Course Description
This course is the writing and defense of a History master’s level thesis. If the student is on the public history track, then it includes a practical project as a capstone thesis.

Course Objectives
Students in this course will work through the process of identifying, researching, developing, and producing a master’s level public history capstone project that provides the relevant historic context, places the project into its theoretical / historiographical context, and explains the process of its completion while creating a project that meets the demands of the thesis director, the thesis committee, and the public, if applicable.

Program Learning Outcomes
The SFA History Department has identified the following Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for all SFA students earning an M.A. degree in History:

1. The student will be able to explain the key issues and developments in at least two historical periods (one per course).
2. The student will be able to identify the main historical works and interpretive debates associated with an event or period.
3. The student will be able to locate, identify, and critically analyze primary sources.
4. The student will be able to research and analyze effectively an issue or topic in writing.
5. The student will be able to present written work in an appropriate academic style, including the proper citation of sources using Chicago Manual of Style (15th or most recent edition).

This section of this course will focus on PLOs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

Student Learning Outcomes
1. The student will demonstrate in writing an understanding of his or her project’s historic context and historiographical and theoretical framework.
2. The student will demonstrate an ability to identify and evaluate primary resources and incorporate those resources into the capstone thesis project.
3. The student will demonstrate an ability to produce a functional project that meets the requirements of public history: completion with full input and commentary from the public rather than a strictly academic exercise presented to the public fait accompli.
4. The student will verbally and visually present the content the thesis committee and defend the project’s significance, contribution, sources, and organization.
5. The student will demonstrate an ability to organize, analyze, and present the project in a written format following Chicago Manual of Style and all other standards relevant to the project.

Required Books
Grading Scale
The final grade in the course is determined by the thesis defense. If successful the student passes with an A, if not, the grade is withheld until completion. Prior to the thesis defense the student will receive a WH for this course, regardless of how many hours and/or semesters in which the students is enrolled in HIS590. There is no grade until satisfactory completion.

Attendance Policy
Student is expected to attend all appointments. Most students will meet with the instructor as needed, for as long as need, regardless of the number of enrolled hours (1-6).

Notifications

Explanation of Credit Hours Awarded for Course:
Students completing a thesis must register each semester university resources are being utilized until the thesis is completed and successfully defended. During the research phase, the student works independently with a list of sources developed in consultation with the thesis director (who is listed as the course instructor of record). The student meets regularly with the director, and as needed with other members of the thesis committee, to discuss the progress of the project during the research phase. The student also works independently during the writing phase of the project, according to the plan of the approved thesis proposal, under the direction of the thesis director. Once again, as during the research phase, the student meets regularly with the director, and as needed with other members of the thesis committee, and submits drafts of the thesis as per the schedule outlined in the thesis proposal until the thesis is successfully defended and approved by the committee, a process that must occur according to university deadlines. Students are expected to produce 100-140 pages of formal writing. The course is for variable credit. Generally, the student registers for 6 hours of credit during the first semester of the thesis work and for 1 hour of credit during subsequent semesters until the thesis is successfully defended.

Student Academic Dishonesty (4.1-January 31, 2017):
Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members must promote the components of academic integrity in their instruction, and course syllabi are required to provide information about penalties for cheating and plagiarism as well as the appeal process.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty - 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 an Internet source or another source; and/or
• incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/4.1-student-academic-dishonesty.pdf. Appeals are acceptable when done according to policy.

Withheld Grades (Course Grades, 5.5-January 29, 2019):
At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, 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, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. 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. Instructor’s Note: There is an exemption to this rule for HIS590.

Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities (6.1-April 30, 2019):
It is the policy of Stephen F. Austin State University to comply with the fundamental principles of nondiscrimination and accommodation in academic programs set forth in the implementing regulations for Section 504 for the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA, as amended by the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of Act of 2008 (ADAAA). 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/disabilityservices/. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf.

Instructor’s Note: It is the policy of the Office of Disability Services that students should communicate directly with the instructor about their needs, simply completing the paperwork is not acceptable.

Discrimination Complaints/Sexual Harassment (2.11-January 29, 2019):
It is the policy of Stephen F. Austin State University, in accordance with federal and state law, to prohibit unlawful discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, citizenship, and veteran status. Unlawful discrimination based on sex includes discrimination defined as sexual harassment. Additionally, Stephen F. Austin State University prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression. Stephen F. Austin State University is committed to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) law. An employee who violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. A student that violates this policy is subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.