

HIST 5301: Geography of 19th Century America
Fall 2014 ~ Section 001 ~ Wednesday 7:00-9:50pm ~ UH13
Dr. Andrew Milson, Professor, Department of History

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Course Description

This course explores the historical geography of nineteenth-century America through multiple readings that offer interdisciplinary perspectives on the 'geography of the American past'.

Student Learning Objectives

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand and analyze historical geography concepts.
2. Apply the concepts of historical geography to the history and geography of the U.S. in the nineteenth century.
3. Interpret and evaluate written works in the field of historical geography.
4. Construct historical and geographical arguments about the U.S. in the nineteenth century.
5. Articulate in writing and verbally the ideas, concepts, and arguments of the field of historical geography.
6. Analyze and evaluate graphics such as maps, figures, tables, and photographs related to U.S. historical geography.

Required Course Materials

1. The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History, Vol. 2: Continental America, 1800-1867, by Donald W. Meinig, ISBN: 978-0300062908
2. The Shaping of America: A Geographical Perspective on 500 Years of History, Vol. 3: Transcontinental America, 1850-1915, by Donald W. Meinig, ISBN: 978-0300082906
3. Mapping the Nation: History and Cartography in Nineteenth Century America, by Susan Schulten, ISBN: 978-0226103969
4. The Health of the Country: How American Settlers Understood Themselves and Their Land, by Conevery Valencius, ISBN: 978-0465089871
5. Manifest and Other Destinies: Territorial Fictions of the Nineteenth Century United States, by Stephanie LeMenager, by ISBN: 978-0803218451
6. Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West, by William Cronon, ISBN: 978-0393308730

Major Assignments

Your course grade will be determined by your performance on:

1. Three Literature Review Essays & Presentations

- a. The purpose of the literature review essay assignment is to provide you an opportunity to demonstrate your ability to read, interpret, evaluate, and synthesize scholarship in the field of historical geography. To that end, you will read scholarly journal articles on three different historical geography topics of your choice and then write essays that synthesize your understanding of these articles. The two books by Donald Meinig will introduce a wide variety of topics from which you may choose. *Your topics and list of journal articles must be approved in advance.*
- b. First, you should select three topics related to the historical geography of the 19th century United States that are of interest to you. There are a few strategies you might employ for identifying topics. For instance, take note of which topics catch your attention and stir a desire to read more as you read the Meinig texts. Also, use the reference lists of the assigned books to identify articles and topics that sound interesting to you. Additionally, you might reflect on topics from other courses that are of interest and explore how the topic is studied from the perspective of historical geography. Once you've identified a few articles related to a topic, search the library databases to identify additional articles on the topic. A few of the journals with excellent scholarship in the field include (but are not limited to) the *Journal of Historical Geography*, the *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, the *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, and the *Geographical Review*.
- c. You must read and evaluate a minimum of eight scholarly journal articles on each topic you select.

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- d. As you read each article, consider the following questions: What is the author's primary thesis? What supporting evidence/sources does the author bring to bear to support this thesis? What prior theses does the author seek to refute, modify, or extend? What connections can you make between this article and other readings you have done for this class or other classes? In what ways does this reading extend your understanding of the topic? In what ways does it challenge previously held understandings?
- e. Using your notes on the questions above, write a focused essay that is structured and sequenced according to the following sections:
 - i. Introduce the topic
 - ii. Discuss and compare/contrast the theses that are advanced and the sources that are employed by the authors of the articles
 - iii. Evaluate the scholarship presented in these articles. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the theses and supporting evidence presented by these authors?
 - iv. Conclude with a synthesis of your understanding of this topic
- f. Essays must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - i. The body of each essay must be 2000-2500 words in length. This excludes the bibliography & footnotes.
 - ii. Include a title page with your name, a title, the course, the date, and a word count.
 - iii. Use the Chicago Manual of Style for citation and style guidance
 - 1. Use footnotes to cite sources directly relevant to the text of the essay
 - 2. Use a bibliography to cite all sources as well as any additional references that were consulted in preparation of the essay
 - iv. Edit your writing carefully. The UTA Writing Center is an excellent resource - <http://www.uta.edu/owl/>
 - v. You may use first person
 - vi. Double space with 1" margins
 - vii. Print, staple, and deliver a hard copy of the essay by the due date.
- g. On the due dates for each essay, each student will provide a brief, informal presentation of his/her essay topic and review. See the course calendar for due dates.¹

2. Book Review

- a. The purpose of the book review assignment is to provide you an opportunity to demonstrate your critical reading skills and your ability to critically evaluate scholarship in the field of historical geography. To that end, you will select one of the books listed below and write a focused review that is structured and sequenced according to the following sections:
 - i. Briefly summarize the contents of the work
 - ii. Identify and critique the key arguments/theses advanced by the author
 - iii. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the work
- b. Select one of the following books
 - i. The American Way: A Geographical History of Crisis and Recovery, Carville Earle, ISBN: 978-0847687138
 - ii. Arcadian America: The Death and Life of an Environmental Tradition, Aaron Sachs, ISBN: 978-0300176407
 - iii. The Shaping of America: Vol. 1, Atlantic America 1492-1800, Donald W. Meinig, ISBN: 978-0300038828
- c. The book review must adhere to the following guidelines:
 - i. The body must be 2800-3000 words in length. This excludes the bibliography & footnotes.
 - ii. Include a title page with your name, a title, the date, and a word count.
 - iii. Sequence your review according to the 3 sections in the instructions above.
 - iv. Use the Chicago Manual of Style for citation and style guidance
 - 1. Use footnotes to cite sources directly relevant to the text of the essay
 - 2. Use a bibliography to cite all sources as well as any additional references that were consulted in preparation of the essay
 - v. Edit your writing carefully. The UTA Writing Center is an excellent resource - <http://www.uta.edu/owl/>

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- vi. You may use first person
- vii. Double space with 1" margins
- viii. Print, staple, and deliver a hard copy of the essay by the due date.
- d. See the following website for additional tips on writing book reviews:
<http://qcpages.qc.cuny.edu/writing/history/assignments/bookreviews.html>

3. Attendance and Participation

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required. Rather, each faculty member is free to develop his or her own methods of evaluating students' academic performance, which includes establishing course-specific policies on attendance. *As the instructor of this section, I have established following attendance policy: Seminar-oriented classes are most successful when all students attend class prepared to engage in deep discussion about the assigned readings. For all students in this class to benefit, it is essential that you read the assigned readings, attend class, and participate with insightful contributions to the discussion. I understand that legitimate situations arise that may cause you to miss class. If you wish for me to consider an absence as 'excused', please provide me with a hard copy note explaining your absence and any related documentation. I will not automatically excuse absences, but I will take reasonable and infrequent conflicts into consideration when calculating your final grade at the end of the semester. If you expect to miss multiple classes, I recommend that you plan to take the course in another semester. See the rubric on the final page for information about how your attendance will be calculated as a portion of your final course grade.*

Grading Policy

Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

- Literature Reviews (30%)
- Book Review (30%)
- Attendance & Participation (40%).

The grading scale for the course is: A = 90-100%; B= 80-89%; C= 70-79%; D= 60-69%; F = below 60%. Students are expected to keep track of their performance throughout the semester and seek guidance from available sources (including the instructor) if their performance drops below satisfactory levels. See "Student Support Services" below.

Expectations for Out-of-Class Study

Beyond the time required to attend each class meeting, students enrolled in this course should expect to spend at least an additional 12-15 hours per week of their own time in course-related activities, including reading required materials, completing assignments, preparing for exams, etc.

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Grade Grievances: Any appeal of a grade in this course must follow the procedures and deadlines for grade-related grievances as published in the current undergraduate catalog. **Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance. Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. Contact the Financial Aid Office for more information. (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>). **Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Any student requiring an accommodation for this course must provide the instructor with official documentation in the form of a letter certified by the staff in the Office for Students with Disabilities, University Hall 102. Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at www.uta.edu/disability or by calling the Office for Students with Disabilities at (817) 272-3364. **Title IX:** The University of Texas at Arlington is committed to upholding U.S. Federal Law "Title IX" such that no member of the UT Arlington community shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. For more information, visit www.uta.edu/titleIX. **Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code: *I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence. I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.* UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code as they see fit in their courses, including (but not limited to) having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System Regents' Rule 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. **Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>. **Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" shall be directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback enters the SFS database anonymously and is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law; students are strongly urged to participate. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>. **Final Review Week:** A period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate. **Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities. **Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include tutoring, major-based learning centers, developmental education, advising and mentoring, personal counseling, and federally funded programs. For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to resources@uta.edu, or view the information at www.uta.edu/resources.

Emergency Phone Numbers:

In case of an on-campus emergency, call the UT Arlington Police Department

817-272-3003 (non-campus phone)

2-3003 (campus phone)

You may also dial 911.

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Course Calendar

I reserve the right to adjust this schedule in any way that serves the educational needs of the students enrolled in this course. ~AJM

Date	Assignments
08.27.14	Meinig, Continental America, Part 1
09.03.14	Meinig, Continental America, Part 2
09.10.14	Meinig, Continental America, Parts 3 & 4
09.17.14	Meinig, Transcontinental America, Parts 1 & 2
09.24.14	Meinig, Transcontinental America, Parts 3 & 4
10.01.14	**Review Essay 1 Due**
10.08.14	Schulten, Mapping the Nation, entire book
10.15.14	Valencius, The Health of the Country, entire book
10.22.14	LeMenager, Manifest and Other Destinies, entire book
10.29.14	**Review Essay 2 Due**
11.05.14	Cronon, Nature's Metropolis - Preface, prologue and chapters 1-2
11.12.14	Cronon, Nature's Metropolis - chapters 3-5
11.19.14	Cronon, Nature's Metropolis - chapters 6-8 and epilogue
11.26.14	Thanksgiving Break
12.03.14	**Review Essay 3 Due**
12.10.14	**Book Review Due**

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Attendance and Participation Rubric

The A Student	The B Student	The C Student	The D Student	The F Student
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends 100% of class meetings Always arrives on-time and stays until the end of class Consistently demonstrates outstanding preparation for discussion of assigned readings Makes insightful contributions to discussions Comprehends the main ideas of the course readings and articulates ideas clearly in class Looks up unfamiliar terms, concepts, events, people, etc. from the readings and shares them meaningfully in class Consistently makes insightful connections between the course content and other courses, prior learning, outside texts, historical events, historical/literary figures, etc. Consistently seeks out additional media sources that are highly relevant to course content (video clips, maps, blogs, news stories, social media, art, graphs, websites, etc.) and shares them meaningfully with the class Is exceptionally respectful of classmates and the instructor in all interactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends more than 90% of class meetings Rarely arrives late or leaves early Consistently demonstrates good preparation for discussion of assigned readings Makes on-topic contributions to discussions Usually comprehends the main ideas of the course readings and can explain ideas during discussions Looks up unfamiliar terms, etc. from the readings and shares these unprompted during class discussion Usually connects the readings to other courses, prior learning, etc. and offers these connections unprompted during class discussion Occasionally seeks out additional media sources that are relevant to course content and shares them with the class Is not disrespectful of classmates and the instructor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends 70-89% of class meetings Is typically late for class and/or leaves early Frequently seems unprepared to discuss assigned readings and/or preparation is erratic Makes frequent off-topic and/or vague contributions to discussions Only occasionally comprehends the main ideas of the readings and/or can explain ideas during discussion only occasionally Complains about the readings rather than attempting to comprehend the meaning of the author's writing or wrestle with the author's ideas Has to be prompted to share ideas, interpretations, connections, etc. with the class Rarely seeks out relevant media sources and/or shared sources are frequently of questionable relevance Occasionally displays a lack of respect for classmates and/or the instructor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends 60-69% of class meetings Is consistently late and/or leaves early Rarely speaks during class Rarely demonstrates preparation for class discussions Does not seek out additional relevant media sources and/or shared sources are irrelevant to the course readings and content Occasionally disrupts the class Plays on mobile device or laptop instead of engaging in the class Is frequently disrespectful to classmates and/or the instructor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attends fewer than 60% of class meetings Never arrives on time and/or always leaves early Does not contribute to discussions Is not prepared for discussion of assigned readings Does not demonstrate that he/she made consistent effort to engage in the class Regularly disrupts the class Distracts classmates with mobile device or laptop Is consistently disrespectful to classmates and/or the instructor