

HIST 1400
Controversies in History
University of Colorado-Denver
2024-2025

Instructor: Dr. Kelly Cvanciger

Class Meetings/Location: Monthly via zoom, with asynchronous lessons

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Office Location: Student Commons Room 3128

Cost: \$231.00 for 3 undergraduate credits

Catalog Title: HIST 1400: Controversies in History

Course Description:

This course examines how historians use the raw material of the past to interpret the “who, what, when, where, why” of historical events and processes. Students will explore a variety of cases where historians have significant disagreement or diverse interpretations regarding “what happened” and “why” to come to an understanding of what historians do and how they do it.

Core Course Notice: This course is part of the Humanities Core program. See your advisor for additional information about Core Curriculum requirements.

Content Overview:

Controversies abound in history. Can we use the methods of historians to make sense of controversies for ourselves? We may not reach any definitive conclusions, but we will practice the art of formulating an argument that presents our positions on controversial topics.

Student Learning Outcomes:

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with historical methodologies and to master the building blocks of historical analysis. To achieve these goals, students must be able to do the following upon completion of this course:

1. Describe and apply the historical process.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of how the course readings fit in historical contexts.
3. Demonstrate the ability to create historical arguments from primary sources.
4. Explain and analyze how past peoples understood their world and how those understandings shaped the way they acted.
5. Identify different types of texts and other sources of historical evidence, distinguishing between primary sources (letters, diaries, speeches, time-period newspaper reports, etc.) and secondary sources (works produced by historians such as books, journal articles, etc.).
4. Demonstrate the ability to interpret, analyze, critique, and compose arguments utilizing primary and secondary sources to support claims.
5. Identify the cultural, historical, political, economic, and intellectual influences on all texts used throughout the course and critically consider how these influences may be used to shape popular opinion on a particular subject.
6. Evaluate authors' arguments and evidence, demonstrate sensitivity to sources' potential biases and limitations, explain the challenges of constructing historical narratives using incomplete and sometimes contradictory evidence, be able to work constructively with multifaceted or ambiguous interpretations, and formulate coherent arguments by sifting through competing explanations and interpretations.

7. Critically consider the ways historical narratives (historiography) and memories are used.

Course Requirements

Monthly Reading Responses: Once a month, students are tasked with completing the reading of an academic article chosen by the teacher. Monthly discussions will occur, each student must read the article, make 1 post, and respond to two posts of their peers. ***These monthly discussions are worth 30% of the students' final grade.***

Primary Source Analyses: Six times throughout the year, students will be tasked with analyzing a primary source collected during research on the topic of their choice. Students will complete and upload the primary source form to google classroom. Primary sources must include the following: paintings, diary entries, maps, charts, graphs, personal letters, photographs, and Congressional Acts.

These primary sources analyses are worth 20% of the students' final grade.

Book Club Reading Guides: The instructor will provide reading guides for *A Midwife's Tale* and *Why Learn History*.

They will be in the form of book club questions and will be used to guide classroom discussion. There will be a culminating question assignment to understand the way in which this story demonstrates the use of history. **The book club is worth 10% of the students' final grade.**

Final Cumulative NHD project: Students will incorporate the elements of both their historiographic and the primary source research they have done on their topic throughout the semester to compose a NHD project. A rough draft of the project is due at the regional contest level and the final project is due on April 26, 2025. ***The final project is worth 35% of the students' final grade.***

Attendance/Active Participation: This course will involve a great deal of discussion and requires students' attendance and participation via zoom. This could include monthly assignments or expected student written contributions to the class in various forms.

Attendance/participation is worth 5% of the students' final grade.

Suggested Readings:

- Samuel Wineburg, *Why Learn History (When It's Already on Your Phone)*, University of Chicago Press (2018; ISBN-13: 978-0-226-35721-8)
- Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812*
- Assorted readings and exercises as determined by the instructor, to include:
 - John Tose, *The Pursuit of History*, Chapters 1-2
 - Excerpts from *Learning from the Germans*
 - Chapter from *The Misplaced Massacre*, Chapter 1
 - Quintard Taylor, *From Esteban to Rodney King: Five Centuries of African American History in the West*
 - MLK, Jr. & Malcolm X: non-violent direction action protest

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Required Readings	Assignments
October	What is history? What do historians do? Why completing a NHD project will set you up for success in college. Primary sources and their importance.	Wineburg, Intro & Chapter 1 Tose, <i>The Pursuit of History</i> , Chapters 1-2. NHD, <i>Contest Rule Book</i>	Primary Source #1 Discussion #1
November	What is our national mythology? Is history thematic, contextual, or chronological? How should history be taught?	<i>Learning from the Germans</i> NHD, <i>Theme Booklet</i> & Video	Primary Source #2 & 3 Discussion #2
December	The Sand Creek Massacre-How should history be taught?	The Misplaced Massacre, Chapter 1	Primary Source #4 Discussion #3
January	How should history be taught? What should we learn from history?	Taylor, <i>From Estaban to Rodney King</i>	Primary Source #5 Discussion #4
February	How should history be taught? When does history become controversial?	Ulrich, Chapter 1-3	Primary Source #6
March	Completing our NHD project	Ulrich, Chapter 4-6	NHD Project due
April	Why do controversies persist in interpreting history?	MLK and Malcolm X readings: Forms of protest	Discussion #5 Book Club #1
May	What should we learn from history? Why is history important?	Wineburg, Chapter 2 Ulrich, Chapter 7-9	Class Review Book Club #2

Dates of synchronous lessons online via Zoom:

Please note: There is no exception to this attendance policy, all synchronous dates students must be in attendance from 6 pm-8 pm via Zoom. No exceptions will be granted. If a student cannot commit to any of these dates then the student should NOT enroll in the course. Cameras will be open during synchronous lessons and the chat will be closed. Participation is required during these sessions.

October 10th

October 24th

November 21st

December 19th

January 23rd

February 27

March 27

April 24

May 15

**Homework opens the 1st business day of each month and discussions open the 15th. Please feel free to print all course material at your school.

Course & University Policies

- **Coursework Workload:** Students should expect to spend anywhere from 1-4 hours per week on course readings, writing papers, preparing for exams, etc. Students who cannot commit the time required to be successful in the class should NOT take the course. Please note that some weeks will have a greater workload than others. This course is stretched longer than a semester to include the completion of the NHD project.
- **Cheating/Plagiarism:** Academic dishonesty will be dealt with severely. Please see the “CLAS Academic Dishonesty Policy & CLAS Academic Ethics Policy” with the link below: <https://clas.ucdenver.edu/faculty-staff/policies-procedures/handling-academic-dishonesty/definition-academic-dishonesty>
- **Final Course Grades:** Final course grades will be calculated based on the grading scale provided on p. 1-2 of the course syllabus and will appear in your records as a letter grade corresponding to the scale below:
 - 94-100% A
 - 90-93% A- • 87-89% B+
 - 84-86% B
 - 80-83% B- • 77-79% C+
 - 74-76% C
 - 70-73% C- • 67-69% D+
 - 64-66% D
 - 60-63% D-
 - 0-59% F
- **Changes to Syllabus:** The instructor reserves the right to change or modify any syllabus content during the semester.

*****Important Note:***

1. NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED!
2. ALL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO COMPETE IN A REGIONAL NHD CONTEST TO ENROLL IN THIS COURSE!

The grade you receive in this course will be recorded on an official CU Denver transcript and will become a part of your permanent University of Colorado academic record. A grade below a C could affect your admission to a CU or other campus. If you earn a grade of C- or lower and are later admitted to a CU campus, you will be on academic probation for the first semester of attendance and subject to University policies on satisfactory academic progress.

Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways:

“The Colorado Commission on Higher Education has approved HIST 1400 for inclusion in the Guaranteed Transfer (GT) Pathways program in the GT-HI1 category. For transferring students, successful completion with a minimum C- grade guarantees transfer and application of credit in this GT Pathways category. For more information on the GT Pathways program, go to: <http://highered.colorado.gov/academics/transfers/gtpathways/curriculum.html>

Additional GT Pathways Student Learning Outcomes:

GT Pathways Competency in Critical Thinking: Competency in critical thinking addresses a student’s ability to analyze information and ideas from multiple perspectives and articulate an argument or an opinion or a conclusion based on their analysis.

Students should be able to:

1. Formulate an Argument (required for GT – HI1)
 - a. Ask a question relevant to the discipline
 - b. Synthesize perspectives that answer it
 - c. Take a specific position
2. Incorporate Evidence (required for GT – HI1)
 - a. Interpret/evaluate sources to develop an analysis or synthesis
3. Understand Implications and Make Conclusions (required for GT – HI1)
 - a. Establish a conclusion that is tied to the range of information presented
 - b. Reflect on implications and consequences of stated conclusion

GT Pathways Competency in Information Literacy: Information literacy refers to the set of skills needed to find, retrieve, analyze, and use information. Competency in information literacy represents a student's ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use that information for the task or problem at hand.

Students should be able to:

1. Evaluate Information Critically (required for GT – HI1)
 - a. Utilize a variety of information sources appropriate to the scope and discipline of the research question
 - b. Consider the importance of multiple criteria, such as relevance to the research question, currency, authority, audience, and bias or point of view, when evaluating information source
2. Use Information Effectively to Accomplish a Specific Purpose (required for GT – HI1)
 - a. Synthesize information from sources to fully achieve a specific purpose
3. Use Information Ethically and Legally (required for GT – HI1)
 - a. Demonstrate a full understanding of the ethical and legal restrictions on the use of information from a variety of sources through correct citation practices

Student Code of Conduct

All students in this course are required to know, understand, and comply with the Student Code of Conduct. A copy of the code can be found here:

<http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/standards/Documents/CUDenver-CodeofConduct.pdf>

CLAS Academic Dishonesty Policy & CLAS Academic Ethics Policy:

Students are required to know, understand, and comply with the CU Denver Academic Dishonesty Policy as detailed in the Catalog and on the CLAS website. Academic dishonesty consists of plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and falsification, multiple submission of the same work, misuse of academic materials, and complicity in academic dishonesty. If you are not familiar with the definitions of these offenses, go to

<http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/CLAS/facultystaff/policies/Pages/DefinitionofAcademicDishonesty.aspx>. This course assumes your knowledge of these policies and definitions.

Failure to adhere to them can result in possible penalties ranging from failure of this course to dismissal from the University. Likewise, students who fail to comply with the UC Denver CLAS Academic Ethics Policy are subject to disciplinary action as set forth by the College policy. For more information regarding the Academic Ethics Committee policies and procedures, please refer to

<http://ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/CLAS/facultystaff/policies/Pages/HandlingAcademicDishonesty.aspx>. Please be informed of these policies and be careful. If any of these policies are unclear to you, please ask your instructor. Remember: do your own work, give credit to any

individuals whose statements, opinions, and ideas you cite in your papers, essays, etc., and when in doubt, consult your instructor.

Incomplete Policy:

Incomplete grades are **NOT** granted for low academic performance. To be eligible for an Incomplete grade, students **MUST**:

1. Successfully complete a minimum of 75% of the course
2. Have special circumstances beyond their control that preclude them from attending class and completing graded assignments
3. Make arrangements to complete missing assignments with the original instructor.
Verification of special circumstances is required.

***Please note that all students who wish to receive an Incomplete grade will be required by the instructor to sign a Course Completion Agreement: https://clas.ucdenver.edu/faculty-staff/sites/default/files/attached-files/incomplete_form_rev_5.17.pdf Incompletes

CANNOT:

1. Require a student to repeat the entire course
2. Repeat or replace existing grades
3. Allow the student an indeterminate period of time to complete a course
4. Allow the student to repeat the course with a different instructor

Disability Accommodations:

To be eligible for accommodations, students must be registered with the Office of Disability Resources and Services (DRS). Any student given accommodations by DRS will receive these accommodations in our class. If a student chooses not to accept the accommodations set forth by the DRS, they **MUST** complete all assignments and do all course work in the same manner as all other students. Your instructor cannot make any exceptions or provide alternative forms of evaluation, except those mandated by the DRS.

Religious Holiday Accommodations:

At the beginning of the semester, please privately consult your instructor regarding any religious holiday accommodations you may need, including possible conflicts that would necessitate establishing alternative due dates for any papers or exams. I am happy to work with you regarding such accommodations.

Academic Freedom:

Academic freedom is essential not only to examine controversial issues in an objective manner in the classroom, but also to insure access to information sources required for study of such issues. The intellectual search for transmission of knowledge should go forward in an atmosphere free from fear of reprisal, while providing opportunities for critical thinking and understanding of conflicting viewpoints. In order that special interests or conflicting public opinion not impede the educational process, instructors and students must be free to investigate, to form conclusions, and to express judgments and opinions.

Safe Learning Environment:

In history, we often wrestle with controversial topics, and, as a result, heated debates ensue. I welcome lively discussions, but I will not tolerate any inappropriate behavior including harassment, bullying, discrimination, ridicule of others' statements, ideas, opinions, etc. in my class. Students are expected to behave professionally and respectfully to each other and to the instructor at all times in both face-to-face interactions in the classroom, during office hours, etc. and via all electronic communication (e.g. emails, Canvas messages, etc.).

Important Websites:

CU Denver History Department:

<https://clas.ucdenver.edu/history/>

National History Day in Colorado:

<https://clas.ucdenver.edu/nhdc/>

CU Succeed Program:

<https://clas.ucdenver.edu/cusucceed/>

National History Day in Colorado Syllabus History 1400 (dual enrollment with CU college system) 2024-2025

Course Description:

National History Day in Colorado is a social studies and literacy program that equips students in elementary, middle, and high school with the skills necessary to succeed in college and the real world. Students participate in a project-based learning curriculum that emphasizes critical reading and thinking, research, analysis, and the drawing of meaningful conclusions. Students can complete these projects in groups or as individuals in one of five categories: documentary, paper, exhibit, performance, or website. They then compete in one of our sixteen regions across the state in either the junior (middle school) or senior (high school) division, or in the elementary poster contest (4th and 5th graders). Regional winners compete at the State Contest in May on the University of Colorado Denver campus. First and second place state winners compete in Nationals at the University of Maryland, College Park in June. Scholarships are available at the state and National levels of the contest. In this course, students determine what they study, not the teacher, so highly motivated students do extremely well in this course and come to enjoy history more than the standard social studies class that is a lecture-textbook format.

Concurrent Enrollment Course Description:

Develops skills in historical writing, the use of rhetorical devices in persuasive historical arguments, critical analysis, and research methods in the historical study. Engaging in diverse historical readings, writings, and conversations, students devise strategies to identify workable topics, locate sources in libraries, archives and published materials, and adapt their writing style to communicate with a variety of audiences. This is a statewide Guaranteed Transfer course in the GT-CO3 category.

REQUIRED COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Reference secondary and tertiary sources to construct knowledge and to develop context.
2. De-construct complex and multiple sources of information into basic historical concepts.

3. Recognize the impact of continuity and change of historical perspective in context of time and space.
4. Develop narrative structures and arguments based on evidence.
5. Compare and contrast how peoples, groups, cultures, and institutions change over time.
6. Analyze events a chosen topic in historical context to illustrate how social, cultural, gender, race, religion, nationality, and other identities affect historical perspectives.
7. Use diverse resources for historical research, including libraries, databases, bibliographies, and archives.
8. Identify perspectives in historical interpretation using secondary sources.
9. Identify types of primary sources, their perspective, and purpose of their author.
10. Create substantive writing samples that employ critical analysis of primary and secondary sources with appropriate citations.
11. Construct knowledge by developing historical narratives from primary and secondary sources, maps, and/or artifacts.
12. Identify historiography and evaluate many points of view to build historical arguments.
13. Create a substantive writing sample, a capstone that employ critical analysis of primary and secondary sources, with appropriate citations.

Course Outline:

Why Study History – Introduction to History Day (September)

1. Why History Day?
2. What is History Day?
3. Student Outcomes
4. Introduction to Historian Research
 - History, Historian
 - Frame of Reference
 - Primary, Secondary Sources
- A. Placing Topic in the Big Picture (September)
 1. Examine background information (social, cultural, political, economic conditions prior to event)
 2. Time Period Research
 3. Create graphic organizer/timeline – class presentation
 4. Establish “SO WHAT” factors
 5. Develop a working “Thesis”
- B. Getting Started/Making Choices (September)
 1. The Classroom
 2. The Notebook
 3. Making Choices
 - Positive/negatives of individual and group work
 - Topic selection
 - Type of entry (exhibit, paper, documentary, performance, website)
- C. Identifying historical problems (October)
 - a. Posing important questions about history
 - b. Using existing historiography to narrow topics
 - c. Locating historiography and primary sources in libraries, databases, and archives
 - d. Techniques for skimming, annotating and organizing data from large numbers of sources
- D. Drafting a Critical Review of a historical work (October)
 - i. Taking and organizing notes on readings
 - ii. Providing context on historical problems
 - iii. Summarizing notes and identifying the thesis and evidence of historiography
 - iv. Assessing strengths and weaknesses of writing about history.
 - v. Identifying and avoiding problems of writing about history
 - vi. Ensuring a competent understanding of essential essay structure and coherence.
- E. Following the conventions of historical bibliographies as found in the Chicago Manual of Style or Turabian’s A Manual for Writers. (November)

- F. Gathering/Recording Information/Creating a Working Bibliography and Annotating (November)
 - 1. Introduce MLA/Turabian (Chicago style) bibliography format
 - 2. Separating primary/secondary sources
 - 3. Organizing sources into categories
 - 4. Preparing/practicing for interviews
 - 5. Covering the breadth of available sources including those published, unpublished, primary and secondary
 - 6. Providing annotation useful to other historians

- G. Writing a review of historical literature (December)
 - a. Identifying an important historiographical subject
 - b. Synthesizing the main arguments on the subject in the scholarly literature
 - c. Evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of historical theses and evidence
 - d. Identifying problems and lacunae in the literature and suggest remedies where possible.

- H. Writing researched, documented papers on historical subjects (January)
 - a. Creating an original research proposal with a working thesis and bibliography
 - b. Locating sources and planning research
 - c. Taking and managing notes and quotations
 - d. Organizing and documenting your argument in proper format
 - e. Adopting tone and style appropriate to the anticipated audience and avoiding pitfalls of historical writing
 - f. Revising/editing
 - g. Using technology to efficiently and correctly format typescripts

- I. Assessments (February)
 - 1. Use background information to create a “HOOK” for project
 - 2. Class Presentation
 - 3. Assessment Tool: History Day Evaluation Sheet
 - 4. Student/Teacher Evaluation Conference

- J. Preparing for Competition (February)
 - 1. Analyze first semester evaluation
 - 2. Use history day guide to create scripts, write papers, and write captions.
 - 3. Conducts interviews
 - 4. Update bibliography – 1st draft due
 - 5. Class presentations
 - 6. Student/Teacher conference/evaluation

- K. Preparing/Presenting final projects (March)
 - 1. Continue research
 - 2. Work on revisions
 - 3. Process Papers – due
 - 4. Final Project
 - 5. Class Presentations/Evaluations

- L. Final Touches (March)
 - 1. Lay out boards
 - 2. Work on props
 - 3. Find/make appropriate costumes
 - 4. Research Papers due
 - 5. Finalize bibliography/process paper
 - 6. Prepare for questioning
 - 7. Practice ... practice ... practice

- J. Competitions (March-April)

*Upon the completion of the NHD project, students will be interviewed by professional historians. This skill is necessary once students leave school and interview for jobs post- secondary. National History Day is a collegiate

level course but is easily adapted to students on an IEP, ELL, or 504 classifications. All students are expected to complete a project and compete in their local contest.

