HIST 5339: HISTORICAL THEORY & METHODS

FALL 2018

**INSTRUCTOR**: Christopher Morris

**OFFICE**: UH 346

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**OFFICE HOURS**: Monday, Wednesday 2:30-5:00 and by appointment

**SECTION INFORMATION:** HIST 5339/001

**TIME AND PLACE:** Monday Evening, 7-10, UH 13

**CONTENT AND OBJECTIVES**: This course is a basic introduction to the discipline of history and is required for all History M.A. and Ph.D. students. No prior knowledge of historiographical issues is expected or required, and the course therefore should be accessible to students regardless of their particular field of interest or concentration.

History is not just a craft; it is a way of thinking. It is an intellectual endeavor. This class is designed to make students think, not about the past, but about how historians think about the past. This we will do by jumping into some of the ongoing debates among historians over what it is they do and how they ought to do whatever it is they do. We will consider broad philosophical problems, survey some of the social theories underlying (explicitly and implicitly) much of modern historical thought, and review recent trends in the discipline. We will discuss current literary theories that question the whole enterprise of historical research and writing as it has been practiced over the last century. As historians, you will not want to take any of this lying down, so to speak, but will want to engage these important matters of life and death (for the discipline of history) intelligently, well informed, and enthusiastically.

The course will be divided into four or five sections, in which we will read about and discuss what it is historians do, or think they do, or say they ought to do. And then we will explore some examples of history theory and method applied to a particular topic. Historians disagree rather widely on what it is they do and how they do it. Some, you may be surprised to learn, don't believe the past is knowable at all. Others think it can be known, and know precisely. Some think the best histories tell good stories. Others think stories are for novels, and history is about analysis and explanation. It's enough to keep a good historian awake at night in existential insomnia. My intent is to give the class a few sleepless nights.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:** By the end of the semester students will be able: **A**) Knowledge: to describe the differences between fact, interpretation, and representation and to recall some of the historians and texts in which those differences are discussed. **B**)Comprehension: to comprehend some of the ways historians have defined their work and discipline over the last 150 years or so; **C)** Application: to juxtapose differing perspectives, for example, on fact, interpretation, and representation; to place different historians and their perspectives into conversation **D)** Analysis and Synthesis: to consider and interrogate one perspective or argument in light of others, through analysis (breaking down arguments and texts into parts and chains of logical progression) and synthesis (reconstructing arguments and texts in ways that offer new perspectives; **E)** Evaluation: to evaluate critically (based on analysis and synthesis) specific works and perspectives, and to offer and informed evaluation of the state of the discipline of history; **F)** Skills: to demonstrate their knowledge, comprehension, etc., orally and in writing that is clear, logical, and free and grammatical and punctuation errors.

Assessment: Progress toward these outcomes will be monitored and assessed in class essays and discussions.

“A” – level of achievement indicates that the student is analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, and writing at or above the graduate level.

“B+” – level of achievement shows room for improvement in one or more of the above categories, but also indicates an ability to improve to “A” level

“B” – indicates a level of knowledge and comprehension, as well as an ability to apply both, that meets graduate level requirements or expectations in History, which is satisfactory for advancement in this class. However, this grade indicates that the student has not yet achieved highest level exectations and may indicate the student will have problems meeting future graduate school requirements, especially at the doctoral level

“C” – level of achievement in several outcomes is not satisfactory for advancement in graduate history at either the M.A. or Ph. D. levels.

**TEXTS**:

Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*

Simon Schama, *Dead Certainties*

Armitage and Guldi, *The History Manifesto* (pdf on Blackboard)

Other readings will be available for you to download and print at your convenience and expense.

**ASSIGNMENTS**:

Active participation in class discussions is absolutely essential. We will not be looking for correct answers in this class, or to solve issues once and for all. Instead, what we encourage is a willingness to grapple with complex and often contradictory ideas of what history really is, and this we will do as a group, by asking questions of one another, offering possible answers, suggesting new ways of looking at old issues, and of course suggesting entirely new issues. Open, forthright, but also polite discussion is essential to this process. I expect to hear all your voices (preferably not all at once).

In addition, each week selected students will be assigned to serve as discussion leaders. They will summarize the readings and open class discussions by pointing out what they take to be the essential points raised in the readings.

Written assignments will consist of five short (2-3 page) essays based on assigned readings. All students will write essays on the texts assigned for September 24 (Trouillot), November 5 (Schama), and December 3 (Armitage and Guldi). Students will choose which class readings to address with their other two papers.

In each essay students will be expected to: 1) Knowledge and comprehension: identify and explain the larger issue on which each reading offers a comment or point of view; 2) Application: assess the significance of that larger issue for the study of history; 3) Analysis and Synthesis: offer a critical evaluation of each reading’s comment on that larger point; 4) Evaluation: offer a point of your own, perhaps by suggesting a perspective on the larger issue that might be worth considering more fully (although you are not asked to consider your perspective more fully in these brief papers).

Rewrites will be permitted for all papers that do not receive a “B” or better, but no re-write can receive a grade higher than a “B”.

There will be no extra-credit assignments.

What your grades mean: See “Assessment” above.

**GRADING**:

Participation and discussion leadership 25%

Written work 75%

**ATTENDANCE:** As the instructor of this section I will note attendance, as regular attendance is necessary for a participation grade. Students who miss more than two classes will find it difficult to earn a grade for the course of greater than C. Students who for whatever reason need to take an incomplete for the course are still required to attend class.

At The University of Texas at Arlington, taking attendance is not required but attendance is a critical indicator in student success. 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.

However, while UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

**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. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://wweb.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UTArlington 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), The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA),* and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.* 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 disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD).Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting: **The Office for Students with Disabilities, (OSD)** <http://www.uta.edu/disability/> or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://www.uta.edu/hr/eos/index.php).

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated.*For information regarding Title IX, visit* [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Michelle Willbanks, Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-4585 or [titleix@uta.edu](mailto:titleix@uta.edu)

**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 in their courses by 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. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>. Faculty are encouraged to discuss plagiarism and share the following library tutorials <http://libguides.uta.edu/copyright/plagiarism> and <http://library.uta.edu/plagiarism/>

**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>.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as “lecture,” “seminar,” or “laboratory” are 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 via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students’ anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington’s effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** for semester-long courses**,** 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, which is located [insert a description of the nearest exit/emergency 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](http://www.uta.edu/studentsuccess/learning-center/utsi/tutoring/index.php), [major-based learning centers](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/college-based-clinics-labs.php), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/advising.php), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](http://www.uta.edu/studentsuccess/learning-center/mcnair-scholars/index.php). 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](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/studentsuccess/success-programs/programs/resource-hotline.php>

**RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS**

**Research or General Library Help**

Academic Plaza Consultation Services [library.uta.edu/academic-plaza](http://library.uta.edu/academic-plaza)

Ask Us [ask.uta.edu/](http://ask.uta.edu/)

Library Tutorials [library.uta.edu/how-to](http://library.uta.edu/how-to)

Subject and Course Research Guides [libguides.uta.edu](http://libguides.uta.edu/)

Librarians by Subject [library.uta.edu/subject-librarians](http://library.uta.edu/subject-librarians)

Research Coaches <http://libguides.uta.edu/researchcoach>

**Resources**

A to Z List of Library Databases [libguides.uta.edu/az.php](http://libguides.uta.edu/az.php)

Course Reserves [pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do](http://pulse.uta.edu/vwebv/enterCourseReserve.do)

Study Room Reservations [openroom.uta.edu/](http://openroom.uta.edu/)

**Bomb Threats:**

If anyone is tempted to call in a bomb threat, be aware that UTA will attempt to trace the phone call and prosecute all responsible parties. Every effort will be made to avoid cancellation of presentations/tests caused by bomb threats. Unannounced alternate sites will be available for these classes. Your instructor will make you aware of alternate class sites in the event that your classroom is not available.

**Stop. Think. Protect Yourself. You Have Choices.**

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor.

This graphic provides each member of the UTA community with information and options for responding to an active threat. These options are not chronological, but are designed to address dynamic situations. Assess the situation (your location, the location of the threat, type of threat, etc.), identify and weigh your options, develop a plan of action and commit to it.



Additional information for active threat and other emergency situations can be found through the links below:

[police.uta.edu/activeshooter](https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fpolice.uta.edu%2Factiveshooter&data=02%7C01%7C%7C72bad73120ce4fe0345908d5fec639e5%7C5cdc5b43d7be4caa8173729e3b0a62d9%7C0%7C0%7C636695049695960185&sdata=08ECLBwRL1fOGeVOAKE9ZC1e5jIXKd6gXrrS8vl%2F8rE%3D&reserved=0)

police.uta.edu/em **SCHEDULE**

**PART ONE: WHAT IS HISTORY?**

Aug. 27 Introduction

READING: Carr, *What Is History?* Chapters 1, 4, 5.

Sept. 3 Labor Day Holiday—No Class

Sept. 10 History As Objective Account of What Happened

READINGS: Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream*, chapters 1 and 2.

Sept. 17 History As Subjective Assertion of Power

READINGS: Foucault, “Two Lectures,” from *Power/Knowledge* (Blackboard)

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

Sept. 24 Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

**PART TWO: HISTORY AS STRUCTURE**

Oct. 1 History as Big Structures, Large Processes, and Huge Comparisons

READINGS: Marx and Engels, “Bourgeois and Proletarians”; Weber, “Spirit of Capitalism”; Braudel, “History and the Social Sciences”; Braudel *The Mediterranean*, table of contents. Schuessler on historians and capitalism today.

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

Oct. 8 History as Microcosms: the Fragmentation of History

Tomich, “The Order of Historical Time.” McWilliams, “The Kitchen Garden in Early New England”

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

**PART THREE: HISTORY AS STORY**

Oct. 15 Return to Narrative

READINGS: Lawrence Stone, “The Revival of narrative: reflections on a new old history” (Blackboard); James Goodman, “For the Love of Stories” (Blackboard); Cronon “AHA Presidential Address: Storytelling” (Blackboard)

**DISCUSSION LEADERS**:

Oct. 22 Narrative and Objectivity

READINGS: Dominick LaCapra, “Rhetoric and History” (Blackboard); Aaron Sachs, “History as Creative Non-Fiction” (Blackboard)

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

Oct. 29 Metahistory: There is No There There

READINGS: Robert F. Berkhofer, “Historical Representations and Truthfulness”;

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

Nov. 5 **Case Study No. 2**:

Simon Schama, *Dead Certainties*

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

**PART FOUR: NEW DIRECTIONS**

Nov. 12 Seeing History with Eyes and Machines

READINGS: Brugger, “Digital Humanities in the 21st Century”; Brown, “Historians and Photography”; Dietzman, "‘Moulder[ing] into nothingness among the rocks’: Sharpshooters in Gardner's Photographic Sketch Book of the Civil War”; Simeone, Morris, McHenry, Markley, “The Canoe and the Superpixel: Image Analysis of the Changing Shorelines on Historical Maps of the Great Lakes”

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

Nov. 19 **NO CLASS**

Nov. 26 Transnational History

READINGS: Tyrrell, “Reflections On the Transnational Turn”; Zimmer, “Transatlantic History”; Parry, “Ian Morris: Historian on a Grand Scale”

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:**

**CONCLUSION: THE FUTURE OF THE PAST**

Dec. 3 READINGS: Armitage and Guldi, *The History Manifesto*

**DISCUSSION LEADERS:** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_