turned in on time and are above average but are not outstanding work. They demonstrate an understanding of historical events, but the analytical thinking is weaker than that for an “A.”

C Range = Average. Assignments indicate an average understanding of historical events. Work tends to be narrative rather than analytical. There is need for improvement.

D Range = Below average. Writing is mostly narrative. There is no analysis and narrowly answers the question assigned. Assignments are incomplete.

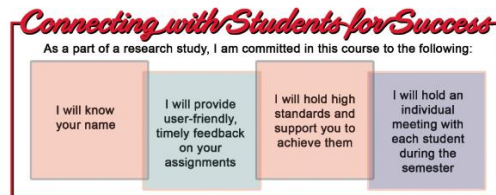
F Range = Fail. Assignments are not turned in or are late without the instructor’s approval. They are substantially below average and fail to answer the questions. Plagiarizing, of course, will result in disciplinary action.

ADA Statement

SRSU Disability Services. Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Mary Schwartz, M. Ed., L.P.C, in Counseling and Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall, Room 112. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832. Telephone: 432-837-8691. Email: mschwartz@sulross.edu

Library Information

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library’s website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).



SEMESTER SCHEDULE

Note: This syllabus with its schedule is an expectation of class topics, learning activities, and anticipated student learning. However, the instructor reserves the right to make changes to this schedule that would result in enhanced or more effective learning on the part of the students. Students will have prior notification of any necessary changes in the semester schedule.

WEEK 1: Jan. 14—Introduction

- Tasks:
Read syllabus
- DUE FRIDAY 1/16:
Introductory Essay (post on Blackboard)
 - **For my eyes only:** By Friday, post a short essay telling me a little about who you are and where you are from. Have you declared a major? If not, what are your general interests? Specifically, I would like the essay to address a little bit about your experiences with history courses in the past. You can draw from your experiences in elementary school, middle school, high school, or college. I encourage your honesty and welcome your input on what you found most rewarding or most discouraging with your experiences in history courses to date. Also, tell me anything you would like me to know about you and your learning preferences.

WEEK 2: Jan. 19 & 21—What Is Historiography?

- No Class Monday, 1/19: MLK Day
- Lecture: “History vs. Historiography”

WEEK 3: Jan. 26 & 28—“Big Thinkers in History”

- 1/26: Due COC Paragraphs & Class Presentations (Pick Three from the List)
 1. Herodotus
 2. St. Augustine of Hippo
 3. David Hume
 4. Auguste Comte
 5. Immanuel Kant
 6. Friedrich Nietzsche
 7. Leopold von Ranke
 8. G. W. F. Hegel
 9. Fernand Braudel
 10. Karl Marx
 11. Jacques Derrida
 12. bell hooks
 13. Michele Foucault
 14. Judith Butler
 15. Joan W. Scott

- 1/28: Read Edward H. Carr, “What Is History?” on Blackboard. Prepare for a quiz over the reading.
http://www.24grammata.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Carr-What-is-history-24grammata.com_.pdf

WEEK 4: Feb. 2 & 4— History From Below & Above

- 2/2: Read Lukas, *A Student’s Guide to History*
 - **Due: Reflection**
- 2/4: Read Marx, “The Materialist Conception of History” on Blackboard.
 - **Due: Reflection**

WEEK 5: Feb. 9 & 11—Postmodernism & the “Cultural Turn”

- 2/9: Postmodernism Lecture
 - **Due: In-Class Quiz**
- 2/11: Read either *American History Now*, Preface & Chapter 10 OR “The Great Cat Massacre” on Blackboard
 - **Due: Reflection**

WEEK 6: Feb. 16 & 18— Colonial America, the American Revolution, & the Early Republic

- 2/16: Read Chapter 1 in *American History Now*
 - **Due: Reflection**
- 2/18: Read Chapter 2 in *American History Now*
 - **Due: Reflection**

WEEK 7: Feb. 23 & 25—Jacksonian America

- 2/23: Read Chapter 3 in *American History Now*
 - **Due: Reflection**
- 2/25: No Class. Find individual books to review.

WEEK 9: Mar. 2 & 4—Frontiers, Borderlands, and Wests

- 3/2: Read Chapter 12 in *American History Now*
 - **Due: Reflection**
- 3 / 4: Read Chapter 16 in *American History Now*
 - **Due: Reflection**

WEEK 10: Mar. 9 & 13—Spring Break

WEEK 11: Mar. 16 & 18—Book Reviews & Women and Gender History

- 3/16: Read *American History Now*, Chapter 15 and Historiann, “Women’s and Gender History Has Menstrual Blood Smear All Over It. If You Read This Post, You Too Will Be Contaminated” <https://historiann.com/2012/08/30/womens-and-gender-history-has-menstrual-blood-smear-all-over-it-if-you-read-this-post-you-too-will-be-contaminated/>
 - **Due: Reflection**
- 3/18: Book Review & Historiography Prospects Due

WEEK 12: Mar. 23 & Mar. 25—Introduction to Public & Digital History

- 3/23: Readings to Be Announced
- 3/25: 250th Anniversary Exhibit Workshop Part I

WEEK 13: Mar. 30 & Apr. 1 Century Reflections

- 3/30: 250th Anniversary Exhibit Workshop Part II
- Apr. 1: Due Reading Notes for Final Paper

WEEK 14: Apr. 6 & 8—Individual Workdays

- Work on Rough Drafts

WEEK 15: Apr. 13 & 15—Rough Drafts Due

- 4/13: Due Rough Drafts
- 4/15: Peer Reflections on Final Papers

WEEK 16: Apr. 20 & 22—250th Anniversary Exhibit Installation

- 4/20: Complete 250th Anniversary Exhibit
- 4/22: Complete 250th Anniversary Exhibit

Apr. 27 & April 29—Individual Workdays / Meeting with Professor

- 4/27: Historiography Presentations
- 4/29: Historiography Presentations

Final Papers DUE Monday 5/4 on Blackboard