

Colorado State University
Fall 2021

HIST 640: RESEARCH SEMINAR IN STATE AND LOCAL HISTORY



Students at Pueblo's St. Mary's School pose in a Jeep during World War II (Pueblo City-County Library District)

Instructor:..... Adam Thomas (Adam.Thomas@colostate.edu)
Schedule:..... Mondays 11 a.m.–1:50 p.m.
Location:..... Chemistry B 301
Office: Clark Building B 365
Student Hours: Tuesdays 12:30–2 p.m.; Wednesdays 11 a.m.–12:30 p.m.; or by appointment
Method of Contact:..... In person or via [Zoom \(Meeting ID: 755 055 5964 Passcode: 151009\)](#)

This seminar is a practicum in place-based history. Its purpose is to teach graduate students how to research and write about “place,” essential skills for public historians whose work often centers on a particular locale or landscape. In this class, students will learn the historical profession’s methodology of research and writing. However, the course also aims to modify this traditional methodology in ways that reflect the realities of the twenty-first century: the need for flexibility and adaptability, teamwork, collaboration, and boundary crossing; the ever-burgeoning use of electronic media; and the very real need to strengthen skills and provide experiences that will help students conduct successful careers. This course will culminate in a real-world public history project for an actual client.

COURSE GOALS

This course has four primary objectives. First, the class will concentrate specifically on researching “place,” requiring knowledge of primary sources and repositories related to the natural and built environments: landscapes, cities, neighborhoods, architecture, artifacts, sites, etc. Second, the course will train students in the art and practice of good writing. This skill is especially important for public historians who will be communicating with broad and multiple publics throughout their careers. Third, the course will teach students how to relate the significance of local history to both larger historical developments and to historical debates. Fourth, students will participate in a real-world public history project that will require them to master the first three objectives. This project will involve individual research at a variety of archives, individual historical writing and reporting, and collaborative writing. It will also compel students to communicate history to the public at formal, open meeting. As a result, students will create real and useful products to launch their public history portfolios.

The instructor has designed this course to address both the methodological and applied aspects of research. Students will read, discuss, and summarize in short essays the assigned readings and websites. Exercises in research and writing will pertain to the projects.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Glassberg, David. *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

Miles, Tiya. *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

Strunk, William Jr., E. B. White, and Roger Angell. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York, N.Y.; Great Neck, NY: Pearson, 1999.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Edited by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press Staff. 9th Ed. University of Chicago Press, 2018.

In addition to these texts, the instructor has assigned various academic journal and popular press articles. All articles are available on Canvas. Additional readings may be assigned based on class need or interest, or by guest instructors and the client.

FIELDWORK

Depending on COVID-related restrictions, you will be required to travel for this seminar both for coursework and research. All travel will be less seventy miles from campus. If you need assistance in transportation, please see the instructor.

DRAFTING, REVISING, AND CONFERENCING

During the last few weeks of the course, we will not meet as a seminar. However, I will be available during our seminar time to review drafts. PLEASE SUBMIT AT LEAST ONE DRAFT OF YOUR PROJECT DURING THIS TIME. We can convene as a seminar to review the context when that draft is available. I am also willing to provide suggestions about your open-house exhibits and public presentations.

EVALUATION

SHORT PAPERS

Notable Quotables

Each week you will select your favorite line, sentence, or quote from at least two of the assigned readings. One must be from the current week’s reading while the other can come from a past week’s reading. You will submit the text of the quotes with a paragraph to convey your thoughts about your selections. The first sentences will summarize the overall argument of the reading from which you pulled the quotes. The next sentences will contextualize the quote you selected. The last and most important set of sentences will explain why you selected the quotes and how they compare or contrast with each other. This four-part scheme is merely a guideline; you may certainly expand on it if necessary. For instance, feel free to write down any questions you may have about the quote specifically or the text generally. However, this assignment should be no more than a full page, double spaced.

Due: Each week at beginning of class, when the instructor has assigned readings.

Weekly Status Reports

While researching and writing your projects, I expect you to email me reports of the status of research and writing.

Due: Each week during the “Drafting, Revising, and Conferencing” portion of the seminar.

MAJOR PROJECT COMPONENTS

Cultural Resource Interpretive Product

You will create a public-facing product appropriate for your specific project. This could include signage, a documentary, story map, etc. This product will require you to assess significance in relationship to local, state, and national contexts. I expect this product to be well-written and produced.

Collaborative Historical Context

While working on your individual projects you will need to work collaboratively with your fellow seminar students to create the historical context by which you will assess the significance of your resources, as required on the survey form. To evaluate this component, I will ask your peers to evaluate anonymously your contributions to and work on the final document.

Open House and Public Presentation

Each of you will create a stand-alone interpretive presentation for your individual projects. These could include but are not limited to posters, PowerPoint presentations, mini documentaries, or even small exhibits. At the conclusion of the open house, you will present your projects to the “client” and the general public. To evaluate this project, I will ask the client to review each of your projects, which I will weigh with my own assessment. Keep in mind that this open house and presentation will likely be virtual because of the pandemic.

Grading

Seminar participation	10%
Notable Quotables/Short papers	20%
Major project.....	70%
Cultural resource interp. product	23.33%
Collaborative historic context	23.33%
Open house and public presentation	23.33%

Please note that I maintain grades in Canvas merely as a reference for your convenience. While your grades in Canvas are a close approximation of your actual scores, they DO NOT fully represent the grades in my grade book. If you would like to know your official grade, please see me during office hours.

Grading Scale

100 A+	87–89 B+	77–79 C+
93–99 A	83–86 B	73–70 C
90–92 A-	80–82 B-	60–69 D
Any grade below a 60 is an F.		

Late Assignments

I expect promptness with all assignments. Late assignments will be docked one percentage point per day late. If you are having a problem completing your assignment, please contact me as soon as possible to make other arrangements. Remember, we have a client with real-world deadlines; you MUST make those deadlines.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable. If caught in such an act, the student will receive an F for the offending assignment and the class and be held for disciplinary action according to department and university policy. Each instance of plagiarism, classroom cheating, and other types of academic dishonesty will be addressed according to the principles published in the CSU General Catalog.

COVID-19 Statement

Important information for students: All students are expected and required to report any COVID-19 symptoms to the university immediately, as well as exposures or positive tests from a non-CSU testing location.

If you suspect you have symptoms, or if you know you have been exposed to a positive person or have tested positive for COVID, you are required to fill out the COVID Reporter (<https://covid.colostate.edu/reporter/>). If you know or believe you have been exposed, including living with someone known to be COVID positive, or are symptomatic, it is important for the health of yourself and others that you complete the online COVID Reporter. Do not ask your instructor to report for you. If you do not have internet access to fill out the online COVID-19 Reporter, please call (970) 491-4600. You may also report concerns in your academic or living spaces regarding COVID exposures through the COVID Reporter. You will not be penalized in any way for reporting. When you complete the COVID Reporter for any reason, the CSU Public Health office is notified. Once notified, that office will contact you and, depending upon each situation, will conduct contact tracing, initiate any necessary public health requirements and notify you if you need to take any steps.

For the latest information about the University's COVID resources and information, please visit the **CSU COVID-19 site**: <https://covid.colostate.edu/>.

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Please keep in mind that this research seminar is, by design, intended to be flexible. I will adapt it to meet your needs and interests as well as the needs of the client. Thus all meeting dates, subjects, and readings, and deadlines are subject to change.

Week 1 (8/23): The Historian and the Public: Power and Responsibility

Eiseley, Loren. "The Poignant Work of Tampering with Prehistory." *Smithsonian*, Oct. 1975, 34–40.

Haskell, Thomas L. "Objectivity Is Not Neutrality: Rhetoric vs. Practice in Peter Novick's *That Noble Dream*." *History and Theory* 29, no. 2 (May 1990): 129–57.

Week 2 (8/30): The Historian, the Story, and the Public, Part 1

Glassberg, David. *Sense of History: The Place of the Past in American Life*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.

- *Notable Quotable 1 due for Glassberg.*

Week 3 (9/6): Labor Day—NO CLASS

Week 4 (9/13): The Historian, the Story, and the Public, Part 2

Miles, Tiya. *The House on Diamond Hill: A Cherokee Plantation Story*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2010.

- *Notable Quotable 2 due for Miles.*

Week 5 (9/20): Introducing the Client and the Project

We may meet at the project site (depending on distance). The client and I will introduce the project, the resources, and the applicable archives.

Week 6 (9/27): Researching Primary Sources

Turabian, Chapters 3–4 and 15–17

Cronon, William. "Learning to Do Historical Research: A Primer for Environmental Historians and Others." <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/index.htm>. Read all sections up to "How to Read a Landscape."

- *Notable Quotable 3 due for Cronon "Learning to Do Historical Research."*

Week 7 (10/4): Extracting History from the Public: Oral Histories, Memory Sessions, and Cognitive Mapping

Readings may be assigned by this week's guest speaker.

Week 8 (10/11): Rules for Writing

Strunk, William Jr., E. B. White, and Roger Angell. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York, N.Y.; Great Neck, NY: Pearson, 1999.

Turabian, Chapters 20–25.

- *Notable Quotable 4 due for Strunk and White.*

Week 9 (10/18): Narrative and Analytical Writing

Turabian, Chapters 5–7.

Cronon, William. "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative." *The Journal of American History* 78, No. 4 (Mar., 1992), 1347-1376.

- *Notable Quotable 5 due for Cronon "A Place for Stories."*

Week 10 (10/25): Digital Public History and Presenting History to the Public

Hayden, Dolores. "Reinterpreting Latina History at the Embassy Auditorium." In *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History*, 188–209. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1995.

Limerick, Patty. "History out of Order." *Denver Post*, July 15, 2018.

There may be a guest speaker this week. Additional readings will be assigned by that presenter.

- *Notable Quotable 6 due for Hayden and Limerick.*

Week 11 (11/1): Historical Ethics

Karamanski, Theodore J. "Introduction: Ethics and the Use of History." In Karamanski, ed., *Ethics and Public History: An Anthology*, 1990, 1-15.

Wiener, Jon. "The Plagiarists: Doris Kearns Goodwin and Stephen Ambrose." *Historians in Trouble: Plagiarism, Fraud, and Politics in the Ivory Tower*. New York: New Press, 2005, 182-200.

American Historical Association, "Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct."
<http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm>

National Council on Public History, "Bylaws and Ethics." <http://ncph.org/cms/about/bylaws-and-ethics/>

- *Notable Quotable 7 due for Karamanski, Wiener, AHA, and NCPH*

Week 12 (11/8): The Art of the Critique

Turabian, Chapter 13

Additional examples of good and bad critiques will be assigned, as well as an essay or article.

- *Critique assignment due.*

Week 13 (11/15): Drafting, Revising, and Conferencing

- *Major Project Rough Drafts Due*

Fall Break: 11/20–11/28

Week 14 (11/29): Rehearsal

- *Status report due*

Week 15 (12/6): Open House and Public Presentation

Note that the open house will likely need to be scheduled for the evening and, thus, beyond our scheduled class time.

FINALS WEEK

Your final cultural resource interpretative product and the historical context will be due at 6:10 p.m. on Tuesday, December 14. If possible, we'll celebrate, even if it is a virtual celebration.