COURSE DESCRIPTION
HIS 310 is a topics course in American history, which means that it will be applied to the requirement for advanced hours in US history for majors and minors. This particular section will use the comics, films and other products of the Marvel Comic Universe as a primary source base for a seminar in cultural history. We will spend most of our time practicing advanced techniques that historians use to analyze popular culture.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO DO AND LEARN IN THIS CLASS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES)
In this class you will:

1. Become familiar with key terms and analytical methods used in cultural history and related disciplines.
2. Analyze comics and related materials as primary sources that provide information about the past. We will pay special attention to metanarratives, overarching themes that explain how the world works.
3. Use secondary sources to contextualize the information in comics and other primary sources.
4. Synthesize and evaluate ideas in secondary sources in order to assess your own reasoning about both primary and secondary sources—and then use that reasoning to develop a manageable historical research question about comics.
5. Practice these historical reasoning skills in low-stress daily exercises and workshop activities that will build the skills you need to be successful in the final class project—and in HIS 470.
6. Demonstrate your mastery of these historical reasoning skills in a final project that includes both an oral presentation and a short research paper.
7. Develop an appreciation for the discipline of history as a way of reasoning about the past, just as professional historians do. By the end of the session, you will understand that history is about critical thinking and interpretation, not about memorizing facts. See p. 5 for more on historical reasoning.
ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

- Pre-class prep and in-class contributions: 15%
  JITT forms, discussions, peer reviews, etc.
- Practice papers: 45% (3 at 15% each)
  2/23, 3/22, 4/12. Due at midnight on D2L
- Research presentation: 10%
  April 27, 29 and May 6
- Research Project: 30%
  Workshop May 6, Due May 8

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Michael Costello, Secret Identity Crisis ($10-30)
- Matthew Pustz, Comic Books and American Cultural History ($25-35)
- Subscription to Marvel Unlimited at marvel.com ($10 per month)
- Articles and videos posted to D2L

You must have daily internet access to be successful in this course. Your phone will not be sufficient to read complex academic articles or analyze detailed comic panels. If you do not have access to a computer or tablet at home, you should be prepared to spend a significant amount of time at a computer lab. You may also want to have access to an American history textbook. If you do not own one, I recommend the online textbook *The American Yawp* at http://www.americanyawp.com.
**BRIEF SCHEDULE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unit 1</td>
<td>Jan. 15-29</td>
<td>Introduction/Early Years&lt;br&gt;Wk. 1: Intro&lt;br&gt;Wk. 2: Defining superheroes; Punching Nazis: Captain America #1, 1941&lt;br&gt;Wk. 3: The 1950s: Captain America, Commie Smasher!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 2</td>
<td>Feb. 3-19</td>
<td>1960s and early 1970s&lt;br&gt;Wk. 4: American Identity: Fantastic Four, Iron Man, the Hulk (Anti-communism)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 5: Race: Black Panther, Cap and Falcon (Colonialism, civil rights)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 6: Gender: The Fantastic Four, Spider-Man (Heroes as family, women as plot device)&lt;br&gt;Sunday, Feb. 23. Practice Paper #1: Writing about comics: Metanarratives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 3</td>
<td>Feb. 24-Mar. 18</td>
<td>1970s-early 1980s&lt;br&gt;Wk. 7: American Identity: Cap vs Nixon (Can a superhero support a corrupt government?)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 8: Race: Iron Fist and Master of Kung Fu (Marvel’s response to the Kung Fu craze)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 9: Gender: X-Men, Phoenix Saga (Female superheroes and women’s liberation)&lt;br&gt;Sunday, March 22. Practice Paper #2: Writing about comics: Historiography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 4</td>
<td>Mar. 23-Apr. 8</td>
<td>1980s-1990s&lt;br&gt;Wk. 10: American Identity: Daredevil (Superhero as moral judge)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 11: Race: Deathlok: Souls of Cyber-folk (Robots as the racial other)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 12: Gender: Alpha Flight (Gay superheroes and the AIDS crisis)&lt;br&gt;Sunday, April 12. Practice Paper #3: Writing about comics: Contextualization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit 5</td>
<td>Apr. 13-May 8</td>
<td>The Modern Era&lt;br&gt;Wk. 13: American Identity: Civil War, #1-7 (Superhero response to 9/11)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 14: Race: Truth: Red White &amp; Black (The horrible cost of Captain America’s powers)&lt;br&gt;Wk. 15: Comics Conference! (Presentations, 4-6 per class)&lt;br&gt;May 6 at 1:30: Presentations, final workshop&lt;br&gt;May 8 at midnight: Research Paper</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**INTERNAL COURSE POLICIES**

**Consultations:** I take my responsibilities as an instructor seriously. You are warmly invited to come to my office hours to discuss readings, lectures or anything else that you have concerns or questions about. You may also make an appointment, if my hours are not convenient.

**Coursework:** You should think of this course like joining a health club. As your personal trainer, it is my responsibility to show you how to do everything that is required of you. I give you my word that I will not deviate from the syllabus, except in case of an emergency. On the other hand, it is your responsibility to do the exercises and eat right—that is, to come to class, keep up with the reading, and prepare properly for assignments. The grade you earn is determined by the quality of your effort, not necessarily by the amount of time you spend.

**Professionalism:** Students are expected to be on time and to behave in a professional manner. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Professionalism also means keeping lines of communication open. I promise to give you timely feedback on your work, so that you
know if you are on track. I also promise to let you know if something happens that prevents me from doing so. By the same token, I would ask that you keep me informed of any matters might affect your performance in the course.

**Official University Policies**

**Academic Integrity (SFA Policy 4.1)**
Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam; falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; and/or; helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: submitting an assignment as one’s own work when it is at least partly the work of another person; submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source; and/or, incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Penalties may include, but are not limited to reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.

**Disability Policy (SFA Policy 6.1)**
To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf

**Withheld Grades (SFA Policy 5.5)**
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

**The SFA Way (SFA Policy 10.4)**
Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed. For information on the Student Code of Conduct, called The SFA Way, go to: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-conduct-code.pdf

**History Department Program Learning Outcomes**
Upon completing the BA, the SFA history major can:

1. Interpret the past in context
2. Understand the complex nature of the historical record
3. Engage in historical inquiry, research, and analysis
4. Craft historical narrative and argument
5. Practice historical thinking as central to engaged citizenship

This course will offer practice in all five areas.
The Five C’s of Historical Reasoning

What is historical reasoning? What do historians do when they reason about the past? We will use five main concepts to help you develop your historical reasoning skills.

1. **Change and Continuity**: Historians debate what has changed over time and what has remained the same. Change can be a dramatic pivot or a slow shift.

2. **Causation**: Historians debate the causes of historical events. Actually, it would be more accurate to say that we argue about causality, sometimes passionately. Few events have only one cause (monocausal), so we argue with one another about which cause should be considered the most important.

3. **Context**: Historians insist that the past must be understood on its own terms. Any historical event, person, idea must be placed in the context of its historical era to be interpreted. The historian’s goal is to discover how people in the past understood their own lives, which is often very different from how we might react to their situation.

4. **Contingency and Connections**: Historians are aware that events happen for a variety of reasons, which are often interconnected. Change one factor, and the event might not have happened at all. This idea helps us to remember that historical events are not inevitable.

5. **Complexity**: Historical reasoning is not about memorizing dates and names. It is about making sense of the messiness of the past, in all its complexity. That means recognizing that different historical groups experienced events in different ways.

---

Hulk trying to craft cogent thesis statement.

It tricky to condense entire argument into focused declarative phrase and still assert Hulk’s conclusions.
Wolverine, these children need our encouragement, not to be stricken dumb with terror. Please revise.

Prof. Xavier

ADVANCED FIELD SURVIVAL 505

Instructor: Logan
Attendance: Attendance is MANDATORY. In the field, the only excusable absence is to be lyin’ in a ditch somewhere with two broken legs trying to stuff yer intestines back into yer belly. And if I catch ya cuttin’ class, I’ll put ya in that ditch myself!
Grading Policy: In this business, ya gotta give 110 percent every blamed minute of every blamed day. That in mind, grading scale’s as follows:
- 100% = A
- 90%-109% = B
- This is a statistical impossibility!

Week 1
- Hand out syllabus
- Read Textbook Chapters 1-4

Week 2
- LECTURE: Fun with adamantium claws! Bring Beanie Babies.
- Read Textbook Chapters 5-6

Week 3
- LAB: How I get my hair like this.
- Read Textbook Chapters 7-9

Week 4
- Essays due on Morrell’s First Blood.
- Read Textbook Chapters 10-11

Week 5
- LECTURE: Why Scott Summers is such a pansy.
- Read Textbook Chapter 12

Week 6
- LAB: Catchin’ arrows out of the air. Will be graded pass/fail, if you get my meanin’. I think not!

Week 7

Week 8
- GUEST LECTURE: Larry Hama shows ya how to kill a man 18 ways with a stapler.
- Read Textbook Chapter 13

Week 9
- LAB: Everyone gets a punch to the jaw. No, Logan...
- Read Textbook Chapters 14-17

Week 10
- FINAL EXAM: Students will be stranded in the Yukon wilderness with a throat wound. Survivors then take the multiple-choice written portion.

Please SEE ME with revisions!