



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
HTST 300 (SPRING/SUMMER 2020)
THE PRACTICE OF HISTORY

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Introduction

This course is an introduction to the practice of History both as an academic discipline and as it relates to public expressions of the past. It places a high emphasis on the word “practice,” keeping reading materials and lecture content manageable while prioritizing hands-on application of the historical discipline through assignments. This course is offered online only, with lectures and supplementary materials available each week on D2L. For the dates of lectures and assignments for your session, please follow the colour codes for [Spring](#) and [Summer](#).

Communication and Technology

Regular communication between the instructor and students is essential to the success of asynchronous (non-live) learning in online environments. Students should make use of the discussion forums on D2L to ask questions about the course material and assignments. In all such cases, use responsible digital citizenship by ensuring content is respectful and relevant. Individual questions or concerns may also be asked over email. I will normally respond to discussion threads and emails within 24 hours, Monday to Friday. I will not usually respond to questions that are answered in this syllabus, in the sample assignments, and in the discussion forums, so please review these in advance.

This course requires a certain level and knowledge of technology in order to view lectures, supplementary materials, and external links provided on D2L, and to complete, upload, and review assessments for assignments. It is each student’s responsibility to ensure sufficient technology is available, and to find appropriate resources within the University of Calgary (<http://elearn.ucalgary.ca/uofc-it-support-information/>) or elsewhere to resolve difficulties.

Accommodation

If you have conditions or circumstances that require accommodations, you are encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services and to contact me by email to discuss reasonable measures that will ensure your success in this course. Situations requiring accommodations may include, but are not limited to, ongoing or temporary illness or disability, or the need to adjust deadlines because of personal circumstances, such as child care or family responsibilities.

Learning Outcomes

Participants in this course will have the opportunity to:

- Develop an understanding of the discipline of History and the historian's skill set;
- Learn about libraries, archives, and digital resources;
- Analyze primary and secondary sources;
- Practice correct citation style and writing methods for History;
- Produce a timeline that shows chronological awareness and cause and effect relationships;
- Develop ethical, empathetic, evidence-based, and argumentative research assignments.

Reading List

Jenny L. Presnell, *The Information-Literate Historian: A Guide to Research for History Students*, 3d. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019)

E-text is available for purchase or rental here: <https://redshelf.com/book/922602/the-information-literate-historian-922602-9780190851507-jenny-l-presnell>

The History Student's Handbook: A Short Guide to Writing History Essays (D2L)

Grade Distribution

	Spring	Summer	
Historical Timeline	May 20	July 15	20%
Library Assignment	May 29	July 24	10%
Primary Source Analysis	June 8	August 4	30%
Secondary Source Analysis	June 17	August 12	40%

General Assignment Guidelines

All assignments must be uploaded to the course D2L Dropbox in Adobe PDF format by midnight on the due dates. Please do not email assignments, as they must be assessed on Dropbox. Extensions must be requested in advance of due dates and will not normally exceed one week unless there are compelling extenuating circumstances. Late assignments may be penalized 3% per day, including weekends. It is my standard practice to grade and provide feedback for assignments submitted on the due date within one week. Assignments submitted late, whether or not they have received an extension, will be graded when it is convenient and will not normally be accompanied by feedback.

Each assignment will be accompanied by a sample and list of grading criteria, available on D2L. Please review these in advance of submission and use them to model the style, methods, and expectations for your assignments. As this course places a high priority on the practice of History as an academic discipline, all assignments must conform to the standards outlined in *The History Student's Handbook*. This especially applies to writing style and the formatting of footnotes and bibliographies, which must be in proper Chicago Style. Please note that other formats, such as MLA and APA style, are not acceptable.

Historical Timeline

One of the core skills for students of history is to understand chronology (the order in which historical events occurred) and causation (what triggered a historical event, what developments caused change, and what that change involved.) This assignment involves producing a timeline of a major historical event, from any time period and geographical location. The event should be known to those with a general interest in History. Examples include the European Black Death, the Spanish conquest of the Aztec empire, the Chinese cultural revolution, the French revolution, the cold war, the American civil rights movement, the Cuban missile crisis, South African apartheid, and many, many others. Feel free to discuss your event with the instructor.

The timeline should take the form of a table with the following three headings:

Year	Development	Significance
If the event occurred over a short period of time (e.g. the Cuban missile crisis), it may be necessary to add months or days to the year to differentiate developments.	Include a brief (2-8 word) summary of each key historical development related to your event. Be selective about these, as not all will be of equal importance. Your first development should be the “trigger” that started your event.	Indicate in a single sentence (10-20 words) why this development was important for your event. It can be useful to use “action” words (caused, enabled, created, allowed, etc.) to show cause and effect.

The timeline should contain about 40 entries (with 15–20 events per page), although this will vary depending on the historical event you have chosen. Please note that if you need to include more than 50 entries, it is likely because your topic is not sufficiently focused. You must also provide a list of sources (minimum 4) that were used to compile your timeline. Because you are not engaging with arguments or interpretations, these sources can include encyclopedia (including Wikipedia) and online websites, although you should be careful not to use sources with clear biases or lack of evidentiary foundation, such as sites that promote counter-historical narratives (such as Holocaust denial websites), or amateur online sources.

Library Assignment

This assignment is available on D2L (please use the template provided) and should be completed following our sessions on library and archival research. It involves answering a series of questions, making use of the methods discussed in lectures and in Presnell, *The Information-Literate Historian*. All research for this project will be undertaken online, using University of Calgary library resources. This assignment may be used to help find your primary and secondary sources for the other assignments in this course, but this is not required.

Primary Source Analysis

This assignment involves selecting a primary source available online, particularly through the Databases available through the University of Calgary library, and writing an analysis of that source, using the methods discussed in lectures, in part III of *The History Student's Handbook*, and in Presnell, *The Information-Literate Historian*, chapters 5–6. The analysis should be between 1000 and 1200 words, or 3–4 double-spaced pages. It should present arguments and criticism as well as reflect on the value of the source, both at the time it was written and to modern historians. The source should be between 25 and 50 pages in length, written by a single individual, between 1300 and 1980. If you are using a source edited by a historian, please remember that your task is to analyze the primary source, not the edition in which it is found (that is, do not interrogate introductory material or scholarly apparatus.) Examples of sources include, but are not limited to: autobiographies, diaries, legal cases, legislative acts, letters, novels, pamphlets, public records, and treatises. It is acceptable to use English translations of foreign sources or modern editions of earlier sources. It is also acceptable to undertake additional research in order to contextualize your source and enable criticism, in which case such works must be listed in a properly-formatted bibliography.

Secondary Source Analysis

This assignment involves selecting an academic monograph available online, using one of the many ebooks available through the University of Calgary library or other online repositories, and writing a review of that source, using the methods discussed in lecture, in part III of *The History Student's Handbook*, and in Presnell, *The Information-Literate Historian*, chapters 3–5. The review should be between 1000 and 1200 words, or 3–4 double-spaced pages. It should identify the author's topic, chronological time period, research question(s), thesis, how the thesis is developed, the type of evidence used (eg. manuscript, printed, secondary), other historians with whom the historian has engaged, how effectively the argument is developed, and why it is important. The source should be a peer-reviewed academic monograph of at least 150 pages, written by a single individual, and published since 2000. The book must have been written by a professional historian, have been published by a reputable academic press, and have either footnotes or endnotes. It is acceptable to undertake additional research by examining, for example, the author's professional website and reviews of the book under examination, in which case such works must be listed in a properly-formatted bibliography.

Lectures

The lectures for this course will be pre-recorded using Yuja lecture capture, accompanied by PowerPoint presentations and/or websites. These will be uploaded to D2L once per week, as described below. Depending on the content, each week's upload will include three or four presentations totaling 60 to 90 minutes of lecture material. All lectures are for the exclusive use of students registered in this course, and may not be distributed to third parties under any circumstances.

Outline (Dates indicate when lectures will be available on D2L)

Date		Topics	Readings
Spring	Summer	Introduction to History; Skills of the Historian; Uses and Abuses of History Types of History; Method and Ideology Primary and Secondary Sources Libraries and Archives	Presnell, <i>Information-Literate Historian</i> , chapters 1–7
May 6	Jun 29		
May 13	Jul 8		
May 20	Jul 15		
May 27	Jul 22	Ethics; Writing Mechanics Academic Writing, Part I Academic Writing, Part II History Beyond the Academy	Presnell, <i>Information-Literate Historian</i> , chapters 8–12 <i>History Student's Handbook</i>
Jun 3	Jul 29		
Jun 10	Aug 5		
Jun 17	Aug 12		

Appendix

(The following material appears on all Department of History outlines)

Departmental Grading System:

The following percentage-to-letter grade conversion scheme is used in all Canadian Studies, History, and Latin American Studies courses, except for HTST 200.

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Description
90-100	A+	4.00	Outstanding performance
85-89	A	4.00	Excellent performance
80-84	A-	3.70	Approaching excellent performance
77-79	B+	3.30	Exceeding good performance
73-76	B	3.00	Good performance
70-72	B-	2.70	Approaching good performance
67-69	C+	2.30	Exceeding satisfactory performance
63-66	C	2.00	Satisfactory performance
60-62	C-	1.70	Approaching satisfactory performance.
56-59	D+	1.30	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject

Percentage	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	Description
50-55	D	1.00	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
0-49	F	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

Program Advising and Student Information Resources:

- For program advising in the Faculty of Arts, contact the Arts Students Centre (ASC) in SS 102, call 403-220-3580, email artsads@ucalgary.ca, or book an appointment with an ASC advisor at <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/current-students/undergraduate>.
- For further information on academic advising and degree planning for arts students, see <https://arts.ucalgary.ca/current-students/undergraduate/academic-advising>.
- For registration issues, paying fees, and assistance with MyUofC, contact Enrolment Services in MacKimmie Tower Room 116, call 403-210-ROCK (7625), or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/>.
- **Attention history majors:** History 300 is a required course for all history majors. You should normally take it in your second year.
- Registration Changes and Exemption Requests: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/appeals>

Writing:

All written assignments and written exam responses are assessed partly on writing skills. Writing skills include surface correctness (grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, etc.) and general clarity and organization. Research papers must be properly documented according to the format described in the History Student's Handbook.

D2L: Throughout the course, important material such as lecture outlines and study guides will be regularly posted on D2L. Students are advised to check this regularly.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism occurs when one submits or presents one's work in a course, or ideas and/or passages in a written piece of work, as if it were one's own work done expressly for that particular course, when, in fact, it is not. Please see [The History Student's Handbook](#).

Plagiarism may take several forms:

- Failing to cite sources properly
- Submitting borrowed, purchased, and/or ghostwritten papers
- Submitting one's own work for more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s) involved
- Extensive paraphrasing of one or a few sources, even when referenced properly, unless the essay is a critical analysis of those works

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence, and written work that appears to contain plagiarized passages will not be graded. All such work will be reported to the Faculty of Art's associate deans of students who will apply the penalties specified in the *University of Calgary Calendar*, [Section K](#).

Academic Accommodations:

Students needing an accommodation because of a disability or medical condition should contact Student Accessibility Services (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/access/>) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities [ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy](https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy).

Students needing an accommodation based on a protected ground other than disability should contact, preferably in writing, the course instructor.

Copyright:

The University of Calgary has opted out of the Access Copyright Interim Tariff proposed by the Copyright Board. Therefore, instructors in all University of Calgary courses will strictly adhere to Copyright Act regulations and the educational exceptions permitted by the Act for both print and digital course material. No copyrighted material may be placed on course D2L or web sites without the prior permission of the copyright holders. In some cases, this may mean that instructors will require you to purchase a print course pack from the University of Calgary bookstore or consult books on reserve at the library. For more information on the University of Calgary's copyright policy, see <http://library.ucalgary.ca/copyright>.

Other Useful Information:

Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for information on:

- Wellness and Mental Health
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk

- **Department Twitter @ucalgaryhist**

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