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HSTR 400.01: Historical Research Seminar - U.S. West

Eric S. Zimmer

University of Montana, Missoula, eric.zimmer@umontana.edu

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Spring 2022

HISTORICAL RESEARCH SEMINAR: U.S. WEST

HSTR400: (ADVANCED WRITING COURSE) (CRN 33961)

Monday and Wednesday, 2:00 – 3:20 p.m.

Liberal Arts Room 203

Professor Eric Zimmer	eric.zimmer@mso.umt.edu
Office	Liberal Arts 258
Office Hours	Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an advanced writing course designed to assist students with the development of a substantial research essay (20+ pages, based on primary sources) on a topic related to the history of the American West, broadly defined. Over the course of the semester, students will learn about big-picture topics and trends in the study of the American West; receive training on how to find, evaluate, and utilize primary and secondary sources; and further their writing and argumentation skills. Along the way, students will develop a strong research proposal, rough and final drafts of their essay, and make a presentation on their research findings. Students will receive feedback from peers and the professor at each juncture. Students will also be introduced to some of the many kinds of writing that professional historians undertake, including the development of museum exhibits and professional reports.

GOALS & LEVEL

This course focuses on key elements of the discipline of history. Students will be expected to understand how to identify and analyze primary sources and engage with existing secondary literature. Students will also practice giving and receiving constructive criticism through peer review. The course focuses on upper-level undergraduates and graduate students interested in and versed in the history of the American West. To be successful, students should have taken HSTA 101 and/or HSTA 102 (American History I & II) and upper-level history electives that required them to conduct research and produce a substantial paper. Because reading and writing a lot is the best way get better at writing, this is an intensive course with heavy weekly reading assignments and frequent short writing assignments. Students who have not taken the courses noted above, who have not

produced a 5–10 page research paper using primary sources, or who are otherwise concerned about their preparedness for this course should reach out to the professor as soon as possible.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This is an approved advanced writing (AW) course that fulfills both the University's Advance Writing Requirement and the History Department's Advanced Writing Requirement for its majors. As such, this class adheres to the required learning outcomes provided by the University of Montana Faculty Senate. These are outlined below. Upon completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Identify and pursue sophisticated questions for academic inquiry
- Find, evaluate, analyze, and synthesize information effectively from diverse sources
- Manage multiple perspectives as appropriate
- Recognize the purposes and needs of discipline-specific audiences and adopt the academic voice necessary for the chosen discipline
- Use multiple drafts, revision, and editing in conducting inquiry and preparing written work
- Follow the conventions of citation, documentation, and formal presentation that are appropriate to the discipline
- Develop competence in information technology and digital literacy

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following books are available for purchase at the UM bookstore:

Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Encounters at the Heart of the World: A History of the Mandan People* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2014)

Michael J. Dax, *Grizzly West: A Failed Attempt to Reintroduce Grizzly Bears in the Mountain West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2015)

*All other readings are listed in the course schedule and will be available via Moodle.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS, DUE DATES, AND EVALUATION

*Details about the assignment parameters will be provided well in advance of each deadline.

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Percentage of Final Grade</i>
Short Assignments	As assigned, see schedule below	10% (check)
Research Topic Memo	February 16	10% (letter grade)
Introduction, Outline, and Bibliography	March 9	15% (letter grade)
Rough Draft Paper	April 20	10% (letter grade)
Presentation	May 2 or May 4 (sign-up sheet)	10% (letter grade)
Final Paper	May 11	30% (letter grade)
Participation	End of semester	15% (letter grade)

GRADING

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62

F=below 60

A grade: Demonstrates outstanding work.

B grade: Attempts critical thinking and analysis and shows solid grasp of the required reading. Students who achieve B-level work consistently attend class and demonstrate preparedness.

C grade: Demonstrates a basic level of effort and competence with the course materials but also gaps in critical thinking, comprehension or synthesis of the material, and incomplete command of basic facts. Irregular attendance often results in C-level work.

D grade: Does not meet basic standards of competency in the course. D-level work shows incomprehension of the course content and falls short of expectations for college-level coursework. A significant number of absences and a failure to complete assignments often results in substandard work.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Students interested in pursuing the following opportunities should reach out to the professor by the third week of classes (February 9). Students who complete the additional work associated with the opportunities below can earn up to 10 extra credit points on their final paper.

Undergraduate Students

Each spring, UM's chapter of Phi Alpha Theta attends the annual northwest regional conference at which students present original research essays. The 2022 conference is an in-person event that will be held April 22-23rd on the campus of Western Washington University (WWU) in Bellingham, WA. In addition to their regular course assignments, students will be required to fill out an application and paper proposal and present at the conference.

Graduate Students

Presenting at conferences and submitting research essays for publication in scholarly journals are key parts of any historian's work. Graduate students are encouraged to work with the professor to identify a potential conference or journal for their final research essay and to undertake the process of apply for and participating in a conference or submitting their research for publication.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

You may have up to two unexcused absences without penalty. Any unexcused absence beyond that will result in a loss of five percentage points per absence from the participation grade. Absences are excused only due to illness, religious obligations, certain University activities, or other legitimate, unavoidable circumstances. If you will be absent, please contact the professor via email as soon as possible. A student with a long-term illness (or those who miss more than five days of classes) will be required to provide a record of appointments or documentation from a health care provider, such as a note stating the student has been under the doctor's care and/or notification from the Registrar of the reasons for the absences.

Late Assignments

Late will be graded down unless you have an excused absence or have made prior arrangements for an extension. Extensions are given rarely and strictly at the professor's discretion.

Missed Assignments

Only students whose absences are excused will be given the opportunity to make up overdue assignments. It is expected that all work will be made up as soon as possible after the missed assignment. It is your responsibility to contact the professor immediately if work was missed (or will be missed). Specific arrangements for make-ups will be made on a case-by-case basis. Unless there are truly extraordinary circumstances, you must contact the professor within three days after the missed assignment to arrange for making up the work. **You must turn in every assignment in order to pass this class.**

Punctuality, Preparedness, and Classroom Decorum

You are expected to arrive to class on time, prepared to work. **This means that you will have checked your UM email account and Moodle for updates or instructions, read and reflected on assigned readings, completed any written work before class begins, and are ready to actively engage our discussions.** Students are expected to treat one another and the professor courteously, listen attentively, and maintain a respectful attitude even toward views with which they disagree. Please turn off the ringer on your cell phones. No texting or email is permitted during class.

Academic Honesty

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with UM's Student Conduct Code and conducting themselves accordingly. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating, will result in appropriate disciplinary action and possibly a failing grade. An easy rule to follow is that all work you produce for this class should be your own. Please ask if you have any questions.

Academic Collaboration

Don't cheat, collaborate! There is a fine line between collaborating to combine efforts and improve your learning and scholarly work and collaborating to share answers and duplicate ideas. As we move through this semester, we will be working together an offering peer-reviews and feedback on each other's work. But do not mistake "collaboration" for the academic misconduct noted above. Study together. Think together. Critique, revise, and rewrite together. But do not take other people's ideas or work and present them as your own. It is your responsibility to understand this policy and ask for clarification when needed.

Students with Disabilities

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, professors, and the Office for Disability Equity (ODE). If you anticipate or experience barriers based on disability, please contact the ODE at:

(406) 243-2243, ode@umontana.edu, or visit www.umt.edu/disability for more information. Retroactive accommodation requests will not be honored, so please, do not delay. As your professor, I will work with you and the ODE to implement an effective accommodation, and you are welcome to contact me privately if you wish.

COVID-19-Related Policies

You are **required to wear a face mask covering your nose and mouth** at all times while inside our classroom. You can find more details and up-to-date information from the University of Montana here: <https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus/campus-covid-plan/default.php>. In addition to the mask requirement, please make note of the following policies:

- If you feel sick and/or are exhibiting COVID symptoms, please don't come to class and contact the Curry Health Center at (406) 243-4330.
- If you are required to isolate or quarantine, you will receive support in the class to ensure continued academic progress. The professor will not be posting Power Points, videos, or other course content online. Instead, please work with your fellow students to share notes, discuss the main points from class, etc. Of course, please email the professor with any questions about assignments, exams/quizzes, and how best to stay up to date on the course.
- UM recommends students get the COVID vaccine and booster. Please direct your questions or concerns about vaccines to the Curry Health Center.
- Drinking liquids and eating food is discouraged within the classroom.
- If the professor must isolate or quarantine, he will email the class with instructions about how we will proceed. (The most likely scenario is that we will move the class to Zoom for a few days.)

COURSE SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic/Readings/Assignments</u>
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Week 1

January 19	Topics: Course Introduction Syllabus
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Week 2

January 24	Topic: Historical Thinking and Historiography Readings: Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, "What Does it Mean to Think Historically?" <i>Perspectives on History</i> (2007) (Moodle)
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- January 26** **Topic:** What is the American West?
Readings: Craig Howe, Tyler Young, and Corey Bettelyoun, “The Great Race:” Frederick Jackson Turner, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (both on Moodle)
Assignment: Bring short reflection on what “The West” means to you for discussion

Week 3

- January 31** **Topic:** The “Old West” and the New Western History
Readings: Stephen Aron, “The History of the American West Gets a Much-Needed Rewrite,” *Smithsonian Magazine* (2016); Virginia Scharff, “Claims and Prospects of Western History: A Roundtable,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 25–46; Nathalie Massip, “When Western History Tried to Reinvent Itself: Revisionism, Controversy, and the Reception of the New Western History,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (Spring 2021): 59–85 (Moodle)

- February 2** **Topic: New(er) Frontiers**
Readings: Watch “The New Western History, 40 Years On,” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L93IZjcYR6g> (Moodle)
Assignments: Bring a 1-page reflection with some key questions, ideas, or points from the panel discussion to class

Week 4

- February 7** **Topic:** Other Types of Historical Writing
Readings: Eric Steven Zimmer, “Barona Band of Mission Indians Research and Resource Report: Barona Cultural Center & Museum Creation Story Theater Project,” September 16, 2021; “Eric John Abrahamson and Eric Steven Zimmer, “The Rapid City Historic Preservation Plan, 2021–2031;” “Celebrating 150 Years at the Tufts University School of Dental Medicine,” <https://dental150.tufts.edu/> (all on Moodle)

- February 9** **Topic:** Research Questions and Chronologies
Readings: Read Kristin Poling, “Writing a History Paper: Formulating a Research Question;” Skim “Deadwood Brothel Tour” chronology (Moodle)

Week 5

- February 14** **Topic:** Primary and Secondary Sources
Readings: Dohistory.org, “Using Primary Sources,” (Moodle)
Assignments: In-class primary source activity

- February 16** **Topic:** Working with Oral Histories
Readings: Baylor University Institute for Oral History, “Understanding Oral History: Why Do It?” (Moodle)
Assignments: Research topic memo due; In-class oral history analysis activity

Week 6

February 21 ———NO CLASS PRESIDENTS' DAY———

February 23 **Topic:** Using Libraries and Archives: CLASS MEETS AT MANSFIELD LIBRARY
Guest Lecture: Natalie Bond, Government Information Librarian

Week 7

February 28 **Topic:** Databases, Newspapers, Archives
Assignments: In-class research activity. Bring your laptop!

March 2 **Topic:** Making Your Argument: Introductions and Conclusions
Readings: UCLA History, "Introductions and Conclusions" (Moodle)

Week 8

March 7 **Topic:** Building a Bibliography
Readings: Review the OWL at Purdue online guide for Chicago Style citations:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmos_formatting_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_edition.html
(Moodle)

March 9 **Topic:** Dissecting a Research Essay
Readings: Charnan Williams, "The Bridgewater Family: A History of an African American Family in the American West from Slavery to the Civil Rights Era,"
Western Historical Quarterly 51, no. 4 (Winter 2020): 349-80.
Assignments: Introduction, outline, and bibliography due

Week 9

March 14 **Topic:** Grizzly West
Readings: Dax, *Grizzly West*, Introduction through Chapter 3

March 16 **Topic:** Editor's Corner: Class Visit by Cody Ewert, Associate Editor at the South Dakota State Historical Society Press
Readings: Eric Steven Zimmer, "At the Vertex of Water and Stone: Landscape and Memory in Rapid City," *South Dakota History* 51, no. 4 (Winter 2021): 320-349;
Reader reviews (Moodle)

Week 10

March 21 ———NO CLASS SPRING BREAK———

March 23 ———NO CLASS SPRING BREAK———

Week 11

March 28 **Topic: One-On-One Paper Meetings**

Readings: Dax, *Grizzly West*, Chapter 4 through Chapter 6

Assignments: This meeting is mandatory. Use sign-up sheet to select a time, meetings in professor's office or via Zoom. If you don't have a presentation today, work on your paper!

March 30 **Topic: One-On-One Paper Meetings**

Readings: Dax, *Grizzly West*, Chapter 6 through Conclusion

Assignments: This meeting is mandatory. Use sign-up sheet to select a time, meetings in professor's office or via Zoom. If you don't have a presentation today, work on your paper!

Week 12

April 4 **Topic: Michael Dax Class Visit**

Assignments: Bring 5 questions about *Grizzly West* to class for discussion.

April 6 **Topic: Encounters at the Heart of the World**

Readings Fenn, *Encounters at the Heart of the World*, Preface and Part I

Assignments: Bring a 1-page reflection on the following questions (1 paragraph per question will suffice): What are Fenn's main research questions in this book? What stands out to you about her narrative approach/writing style? How does she analyze the history of gender and cultural practices in Mandan history, especially in Part II?

Week 13

April 11 **Topic: Encounters Continued**

Readings: Fenn, *Encounters at the Heart of the World*, Parts II and Part III

Assignments: Bring a 1-page reflection on the following questions (1 paragraph per question will suffice): How do environmental factors play into Fenn's analysis of Mandan history in these sections? What sources does she use to make this case?

April 13 ———NO CLASS, WORKING SESSION———

Assignment: Work on your paper! Rough drafts are due on Moodle at 9:00 PM today! The professor will assign rough draft papers for peer review on April 14

Week 14

April 18 **Topic: Peer Review of Rough Drafts**

Assignments: Print out and comment on assigned student's paper; bring your comments to class for discussion

April 20 **Topic:** Even More Encounters!
Readings: Fenn, *Encounters at the Heart of the World*, Part IV and Epilogue
Assignments: Rough drafts due today. Bring a 1-page reflection on the following questions: How do environmental factors play into Fenn's analysis of Mandan history in these sections? What sources does she use to make this case?

Week 15

April 25 ———NO CLASS, WORKING SESSION———
Assignment: Work on your paper! The professor is available in office or via Zoom for optional one-on-one meetings

April 27 ———NO CLASS WORKING SESSION———
Assignment: Work on your paper! The professor is available in office or via Zoom for optional one-on-one meetings

Week 16

May 2 **Topic:** Paper Presentations
Assignment: Use sign-up sheet to select a time slot for presentation

May 4 **Topic:** Paper Presentations
Assignment: Use sign-up sheet to select a time slot for presentation

Week 17

May 9 ———NO CLASS FINALS WEEK———

May 11 **Assignments:** Final Paper due by 3:00 p.m.