

HST 3311: The Study of History

Wednesday, 6-8:50pm

Eagle Pass Administrative-RGC 0B113

Fall Semester 2026, 16 Week Term, 8/24-12/9

Professor: Dr. Ives Hartman

Email: ihartman@sulross.edu

Office: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

Class Information

This class will introduce you to the historical profession. We will address philosophical questions about what history is, and argue over what historians should or should not do. By examining how theories and practices of history have changed over time, and why they remain a subject of ongoing controversy, this course will demonstrate that history is not an easily defined subject, practice, or discipline.

Questions we will discuss over the semester include:

- Is history a body of knowledge or a way of thinking? If it is the former, what kind of knowledge is it? If it is the latter, what distinguishes historical thinking from other modes of inquiry?
- What is the place of history among other academic disciplines? Are historians social scientists, humanists, or some hybrid of the two? Should historians devote their efforts to explaining broad, sweeping transformations? Or are they at their best when they describe discrete events in their particular contexts? In other words, should historians think big or small?
- Historians study the past, but are some pasts more recent than others? For example, is political history more significant than social history? Most history is written with a particular nation in mind. Does this tend to ignore the histories of colonized or excluded peoples?

- If history is what historians do, does it matter who is doing history? To what extent do the personal backgrounds, biases, and predilections of historians influence their work? How have demographic changes in the composition of the historical profession impacted changes in the scholarship it produces?
- What are the professional responsibilities of historians, and who are they responsible to? What happens when the “science” of history leads to findings that offend popular opinion and challenge nationalist mythologies?

By the end of this course, you will not have definitive answers to these questions (and I will not have any for you.) But you will understand why they are important, and how they have shaped the writing and teaching of history. And (hopefully) you will come to a deeper appreciation of the habits and qualities of mind that the discipline of history requires: persistence, self-reflection, empathy, attention to detail, and openness to criticism.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- The graduating student with a B. A. in History will:
- 1. Develop an informed, critical and articulate approach to the study of history. Marketable Skills: Critical Thinking: Absorption, comprehension, synthesis of Data Ibid: Development of pattern recognition and causal skills. Global Fluency: Ability to place the United States in a global context
- 2. 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.
- 3. Demonstrate knowledge of historical events, movements, major turning points and personalities of the past. Marketable Skills: Professionalism: Knowledge and understanding of the civic roles and responsibilities of a United States citizen. Critical Thinking/Professionalism: Ability to relate the importance of the historical past when considering public policy decisions.
- 4. 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.

- 5. 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's will be assessed as follows:**
- Reading Journals (14) will assess SLOs 1-4
- Research Project (1) will assess SLOs 2-5
- Book Essay (1) will assess SLOs 2-5.

Required Materials

The Return of Martin Guerre by Natalie Zemon Davis, Harvard University Press, 1983, ISBN 9780674417342

You should be able to access this book through Blackboard or through KorText using your Sul Ross email address <https://app.kortext.com/identity/signin> or

<https://kortext.com/student-hub/welcome-to-study/>

Other readings provided online

Course Policies

Laptops, devices, and phones are not allowed during class except during structured class activities. Bring your devices to class because we will be doing collaborative work that involves the internet, but during lecture you must take notes by hand and put your phone and computer/device away.

AI is not allowed in this class. Do not use AI to help you plan your assignments, write your assignments, or do research. A key component of college history classes is the rigor of doing these essential activities yourself. The process of planning, writing, and research is essential to your development as a liberal arts scholar. Also, AI is often wrong and makes some pretty serious mistakes, so it is not a reputable way to get factual information. If you need help with your writing, research, or course planning, please talk to me and we can come up with a plan together.

Please keep an eye on **Announcements** on Blackboard because I will communicate reminders and other important information there.

Please contact me primarily by email at ihartman@sulross.edu. I check my email most often and will be most likely to respond quickly. You can expect a reply within 24 hours during the workweek and on the next business day over the weekend or break.

Quizzes will be released at least a week in advance.

The prompt for the in-class essay will be released that day in class.

You can expect journals and essays to be graded within two weeks of their due date. The Final Essay will be graded by December 10.

There is a hard class deadline on all materials on the day that the final essay is due, 12/6 at 11:59 pm. I will not accept any revisions or late assignments after that date.

Grade Breakdown

Attendance	140 (10 each)
Reading Journals	130 (10 each)
In Class Assignments	70 (5 each)
In Class Essay	150
Martin Guerre Essay	300
Seminar	150
Bibliography and Thesis Review	50
Rough Draft	100
Final Research Essay	150
Total	1240

Grading

A: 90 – 100

B: 80 – 89

C: 70 – 79

D: 60 – 69

F: 0 – 59

Assignments will be marked down 10% every day that the assignment is late. Turning your work in past the deadline will automatically result in a 10% deduction. If you are

having issues getting your work in, please communicate with me. If you talk to me, I will be more than happy to come up with a plan to help you succeed. However, if we do not communicate and you turn in work late, you will incur late penalties. Like in the workplace, you are accountable for your behavior. You must communicate with the people you work with, both professionally and academically, in order to collaborate most effectively.

Explanation of Assignments

Attendance: Attendance is taken at the start of every class. If you are more than 10 minutes late and do not provide an explanation, you may be marked absent. Arriving late is very disruptive to both me and your classmates, so please be on time. If chronic lateness occurs, we will need to meet to come up with a plan. If you are going to be late or absent, please contact me in advance.

Reading Journals: You have weekly reading journals due at **11:59 pm every Sunday**. These journals are low-stakes assignments designed to gauge your engagement with the reading. You have specific questions that you must answer, and your journals should be germane to the reading and class activities that we have done that week. Journals on unrelated topics might not be accepted.

In-Class Assignments: Every week we will do some collaborative work in class and you will turn your work in for 5 points.

In-Class Essay: You will write an essay during class time based on a prompt that I provide. There is a rubric and extensive information in Blackboard that can guide you on how to succeed with this assignment. The prompt for the essay will be released in class on the day the essay is due. **The essay is scheduled for 9/16.**

Return of Martin Guerre Essay: You are expected to read *The Return of Martin Guerre* by Natalie Zemon Davis and then write an essay answering prompts that I provide. There is a rubric and explanation of this assignment on Blackboard, and we will talk about it during the Microhistory week. This assignment is due **10/11 at 11:59 pm**.

You have a **Final Research Essay** due at the end of the semester on **12/6 at 11:59 pm**. This assignment is divided into three parts: the Bibliography and Thesis Review, the Rough Draft, and the Final Essay. You will submit your bibliography and thesis ideas and I will give you feedback. Then you will write a rough draft and you will get feedback from me and your classmates. Then you will turn in your final, revised essay at the end of the semester. Directions for all three components of this assignment and rubrics are on Blackboard in a

separate module just for this assignment. Rubrics are located with the specific components of the assignment.

ADA Statement

SRSU Disability Services: SRSU is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans Disability Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Kathy Biddick at (830) 279—3003. The address is 2623 Garner Field Road, Uvalde Texas 78801. Kbiddick@sulross.edu

Library Information: The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through the SWTJC website. <https://library.swtjc.edu>. The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for Inter Library Loan (ILL) and Document delivery from the Alpine campus.

SRSU Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based or distance education courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Introduction to Historiography

8/26

Reading Journal due 8/30 at 11:59 pm

Week 2 Marx and Marxism

9/2

Reading Journal due 9/6 at 11:59 pm

Week 3 Braudel and the Annales School

9/9

Reading Journal due 9/13 at 11:59 pm

Week 4 The Great Cat Massacre

9/16 IN CLASS ESSAY

Reading Journal due 9/20 at 11:59 pm

Week 5 Thick Description

9/23

Reading Journal due 9/27 at 11:59 pm

Week 6 Microhistory

9/30

Reading Journal due 10/4 at 11:59 pm

Week 7 Orientalism

10/7

Reading Journal due 10/11 at 11:59 pm

MARTIN GUERRE PAPER DUE 10/11

Week 8 Social History

10/14

Reading Journal due 10/18 at 11:59 pm

Week 9 Foucault and Poststructuralism

10/21

Reading Journal due 10/25 at 11:59 pm

Week 10 Assessing Power Dynamics

10/28

Reading Journal due 11/1 at 11:59 pm

BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE 11/1

Week 11 Global History

11/4

Reading Journal due 11/8 at 11:59 pm

Week 12 Public History

11/11

Reading Journal due 11/15 at 11:59 pm

ROUGH DRAFT DUE 11/15

Week 13 Digital History

11/18 **Review drafts in class**

Reading Journal due 11/22 at 11:59 pm

Week 14 THANKSGIVING NO CLASS

11/24

Week 15 Environmental History

12/2

Reading Journal due 12/6 at 11:59 pm

RESEARCH PAPER DUE 12/6

Grades:

Graduating students grades due noon **December 10**