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HSTR 200.01: Introduction to Historical Methods

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HSTR 200: Introduction to Historical Methods

Professor Jeff Wiltse

LA 251 / jeffrey.wiltse@umontana.edu

Office hours: M: 1:00-1:50; F: 11:00-12:30

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

This one-credit course introduces students to the skills and methods fundamental to the historical discipline and prepares them for upper-division courses in history. Students will learn how to think historically, conduct historical research, analyze historical documents, and write historical essays.

Readings and Course Requirements

All the readings for this course are available as pdf files on the course Moodle page. Print the readings, study them, and bring them to class so you can reference them during discussions.

You are expected to read all course materials, attend each class meeting, actively participate in class discussions, and complete all assignments. You must take this course for a grade. Your grade will be weighted as follows:

Attendance and Participation	20 percent
Why I Chose to Major or Minor in History Essay	5 percent
Primary Source Description	10 percent
Fitzgerald-Murphy Documents Assignment	10 percent
Historical Questions Assignment	10 percent
Telling Details Worksheet for Early American Cities Docs	5 percent
Social History in Early American Cities Paper	15 percent
In the Archives Research Report	25 percent

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. The work you submit in this course must be your own. Plagiarism or cheating will result in a failing grade for the course.

DSS Accommodation and Drop Deadlines

If you have a documented learning disability, please contact me so we can ensure you have suitable accommodation. The last day to drop this course without approval is February 7. From February 8 to March 29, drops require instructor and advisor approval. From March 30 to May 6, drops also require the Dean's approval and a WP or WF will appear on your transcript. May 6 is the last day to drop.

Course Schedule

Mon, Jan. 24: Course Introduction

Mon, Jan. 31: Why Study History?

Read: Sterns, "Why Study History?"
Due Why I Have Chosen to Major in History Essay

- Mon, Feb. 7: Applied History and Public History
Read: Allison and Ferguson, "Applied History Manifesto"
David W. Blight, "The Fog of History Wars," *New Yorker*, June 9, 2021.
- Mon, Feb. 14: Sources for Studying the Past
Read: Anthony Brundage, *Going to the Sources*, 19-32.
Jenny Presnell, *The Information-Literate Historian*, 112-134.
- Mon, Feb. 21: Introduction to Mansfield Library Resources
*Meet in Computer Lab
- Mon, Feb. 28: Primary Sources in the Mansfield Library
Due: Primary Sources Description Assignment
- Mon, Mar. 7: Historian as Detective
Read: (x) Fitzgerald-Murphy Documents
Due: Fitzgerald-Murphy Documents Assignment
- Mon, Mar. 14: Asking and Answering Historical Questions
Due: Historical Questions Assignment
- Mon, Mar. 21: No Class (Spring Break)
- Mon, Mar. 28: Analyzing Primary Sources
Read: (x) Social History in Early American Cities Documents
Due: Telling Details Worksheet for Early American Cities Documents
- Mon, Apr. 4: Formulating and Supporting Interpretive Arguments
Due: Social History in Early American Cities Paper
- Mon, Apr. 11: Researching in Online Databases
*Meet in Computer Lab
- Mon, Apr. 18: Introduction to the Mansfield Library Archives
*Meet in the Mansfield Library Archives, 4th Floor
- Mon, Apr. 25: No class (Work on In the Archives Assignment)
- Mon, May 2: In-class Discussion of Archival Findings
- Fri, May 6: **Due:** In the Archives Research Report