TEACHING COLLEGE HISTORY
HIST 5380-001 Th 6:00-8:30

Instructor: Dr. Randi Cox
Office: Liberal Arts, room 356
Hours: MW 4:00-5:00, Th 2:00-5:00, and by appointment
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OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION
An intensive study of the theory, methods, and techniques in the teaching of history at the college level.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO DO AND LEARN IN THIS CLASS (STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES)

- You will examine and synthesize recent research on students, learning, and historical thinking.
- You will examine and synthesize recent research on best practices in course design and evidence-based teaching methods in undergraduate history courses.
- You will apply your findings by designing your own course and practicing the basic skills that are key to effective teaching in history.
- You will confidently debate scholarly literature in a seminar setting.
- You will demonstrate graduate-level mastery of analysis and communication skills as outlined in the History Department’s Program Learning Objectives #2, 4 and 5. (See page 5.)

COURSE TEXTS

- Peter Filene, The Joy of Teaching
- Linda B. Nilson, Teaching at its Best (4th edition)
- William Buskist and Victor Benassi, Effective College and University Teaching (optional purchase)
- Additional required readings will be available via D2L.
ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES

Class discussion: This course is a colloquium, and as such meetings will consist almost exclusively of discussion of the assigned readings. You must come to class having completed the readings and prepared to talk about them in detail. You may miss one class for any reason without penalty. Any subsequent absences may result in a penalty to the participation score, although I will be more flexible than usual this semester, given the current situation.

Weekly response papers: Each week you will write a short response to the assigned readings using a checklist of questions on D2L as a guide. These essays will help you to identify key concepts in the readings and apply them in order to develop strategies that you might use in your own teaching in the future. Most of the essays will be 2-3 pages long, but sometimes you will write shorter essays plus teaching materials. You may drop two of the essays, but you must still complete the required teaching materials. Each essay should include Chicago style footnotes.

Classroom observations: You will observe two undergraduate surveys (US History, Western Civ, or World Civ). You will write a 2-3 page essay in which you describe the teaching methods used and relate your observations to the course readings.

Practice Lectures: You will deliver two lectures, with appropriate PowerPoint presentations, on a topic of your choice. The entire meeting on October 7 will be devoted to short practice lectures of 10-15 minutes each. During the month of November or December, each of you will serve as a guest instructor for 40 minutes in a survey course, which you will arrange individually with an instructor. You must lecture for 20-30 minutes and engage the students in some kind of “active learning” for 10-20 minutes. This sounds scary but I think it is important that you have some practice in front of students. To offset the stress of the performance, I have allocated only 20% of your grade for these two lectures.

Course portfolio: In lieu of a final exam, you will prepare a portfolio that lays out a plan for a survey course of your choosing (US History, Western Civ, or World Civ). This portfolio will include a syllabus which meets SFA requirements for core courses, a sample PowerPoint presentation, sample assignments, exams, etc. It will also include an essay which outlines your teaching philosophy and discusses your decision making process regarding reading selections, learning objectives, and other information that potential employers would ask for.
# Brief Schedule

| Week 1 | Aug. 26 | Introduction  
Welcome to HIS 580! |
|--------|---------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Week 2 | Sept. 2 | History in the Core Curriculum and Texas Undergraduates  
Response paper due |
| Week 3 | Sept. 9 | Models of Teaching and Learning  
Response paper due |
| Week 4 | Sept. 16 | Models of Historical Reasoning  
Response paper due |
| Week 5 | Sept. 23 | Planning a Course  
Response paper due |
| Week 6 | Sept. 30 | Effective Lectures  
Class observation #1 due |
| Week 7 | Oct. 7 | Practice Lecture Session #1  
15 minute practice lecture, plus peer feedback |
| Week 8 | Oct. 14 | Active Learning and Using Primary Sources in the Classroom  
Response paper due |
| Week 9 | Oct. 21 | Leading discussions  
Response paper due |
| Week 10 | Oct. 28 | Teaching with technology  
Response paper due |
| Week 11 | Nov. 4 | Writing Assignments: Design, Feedback, Assessment  
Response paper due |
| Week 12 | Nov. 11 | Tests: Design, Feedback, Assessment  
Class observation #2 due |
| Week 13 | Nov. 18 | Diversity in the Classroom  
Response paper due |
| Week 14 | Dec. 2 | Student-Instructor Interactions  
Response paper due |
| Week 15 | Dec. 9 | Finals Week  
Course Portfolio due |
INTERNAL COURSE POLICIES

Office Hours: 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. I plan to hold in-person office hours, but it may be necessary to shift to zoom hours if the health situation worsens.

Professionalism: I recognize that this is going to be another strange semester, and that means we are all going to have to support one another to make it work. I intend to be as flexible as possible, but I also expect that, as grad students, you will do your best to meet professional expectations. That means arriving to class on time, treating one another respectfully, etc. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated, especially at the graduate level. 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.

Other: On the first day of class, we will discuss any other policies that we might want as a group. These could include things like classroom civility (late arrivals, texting, etc.) or assignment procedures (paper vs. electronic submissions).

OFFICIAL DEPARTMENT AND 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.

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.
Disability Policy (SFA Policy 6.1)
I am committed to creating a course that is inclusive in its design. If you encounter barriers, please let me know immediately so that we can determine if there is a design adjustment that can be made or if an accommodation might be needed to overcome the limitations of the design. Together we’ll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I am always happy to consider creative solutions as long as they do not compromise the intent of the assessment or learning activity.

You are also encouraged to contact the Office of Disability Services to begin this conversation or to establish accommodations for this or other courses. I welcome feedback that will assist me in improving the usability and experience for all students. If you need official accommodations, you have a right to have these met. The Office of Disability Services works with students to identify accommodations that remove barriers to learning. The ODS is located in the Human Services Building, Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD). For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf

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

Mental Health Statement
SFASU values students’ mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

On-campus Resources:
SFASU Counseling Services
www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices
3rd Floor Rusk Building
936-468-2401

SFASU Human Services Counseling Clinic
www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/139.asp
Human Services Room 202
936-468-1041

Crisis Resources:
Burke 24-hour crisis line 1(800) 392-8343
Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1(800) 273-TALK (8255)
Crisis Text Line: Text HELLO to 741-741
History MA Program Learning Outcomes

The 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 course will offer training in PLOs 2, 4 and 5.

Explanation of credit hours awarded for course:

This is a graduate-level history course. SFA Graduate courses in history generally meet 2,250 minutes (37.5 hours), including examination times and seminar presentations, during the course of a semester. Students are expected to complete weekly reading assignments of primarily and secondary sources (books, scholarly articles, book reviews, etc.). Completion and comprehension of the readings is assessed through seminar style discussions, in-class presentations, and out-of-class writing assignments, including response papers, historiographical essays, annotated bibliographies, and research papers. Students are typically required to conduct a significant research project, including a research plan, an assessment of sources relevant to the project, class presentations in which they report on the progress of their project, and a final research paper. Formal written work over the course of the semester ranges from 30-35 pages. Course instructors are required to hold regular scheduled office hours to make themselves available to consult with students as needed. Doing the required reading, completing out-of-class writing assignments, and consulting with course instructors generally averages at least 10-12 hours of work each week.
Students of history should understand...

**History:** History is an interpretative account of the past supported by evidence that survives. History is not simply an account of “what happened”; the past cannot be known except through a disciplined process of problem solving.

**The Past:** The object of historical study is the past. Recognizing the “pastness of the past” directs historians to understand people of the past by contextualizing their actions; what they were trying to accomplish, the nature of their beliefs, attitudes, and knowledge, the culturally and historically situated assumptions that guided thought and action.

**Historical Evidence:** Historians use primary and secondary sources to make sense of the past. History students should know that primary and secondary sources come in diverse forms, represent diverse perspectives, and have distinct strengths and limitations as evidence about the past.

**Complex Causality:** Historians are intensely interested in the how and why of historical events. Historical accounts are multiple and layered, avoiding moncausal explanations and reductionist thinking.

**Significance:** Significance is the indefinite standard by which historians determine what questions are worth asking; what parts of the past are worth teaching, learning, and remembering; and which pieces of the extant past properly belong in a meaningful, coherent account.

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**Students of history should be able to...**

**Evaluate Historical Accounts:** Recognize historical explanations in their most common forms: narrative, exposition, causal model, and analogy; identify an author’s interpretation and critically scrutinize the evidence and analysis used to support it; and critically evaluate, compare, and synthesize historical accounts.

**Interpret Primary Sources:** Distinguish primary from secondary sources; assess the credibility of sources and make judgments about their usefulness and limitations as evidence about the past; consider how the historical context in which information was originally created, accessed, and distributed affects its message; and address questions of genre, content, audience, perspective, and purpose to generate subtexts that illuminate the intentions of the author.

**Apply chronological reasoning:** Take account of the role of time, sequencing, and periodization in historical narratives. Contextualize: Place an event, actor, or primary source within the context of its time in order to interpret its meaning and significance.

**Construct a historical argument using primary sources:** Construct acceptable historical accounts that interpret the past using primary sources as evidence for knowledge claims in ways that demonstrate understanding of historical concepts, especially the nature of historical evidence, interpretation, and perspective.