

## Course Syllabus: The Writing of History HIST 3903 Fall 2025

Meeting Time: Tuesday/Thursday 12:30pm-1:50pm Class Location: PY 210 (Prothro-Yeager Hall)

#### **Contact Information**

Instructor: Jackson Pearson, PhD

Office: PY O-216

Office hours: Tuesday & Thursday – 2:30pm to 5:00pm. Look for updates on Monday and/or Wednesday

office hours via D2L announcements.

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## **E-Mail and Communication Policy**

Your MSU e-mail account is the official communication method used in this course. Responses will typically occur within 24 to 48 hours. If your email concerns a grade, you must wait 48 hours after receiving your grade before emailing your question/concern. (Example: if grades are given back on Monday, you must wait until Wednesday before emailing me concerning your grade. I will not respond to emails sent earlier.) Notice: Please do not use your personal e-mail account to send questions pertaining to this course. I will not respond to messages sent from personal e-mail accounts.

## **Course Description**

This course introduces students to historical research methods and writing. During the semester, students will learn skills that historians utilize to research and write history. Students will learn how to choose a historical topic, develop a research proposal, develop thesis statements, assess primary and secondary source material, outline ideas, and draft these ideas into a coherent, formal research paper. Students will utilize these skills to write a formal academic research paper based on primary and secondary research undertaken by the student.

### Course Objectives:

- 1. Students will be able to develop methods to research and write history papers.
- 2. Interpret a range of both primary and secondary sources that are necessary to write an effective history paper.
- 3. Develop skills to navigate information databases and sources.
- 4. Critique primary and secondary sources.
- 5. Conduct original research, synthesize that research into a formal paper, and make an argument based on original research.

## **Assigned Readings**

Matt Upson, Holly Luetkenhaus, C. Michael Hall, and Kevin Cannon. *Information Now, Second Edition*. (University of Chicago Press, 2021). ISBN-9780226766119.

William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*. (Oxford University Press, 2020). ISBN - 9780190078416.

Francis X. Galán, Los Adaes: The First Capital of Spanish Texas. (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2020). ISBN - 9781623498788.

One additional monograph chosen by the student.

Other readings assigned by the professor (such as articles/primary sources) will be provided via D2L.

## **Study Hours and Tutoring Assistance**

Students should be aware of existing university support services to help them succeed in their academic journey. Please visit the following link to view tutoring and health services provided by the university. These services exist to help ensure student success. Please visit the following links for more information. Student Health, Wellness, and Safety. Tutoring and Academic Support Services.; Supplemental Instruction. TRiO Student Support Services.

## **Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures**

"As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so." Academic Dishonesty/Misconduct -Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individuals to whom credit is given), etc.,- will not be tolerated and will receive an F. For example, "cutting and pasting" from any internet source or poorly paraphrasing (i.e. changing a few words with the synonym function) without citing that source is plagiarism. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

#### Office of Student Conduct Student Handbook

## **Generative AI Policy**

This course only allows for limited use of Generative AI in course assignments. Generating text via AI and citing it as your own is academic misconduct, and the instructor reserves the right to give that assignment an F.

When can you use Generative AI in this course?

- The use of Generative AI is allowed in this course for the following: brainstorming your ideas, checking your grammar, as a study aide to help prepare for quizzes and exams.

When must you avoid Generative AI in this course?

- The use of Generative AI is not permitted for the following: Writing a draft of an assignment, writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete assignments.

Why should you limit your use of Generative AI?

- Learning how to analyze information, how to think critically, how to communicate with others, how to discuss and engage with big ideas, and how to work with others is something that we do not want machines or AI to do for us. AI can be a supplemental tool, but your education and professional career depends on your ability to develop a broad skill set independent of reliance on AI functionalities.

**Grading** 

Assignments	Points	Percentage
Attendance and Participation	200	25%
Book Reviews x 2 (50 pts each)	100	12.5%
Two Topics Proposal	25	3%
Preliminary Topic Selection	25	3%
Primary Source Annotation 1	25	3%
Primary Source Annotation 2	25	3%
Article Responses x 5	100	12.5%
Annotated Bibliography	50	6%
First Rough Draft (4-5 pages)	50	6%
Revision Plan (1-2 pages) – Mandatory	0	0%
Second Draft (10-12 pages)	50	6%
Final Paper	150	19%
Total Points	800	100

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	> 720
В	640-719
С	560-639
D	480-559
F	< 479

## **Attendance and Participation**

This course utilizes a Socratic colloquium with discussion as the foundation for intellectual engagement and development. Your success in this course depends on your preparation and review of materials before class. Discussions will form the foundation of this class, and your grade will depend on your active participation in class discussions and activities. Students who do not offer frequent and meaningful contributions to class discussions will not receive credit for attending/participating in the course. Students should offer meaningful contributions in each class. Attendance and participation will count for a total of 200 points in the course. (25% of your total grade). Note: Students will be expected to meet individually with the professor a minimum of four times during the semester. If a student does not meet this requirement, the student's attendance/participation grade will be deducted by 10% for each missed meeting.

#### **Book Reviews**

Students will complete two book reviews during the semester. Each review should be between 650 and 850 words in length. The review should explain the thesis/arguments, intervention, archival research, and offer a brief summary of the book. The first review will examine Francis Galán's *Los Adaes*. Students will choose a second monograph that pertains to their own research project for the second review. Students will present the second monograph to the class. The professor will provide a rubric with more details. Each review will be graded for 50 points for a total of 100 points. In total, the reviews will account for 12.5% of the total course grade. The *Los Adaes* review is due Sunday, October 5, by 11:59pm. The monograph review as chosen by the students is due Sunday, October 19, by 11:59pm.

### **Two Topic Proposals**

Students will create two research topic proposals for review by the professor. Each proposal should be between 175 and 225 words (for each topic). The proposal should explain what or who you are interested in researching. Your proposal should also include the following: guiding questions (identify at least two initial questions to guide your project), and a few potential takeaways/interventions/contributions of this project to better historical understanding of the topic in question. The proposals will be graded for a total of 25 points (3% of the final grade). Two Topics Proposal is due September 4 by 11:59pm.

## **Preliminary Research Topic Proposal**

Students will write a two-page essay (~500-600 words) that outlines their research topic. The essay should identify the research topic, outline questions that you hope to answer through your research project, outline potential primary and secondary sources which can be used in the project, and explain why this research is important or needed. The proposal will count for a total of 25 points. (3% of the final grade). The proposal is due September 11 by 11:59pm.

## **Primary Source Annotations**

Students will annotate two primary sources. The first primary source will be provided by the professor via D2L. Students will choose a second primary source based on their own research project. Students will present the source to the class and explain why they chose it. Students will complete an analysis guide for each primary source. Each annotation will be graded for 25 points for a total of 50 points. (6% of the final grade). The first primary source annotations will be completed on Sept. 18 and 25. The annotations should be submitted by 12:00pm prior to the beginning of class.

## **Article Responses**

Students will complete 5 article responses during the semester. Each response should be one paragraph in length and consider questions about the article's research and writing process. The responses should contemplate how the author approached the historical subject, conducted their research, and organized their article. Each article response counts for 20 points for a total of 100 points. These responses will count for 12.5% of the final grade. Article reviews are due on September 3, 15, 17, 22, and 24. On each due date, the article review should be submitted by 12:00pm prior to the beginning of class.

#### **Annotated Bibliography**

Students will create an annotated bibliography that includes 10-15 secondary sources. These sources must be peer-reviewed publications (academic books/journal articles/edited volumes) that are not assigned in this course. Students should also include a list of primary sources (at least 5 primary sources) that will form the foundation for their research. Each annotation should summarize the source and explain why it is important to your research project. The annotated bibliography will count for a total of 50 points (6% of the final grade). The annotated bibliography is due Sunday, October 26, by 11:59pm.

## First Rough Draft and Peer Review

Students will submit a rough draft (4-5 pages in length) of your final paper for peer review. Students will circulate drafts with one classmate who will offer feedback on the draft. Students should utilize feedback from me as well as their peers to contemplate revisions that they might make for their final research paper drafts. The rough draft and peer review will count for 50 points. (6% of the final grade). The first rough draft is due Sunday, November 9 by 11:59pm.

#### **Revision Plan**

Students will complete a revision plan after meeting with the professor to discuss their first rough draft. Students should create a one-page revision plan that outlines what they will do to complete the final draft of the paper. This plan should include steps to answer any additional questions, a writing timeline, plans for editing, and any other additional information that might be relevant to completing the research paper. This assignment does not count for any points, but it is required. 0% of final grade. The revision plan should be submitted by Sunday, November 16 at 11:59pm.

#### **Second Draft**

Students will submit a second draft (10-12 pages in length) of a paper based on original research that incorporates both primary and secondary research on a historical topic. This draft should be revised and edited for both content and grammar. This draft should include footnotes as well as a completed bibliography. The second draft will count for 50 points. (6% of the final grade). The Second Draft is due Tuesday, November 25, by 11:59pm.

## **Final Paper**

Students will submit their Final Paper by **Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm**. The final paper should be 10-12 pages in length based on original research that considers feedback provided by me. The paper should include completed footnotes and a completed bibliography. The final paper will account for 150 points. (19% of the final grade).

#### **Extra Credit**

The professor may choose to offer extra credit assignments during the semester. If the opportunity arises, the professor will provide clear instructions for the extra credit opportunity. Extra credit assignments may not be offered every semester.

## Late Work

Students will be allowed to submit late work for writing assignments; however, for each 24-hour period that the assignment is late, the student will be assessed an automatic 10% penalty from the total points available.

#### Make Up Work/Tests

Students will only be allowed to take make-up exams if they provide proper documentation for their absence on test day. If a student anticipates missing class on an exam day, please inform the professor so that the exam may be taken in advance of the anticipated absence. Students who miss class due to a university approved absence will be allowed to make up exams and assignments.

#### **Important Dates**

Last day for term schedule changes: Thursday, August 28, 2025. Check date on <u>Academic Calendar</u>. Deadline to file for graduation: Monday, September 22, 2025. Check date on <u>Academic Calendar</u>. Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" Monday, November 26, 2025. <u>Academic Calendar</u>. The majority of assignments will be completed by this point, so you should be able to make an informed decision by this date. It is the student's responsibility to meet with their academic advisor prior to withdrawing from a class.

Refer to: Drops, Withdrawals & Void

Last Day of Regular Instruction: Thursday, December 5, 2025.

#### Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into D2L through the MSU Homepage. I will use D2L to post grades, Lecture PowerPoints, Key Terms Lists, Assignments, and Rubrics. Students will submit written assignments through D2L. All other assignments and assessments will be completed during class and submitted in-person. If you experience difficulties with D2L, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

#### **Attendance**

Students are expected to attend each class in a punctual manner. Students should contribute to class discussions by offering their fact-based thoughts on topics and readings being analyzed by the class. Students need to provide informed contributions to the class discussions that reflect insights related to topical discussions and assigned readings. The course activities and discussions are designed to help students better understand course material. These discussions will help you develop deeper understanding of the content covered in class.

You will not be able to pass this class if you do not attend class. It is in your best interest to attend class.

## **Technology Requirements and Expectations**

This course requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. \*Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings. Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. \*Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline! There are many places to access your class! Our online classroom can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. Contact your professor immediately upon having computer trouble If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations, however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into D2L.

#### **Instructor Class Policies**

All members of the class are expected to follow rules of common courtesy in all email messages, discussions, chats, and interactions with other students. Students must display respect and courtesy toward their peers and the professor. If a student displays inappropriate or offensive behavior during class, they will be immediately dismissed from the class. The student will not be permitted to attend class until they meet with the professor and discuss the situation. Once an acceptable solution is agreed to, the student will be allowed to attend class again. If I deem any online messaging to be inappropriate or offensive, I will forward the message to the Chair of the department and appropriate action will be taken, not excluding expulsion from the course. The same rules apply online as they do in person. Be respectful of other students. Foul discourse will not be tolerated. Please take a moment and read some basic information about netiquette (http://www.albion.com/netiquette/).

Participating in the virtual realm, including social media sites and shared-access sites sometimes used for educational collaborations, should be done with honor and integrity. Please review the relevant

sections of the <u>Midwestern State University Student Handbook</u> for more information and relevant policies.

## **Change of Schedule**

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

### **Refund and Repayment Policy**

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

#### Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to <u>Disability Support Services</u>.

# **College Policies**

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: Campus Carry Rules and Policies

## Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by WATC. Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

#### Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on University property or at University-sponsored activities.

### Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit Campus Carry.

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit MSUReady – Active Shooter. Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled "Run. Hide. Fight." which may be electronically accessed via the University police department's webpage: "Run. Hide. Fight."

## **Grade Appeal Process**

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University Catalog. Students must follow the proper appeals process. <u>MSU Catalog</u>

\*Notice: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

#### **Course Schedule:**

The following course schedule is the anticipated schedule for the duration of the semester. The schedule is subject to change at the discretion of the professor. Any changes will be communicated to students via email and D2L announcements.

#### **Course Schedule**

Week or Module	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 1: 8/26 – 8/28 First Week of Classes	Topic: Syllabus Review – What is History and how is it Created?  Assigned Reading: Writing History, 1A-1C. Information Now, Introduction and Ch. 1. "How to Read for History."  Assignments Due: N/A	Topic: Meet in Moffett Library with a Reference Librarian. Review Library Databases and Resources.  Research potential research topics.  Assigned Reading: Article 1 – Pearson, "Bankrupts at the Head and Vagabonds at the Foot': Revolutionary Opportunists and Land Speculation in the James Long Expedition of 1819."  Assignments Due: Article 1 Response is due Wednesday,
		Sept. 3, by 11:59pm.

Week or Module	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 2: 9/2 – 9/4	Topic: Meet in Moffett Special Collections.	Topic: Discussion of Article 1 and the Writing/Research Process
	Assigned Reading: Writing History, 1D-1P. Information Now, Ch. 2.  How to Discuss a Book for History.	Assigned Reading: Los Adaes, Introduction. Writing History, 1Q- 1S. Information Now, Ch. 3.
	Assignments Due: N/A	Assignments Due: Two Topics Proposal is Due Thursday, Sept. 4, by 11:59pm.
Week 3: 9/9 – 9/11	No Official Class - First Meeting with Professor. Please schedule a ten-minute meeting with the	Topic: Discussion and Review of Research Topic Proposals.
	professor.	Assigned Reading: <i>Los Adaes</i> , Ch. 1 & 2. Article 2 – Anderson, "The
	Assigned Reading: N/A Assignments Due: N/A	Wichita Valley Irrigation Project: Joseph Kemp, Boosterism, and Conservation in Northwest Texas, 1886-1939"
		Assignments Due: Preliminary Research Topic Proposal is due Thursday, Sept. 11, by 11:59pm. Article 2 Response is due Monday, Sept. 15, by 11:59pm.
Week 4: 9/16 – 9/18	Topic: Discussion of Article 2/ Review of Research Topic Proposals/ Approaches to Researching your Topic	Topic: Discussion of Article 3/ How to Analyze and Interpret Primary Sources
	Assigned Reading: <i>Information Now</i> , Ch. 4. Article 3 – Sharpless, "Cookbooks as Resources for Rural Research."	Assigned Reading: Writing History, Ch. 2. Information Now, Ch. 5. Los Adaes, Ch. 3 & 4. Article 4 – Cox, "Enlightened Rebels."
	Assignments Due: Article 3 Response is due Wednesday, Sept. 17, by 11:59pm.	Assignments Due: Primary Source Annotation 1 is due in class today. Article 4 Response is due Monday, Sept. 22, by 11:59pm.

Week or Module	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 5: 9/23 – 9/25	Topic: Review of Article 4/ Finding and Interpreting Primary Sources for Student Projects.	Topic: Discussion of Article 5/ Review of Primary Sources for Student Projects.
	Assigned Reading: <i>Information Now</i> , Ch. 6. <i>Los Adaes</i> , Ch. 4. Article 5 – Hämäläinen, "The	Assigned Reading: <i>Writing History</i> , Ch. 3 & 4. <i>Los Adaes</i> , Ch. 5, 6, 7, and Epilogue.
	Politics of Grass: European Expansion, Ecological Change, and Indigenous Power in the Southwest Borderlands."	Assignments Due: Primary Source Annotation 2 is due in class Today (Sept. 25).
	Assignments Due: Article 5 Response is due Wednesday, Sept. 24, by 11:59pm.	
Week 6: 9/30 – 10/2	Topic: How to Create an Annotated Bibliography/ Identifying Secondary Sources for Student Projects.  Assigned Reading: N/A	Topic: No Official Class – Schedule Second Meeting with Professor. Please schedule a twenty-minute meeting with the professor.
	Assignments Due: N/A	Assigned Reading: N/A
		<b>Assignments Due</b> : Review of <i>Los Adaes</i> is due Sunday (10/5) by 11:59pm.
Week 7: 10/7 – 10/9	Topic: Discussion of <i>Los Adaes</i> / Refining your approach to your topic and sources.	No Official Class – Second Meeting with Professor. Please schedule a twenty-minute meeting.
	Assigned Reading: N/A	Assigned Reading: N/A
	Assignments Due: N/A	Assignments Due: N/A

Week 8: 10/14 –		Thursday
10/16	No Official Class – Conclude Second Meetings with Professor. Please schedule a twenty-minute meeting with the professor to occur from 12:30pm to 4pm.	Topic: Review of Books Chosen by Students for Book 2 Review/ How do they relate to your projects? How does your own project build from or push against these books?  Assigned Reading: Writing History, Ch. 6.
		<b>Assignments Due</b> : Book Review 2 is due Sunday (10/19) at 11:59pm.
Week 9: 10/21 – 10/23	Topic: No Class Today. Please work on your Annotated Bibliographies.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: N/A	Topic: Review of Annotated Bibliographies/ Progress on Research Projects.  Assigned Reading: Writing History, Ch. 7 & 8.
		Assignments Due: Annotated Bibliography is due Sunday (10/26).
Week 10: 10/28 – 10/30	Topic: No Official Class – Third Meetings with professor. Please schedule a fifteen-minute meeting. Assigned Reading: N/A	Topic: No Official Class – Third Meetings with Professor. Please schedule a fifteen-minute meeting. Assigned Reading: N/A
	Assignments Due: N/A	Assignments Due: N/A
Week 11: 11/4 – 11/6	Topic: No Official Class – Conclude Third Meetings with Professor. Please schedule a fifteen-minute meeting.	No Class Today!  Assigned Reading: N/A
	Assignments Due: N/A	Assignments Due: First Rough Draft is due Sunday (11/9) at 11:59pm.

Week or Module	Tuesday	Thursday
Week 12: 11/11 – 11/13	Topic: Review First Drafts and Complete Peer Review Assignments.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: N/A	Topic: Discuss and Evaluate Peer Review. Create Revision Plans.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: Revision Plan is due Sunday, November 16, by 11:59pm.
Week 13: 11/18 – 11/20	Topic: No Official Class – Schedule Fourth Meeting. Please schedule a ten-minute meeting.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: N/A	Topic: No Official Class – Schedule Fourth Meeting. Please schedule a ten-minute meeting.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: N/A
Week 14: 11/25	Topic: No Official Class – Schedule Fourth Meeting. Please schedule a ten-minute meeting.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: Second Draft of Paper is due Tuesday, November 25, by 11:59pm.	No Class, Thanksgiving!
Week 15: 12/2 – 12/4	Topic: Last Official Class Meeting. Students will review their progress on papers and outline any final edits/additions to make before submitting their final paper.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: N/A	Topic: No Official Class Meeting. Professor will be available to meet with students to discuss paper progress.  Assigned Reading: N/A  Assignments Due: N/A
Week 16: 12/9 – 12/11 Finals Week	None	Final Paper is due Thursday, December 11, by 11:59pm.