

# **HISTORY 480, HISTORY OF THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY: THE PAST AS PROLOGUE**

Section 002, Spring 2012

Wednesday 3:35-6:35 pm, Room: Ross Hall 3270B

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Office: Ross Hall 3285B Office Hours: MWF 11:15 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and by appointment

**Course Description:** In conducting research, historians seek to study the past on its own terms rather than reading present day views and attitudes into the decisions and the developments that occurred in earlier times. Nevertheless, present day events often provide inspiration or focus for historical research by prompting new questions about old subjects or steering historians toward topics not previously explored. Indeed, in many ways the study of history represents a quest to understand how we arrived at our present circumstances. As such, this course will use nine events from the 21<sup>st</sup> century (The 9/11 terrorist attacks, Iraq War, the 2008 election of Barack Obama, the genocide in Darfur, Hurricane Katrina, debates over gay marriage, the politicization of immigration, the downturn of the economy beginning in 2008, and the development of women becoming a majority of American workers in 2010) as starting points to explore the past. This course does not focus on these specific events per se, but rather through readings and discussion, the class will explore either the historical antecedents of these current events or probe the historical trajectory of key issues raised by these events. The format of the course will also inform the capstone research project that each student will complete: a 15-20 page research paper that broadly explores - either directly or through a comparative format - the historical underpinnings of an event from the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The goals and final course expectations for students in History 480 are:

1. To have a deeper understanding of the study of history and the challenges historians face in attempting to construct narratives of the past.
2. To see the influence of the past on the present, as well as the ways in which the present shapes the study of the past.
3. To complete a substantial research paper of 15-20 pages based on original historical research, which answers a historical question, utilizing both primary and secondary sources, situates the research historiographically, and suggests some larger connection to the present.
4. To make a public presentation that succinctly displays the major findings of the research paper in either a poster or PowerPoint format.
5. To be able to critically read a work of scholarly history by identifying its central argument, key points of evidence, as well as assess the work's larger strengths and weaknesses.
6. To learn how to work both independently and cooperatively.

## Course Components and Assessments:

**Student Engagement:** This class is a seminar that meets just once a week and therefore depends on all students attending every class and prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Each student is expected to attend class regularly and be on time.

To help stimulate better discussion, unless otherwise noted, **for every weekly reading assignment (not including the *Writing of History* book) students must complete a short discussion post for blackboard** where they identify **2** points from the reading that they found particularly interesting or informative, **2** points that they either disagreed with, didn't find well supported, or found unnecessary, and **2** ways in which the reading helped inform their understanding of an event or development from the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In writing these posts students should focus on the arguments that the authors are trying to make and the larger factual and primary source evidence that they are relying on, rather than on random mundane details, or the author's writing style. These posts should be completed in list or bulleted form (rather than paragraph form). They will be submitted to blackboard as part of a discussion board so everyone in class can reflect on each other's comments prior to class discussion. **These posts must be completed by 5:00 p.m. the day (Tuesday) before class.** They will be graded as either excellent (for particularly thoughtful and intelligent comments, satisfactory (for solid work in following the instructions, but perhaps with some minor errors) or poor (for comments that reflect a lack of reading of the assignment or substantially fail to fulfill the requirements listed above).

**To help guide your general reading, the instructor will post discussion questions for each reading assignment on the blackboard website. Students should be prepared to answer those questions if called upon directly.**

As an additional part of this grade, students will be doing some editing of fellow classmates' work. Sometimes this editing will take place in class, other times it will be in the form of an assignment. Specific instructions will be posted prior to these occasions. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Because this class meets just once a week, students will only be allowed one unexcused absence. **For every unexcused absence over one, the instructor reserves the right to lower a student's semester grade by a full letter grade.** Being excessively tardy or an unauthorized early exit from class will be counted as half an absence. As a courtesy to the instructor and fellow students, please turn off any cell-phones or electronic devices as you enter class and do not read newspapers, text message, or work on assignments for other classes during class time.

Traffic and/or parking problems as well as oversleeping do not count as legitimate excuses for being late or absent. In most cases to receive an excused absence for missing class you need written documentation (ie. a doctor's note or receipt from a car repair shop/towing service) clarifying why you missed. If you anticipate missing a future class and will be seeking an excused absence because it is a university related event, then you need to inform the instructor in advance and provide any necessary documentation.

**Research Paper:** Each student will complete a **15 to 20 page research paper** using primary and secondary sources on a topic of their choosing (in consultation with the instructor) that broadly connects to an event of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Leading up to the research paper, students will complete a series of scaffolding assignments. First students will compose a **draft historical question and thesis statement** based on the interpretation of their primary sources. Students will need to submit an electronic copy of the draft historical question and thesis statement to Assignment on Blackboard two days before class on the week it is due, as well as bring a printed out copy to class to be used for peer editing. Students will then complete an **annotated bibliography of scholarly secondary sources**. This assignment will need to be submitted to the professor two days before class on the week it is due. Next, students will write up a detailed **outline of their research paper** and like the previous assignment, this will be submitted electronically to the professor two days before class. About one month prior to the final of the class students will submit a **rough draft of the final paper**. The rough draft will be submitted to Safe Assignment and emailed to a peer editor two days prior to the class that week. A **final draft of the research paper** (single copy submitted to Safe Assignment) will be due during finals week.

The instructor will post specific instructions for each paper prior to when the assignment is due. Late papers will be penalized for every day they are not turned in unless students can provide an acceptable written excuse.

**Public Presentation of Research:** On the last day of class, April 25, students will make a public presentation of their research as part of a larger History 480 gala that will take place with the other History 480 section, and be open to the public. Students will be presenting the major findings of their research in either a poster or PowerPoint slides.

**Plagiarism** or any other forms of **cheating** will not be tolerated and result in a zero on the assignment. Repeated offenses will be referred to the Dean of Students.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student requesting disability accommodation for this class must inform the instructor giving appropriate notice. Students are encouraged to contact Disability Support Services at (970) 351-2289 to certify documentation of disability and to ensure appropriate accommodations are implemented in a timely manner.

**Honor Code:** All members of the University of Northern Colorado community are entrusted with the responsibility to uphold and promote five fundamental values: Honesty, Trust, Respect, Fairness, and Responsibility. These core elements foster an atmosphere, inside and outside of the classroom, which serves as a foundation and guides the UNC community's academic, professional, and personal growth. Endorsement of these core elements by students, faculty, staff, administration, and trustees strengthens the integrity and value of our academic climate.

**UNC's Policies:** UNC's policies and recommendations for academic misconduct will be followed. For additional information, please see the Dean of Student's website, Student Handbook link <http://www.unco.edu/dos/handbook/index.html>

**Required Books:**

1. David Farber, *Taken Hostage: The Iran Hostage Crisis and America's First Encounter with Radical Islam* (Princeton University Press, 2005) ISBN: 978-0691127590
2. Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (Yale University Press, 1998) ISBN: 978-0300080674
3. Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth Century America* (Princeton University Press, 2009) ISBN: 978-0691149936
4. Niall Ferguson, *The Ascent of Money: A Financial History Of the World* (Penguin, 2008, paperback 2009) ISBN: 978-0143116172
5. Daniel Horowitz, *Betty Friedan and the Making of the "Feminine Mystique": The American Left, the Cold War, and Modern Feminism* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1998, paperback 2000) ISBN: 978-1558492769
6. William Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford University Press, 2009) ISBN: 978-0-19-533755-6

**Grading: A: 100-93%, A-: 92-90 %, B+: 89-88%, B: 87-83%, B-: 80-82%, C+: 79-78 %, C:77-73%, C-: 72-70%, D+: 69-68 %, D:67-63%, D-: 62-60%, F: 59-0%**

**Student Engagement: 25% (comprises subcategories of weekly discussion postings, peer editing, and participation)**

**Draft of Historical Question and Thesis Statement: 5 %**

**Annotated Bibliography of Scholarly Secondary Sources: 5 %**

**Research Paper Outline: 5 %**

**Public Presentation of Research: 10 %**

**Rough Draft of Research Paper: 10 %**

**Final Draft of Research Paper: 40 %**

**Blackboard:** Copies of the course syllabus, writing assignments, additional readings, discussion questions and other course materials will be posted on the Blackboard website for this course. Grades will also be posted on this site. Go to the website [unco.blackboard.com](http://unco.blackboard.com) and follow the links to the course website. Special note, the instructor will be communicating with individual students and/or the entire class through everyone's official UNC email (bear mail) accounts. Be sure to check your UNC email a couple times a day.

**Class Schedule:** (Note-this schedule of daily topics and reading assignments is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Every effort will be made to inform the class in advance as far as possible of any change.)

Wednesday January 11            Course Overview

Wednesday January 18            September 11<sup>th</sup> Attacks  
*Taken Hostage*, all  
*Writing History*, Chapter 1

Wednesday January 25	The Iraq War <i>Writing History</i> , Chapters 2-4 <b>Must have topic and major primary sources approved by instructor prior to class.</b>
Wednesday February 1	Downturn of the Economy I <i>Ascent of Money</i> , Introduction, Chapters 1-3 <b>Bring two copies of historical question and thesis statement on <i>Fog of War</i> to class</b>
Wednesday February 8	Downturn of the Economy II <i>Ascent of Money</i> , Chapters 4-6, Afterward <b>Draft of Historical Question and Thesis Statement due to Assignment on Blackboard by February 6, bring in printed out copy to class on February 8</b>
Wednesday February 15	Feminism and Gender Equity I <i>Betty Friedan</i> , Introduction and Chapters 1-6
Wednesday February 22	Feminism and Gender Equity II <i>Betty Friedan</i> , Chapters 7-11
Wednesday February 29	Politicizing Immigration Pekka Hamalainen and Samuel Truett “On Borderlands,” Geraldo L. Cadava, “Borderlands of Modernity and Abandonment: The Lines within Ambos Nogales and the Tohono O’odham Nation,” and Seema Sohi, “Race, Surveillance, and Indian Anitcolonialism in the Transnational Western U.S.-Canadian Borderlands” in <i>Journal of American History</i> 98:2 (September 2011). [Essays Posted on Blackboard] <i>Writing History</i> , Chapter 5 <b>Annotated Bibliography of Scholarly Secondary Sources due to Assignment by February 27.</b>
Wednesday March 7	The Debate over Gay Marriage <i>The Straight State</i> , all
Wednesday March 14	<b>No Class (Spring Break)</b>
Wednesday March 21	Genocide in Darfur Robert Gallately and Ben Kiernan, “The Study of Mass Murder and Genocide,” Edward Kissi,

“Genocide in Cambodia and Ethiopia” Greg Grandin, “History, Motive, Law, Intent: Combining Historical and Legal Methods in Understanding Guatemala’s 1981-1983 Genocide” in Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, eds. *The Specter of Genocide: Mass Murder in Historical Perspective* [Essays posted on Blackboard]

- Wednesday March 28      Drafting the Essay  
*Writing History*, Chapters 6-9  
**Research Paper Outline due to Assignment on Blackboard Monday, March 26)**
- Wednesday April 4      The Election of Barack Obama and the Contestation over American Identity  
*Playing Indian*, all
- Wednesday April 11      Editing Rough Drafts  
*Writing History*, Chapter 10  
**Rough Draft of Research Paper due to Safe Assignment on blackboard and peer editor Monday April 9) Bring copy of peer editing of partner’s rough draft to class and email the professor a copy of the peer editing prior to class.**
- Wednesday April 18      Hurricane Katrina  
Selected Readings from *The Journal of American History* Volume 93, No. 3 (December 2007)  
[Articles posted on Blackboard]
- Wednesday April 25      History 480 Gala/Public Presentations of Research
- Wednesday May 2      **Final Draft of Research Paper Due**