The Art and Practice of History
Hist. 3385-001

Dr. Sandrine Sanos
T 11:00-12:15, CI 107
Office: Classroom East 216B
Office Hours: by appointment during these hours
T 1:30-3:00pm, W 2:00-4pm, Th 1:30-3:00pm
Phone: 361-825-2466
Email: sandrine.sanos@tamucc.edu

Course Description

A philosopher once said we should remember that the name “history” is ambiguous because it refers at the same time to “lived experience, the story that is told about it, a fiction, as well as a scholarly explanation.”¹ The writing of history involves more than gathering facts and telling stories: it involves choosing what facts we consider relevant or important, interpreting these facts, interpreting the archival materials we use and, as historian Jeremy Popkin has written, deciding “what constitutes a historical problem.”² Ever since Herodotus and Thucydides, historians have debated what it meant to “do history,” what archives (or sources) should be used, what are the proper methods to study the past, and what kinds of stories (or narratives) best illuminate this past. These debates have focused on some of the main issues that preoccupy historians: objectivity, agency, periodization, etc. These make up what we call “historiography;” namely, the methodological questions that have obsessed historians and the history of how historians have tackled these over time.

This course will provide an introduction to some of the significant historiographical problems that face historians. It will do so by focusing on recent and contemporary debates and controversies that have shaken the profession and that have been the subject of public and political discussions. The course will provide examples of how historians think about and do history. Themes covered will include: objectivity & revisionism, memory & justice, narrative & subaltern history, oral history, popular history & historical fiction, among others.

Course Objectives

- acquire the basic skills of professional historians, namely:
  - read and analyze texts on historical issues
  - learn to develop understanding and positions regarding historiographical debates (in class & in writing)
  - reflect on issues of continuity & change (as guides to understanding events & phenomena in the past)
  - write critically in a range of assignments.

Prerequisites

Before taking this class, students must have taken both
- Hist 1301 and 1302
- either Hist 2311 or 2312

This class is a requirement for Hist 4385

Required Readings

BOOKS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE CAMPUS BOOKSTORE
READINGS THAT SAY “RESERVE” WILL BE ON RESERVE AT THE LIBRARY

Please be aware this course syllabus is provisional and may be subject to change

Course Expectations and Guidelines

**Class participation**
PARTICIPATION IN CLASS IS CRUCIAL.
We will have small and large-group class discussion.
Engaging with the material, being prepared for class and participating in class are essential for productive discussions: **you will be expected to have done the reading.**
You are expected to **bring the reading to class** (textbook, book, reserve reading).
**You will be assessed for your participation:** you will be expected to make SUBSTANTIAL contribution during our discussions. If large group discussions are intimidating, we will have the opportunity for smaller group discussion.

Participation must include:
- evidence of reading done.
- comments in class (small or large group discussion) offering thoughts & analysis of the material.
- making connections with issues brought up in lectures and during class discussion.
**do not be afraid to ask questions in class if you need clarification, are confused, or want more information. I always welcome questions and queries.**

**Course Etiquette**
The classroom should be a **pleasant, exciting, and rewarding** experience:
1. **Students are expected to be respectful of each other in demeanor, tone, and behavior.**
2. Rude or inconsiderate behavior and remarks will not be tolerated.
3. **Please turn off your cell phones BEFORE CLASS.**
4. **Please do not send text messages, check or use phones during class.**
5. **Please do not use laptop computers in class).**
6. You are not allowed to record class conversations or my conversations without my permission.
7. **You are expected to be able to stay in class for the entire duration of class and not leave during the class period (unless you have a serious reason to do so. Please inform me ahead of time if that is the case).** If you do so or are in the habit of doing so, I will count you as absent.
**If you text or use your phone during class, I reserve the right to ask you to leave, and will count you as absent for that class period. If you do this repeatedly, this may also affect your overall participation grade in the class.**
If students engage in ANY of the above, I reserve the right to ask you to leave class.
If you plan on using online versions of the reading, please come and see me.
8. **Students are also expected to come to class ON TIME**: this is a sign of respect towards your peers and myself. Any **substantial** lateness will be counted as an **absence**—unless documented or justified. If you anticipate being late on a regular basis (because of work, family commitments, babysitting, etc. That may indeed happen), please come and inform me at the beginning of class. As always, a policy of open and honest communication with me is the best.

**A note on Campus Carry**
With the recent establishment of “Campus Carry” legislation in the State of Texas, all those that are at least 21 years of age and have a permit may now carry concealed firearms on campus (with the exception of restricted zones, which are clearly marked with signage). Our classroom is not a gun-free zone, nor is my office. By law, I cannot restrict you from exercising the right extended to you by the Campus Carry initiative but, in light of these changes, I would like to explain how I think of our classroom: when we come together for class, we agree to engage in a common project—to study a particular topic. Our discussions may sometimes be messy or heated, there may be disagreements or hesitations. But that is the very point of education. The spirit of our time together should be driven by curiosity, respect for one another, and desire to learn. I hope we can keep this spirit alive so that learning takes place in “safe spaces.”

**Email Etiquette**
1. If you cannot ask me during or after class, never hesitate to email me. I will make every effort to answer as quickly as possible.
2. Emails are professional correspondence, which means they should include:
   - a subject heading (indicating what your email is about)
   - proper address (“Dear Dr. X” or “Dear Prof. S.”)
   - explain and ask your question
   - always include the usual forms of politeness (sign your name)

**The rule is simple: behave on email as you would in person**
3. The same rules apply if you send me an assignment over email: the email should include a subject-heading, a sentence explaining what you are sending me, and your name.
4. I will not respond to emails after 6pm. Please do not expect an immediate response over the weekend.
5. If you do not receive a response after two days, email again –your email may have got lost in spam or junk mail folders.

**Class Attendance**
Students are expected to attend ALL class sessions: attendance is part of your participation grade.
Students are allowed **ONE UNJUSTIFIED ABSENCE**.
More than one unjustified absence will result in an F for your participation grade.
All absences must be documented in order to be justified and allow you to make up quizzes.
If you have more than 4 unjustified absences (=two weeks of classes), you will earn an F for the entire course.

It is your responsibility to make sure you keep up with the work done when absent.
Please be aware that irregular attendance usually makes it difficult to do well in this class.
If you cannot come to class, or will be unprepared due to unforeseen events, it is best to contact me as soon and early as possible, preferably by email.

**In all matters, a policy of honesty is usually the wisest in communicating with me.** I am not working against you but **with you** and my aim is for every student to successfully complete the course.
Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

Office Hours
Always make an appointment – in person or via email. This way, you avoid waiting. I also sometimes need to be absent during office hours – usually for meetings on which I have no control. I will also try and accommodate you if these times are difficult. As a rule, I am not on campus on Mondays and Fridays.

Academic Affairs

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Please be aware that I am not allowed to accommodate your needs unless I receive official paperwork from the Disability Services Office.

Unfortunately, my office is not fully accessible (stairs only). If you cannot come to my office, please contact me and I will meet your somewhere else on campus that is fully accessible.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Course Assignments
Since this course asks you to become familiar with a range of debates by historians over historical issues, you will not be asked to write a traditional essay.

1. Weekly Response Paper:
Every week, I will hand in a question that addresses the reading and topic of that week.
You must write a short paper (3 to 4 double-spaced pages, 12 font, excluding title page) to hand in at the end of the week on Friday—please get in touch if your class schedule makes this difficult. In that paper, you must use the readings from that week and try and respond to the question. There will be one every week until (and including) Week 11. There will be a total of TEN response papers.

Every response paper will be graded. But I will only keep the SIX best grades.

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**2. Reflection Paper**

At the end of the course, I will ask you to hand in a more substantial response paper where you will have to identify a “historical problem” and discuss its implications for how we write history, using readings from the class. You will be given the handout with guidelines and we will discuss this reflection paper on Nov. 20 in class.

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**Grades**

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**Deadlines**

Please ask for an extension at least 2 days in advance. In general, I grant extensions and do not need a justification. But I am unlikely to give them more than once. Any late paper will be graded a full-letter grade down for every day late. No paper will be accepted 4 days after the deadline, unless an extension has been arranged.

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**Academic Dishonesty**

There will be a no-tolerance policy on cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is the “UNCREDITED USE (INTENTIONAL OR UNINTENTIONAL) OF SOMEONE ELSE’S WORDS OR IDEAS.”

(https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01)

Using a word, a group of words, a sentence structure, ideas without giving proper credit to the original author constitutes plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism will result in an automatic F for the work involved and, depending on the gravity, may earn you an F for the entire course.

Please also refer to the Catalog, pp. 39-40, section on Academic Honesty and Integrity.

**To avoid plagiarism:** always be safe rather than sorry! Cite (provide quotation marks, citation in MLA, Turrabian, or Chicago format, provide citation even when you are paraphrasing or using an idea or information) anything you may use for your paper. For best practices, see:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/03/

**Note:** Any credited or uncredited use of wikipedia will result in an F for the piece of writing.

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**Grade Appeals**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A
student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Course Outline

Week 1

T Aug. 28  What is Historiography? Why does History Matter
Lecture & Syllabus Overview

Th Aug. 30  Power and The Writing of History
Reading: Trouillot, Silencing the Past, preface until p.14 (top).

Fr Aug. 31  Response Paper 1: email by 5pm

Week 2

T Sept. 04  How Historians Wrote in the Past
History from Ancient Times to the Early Modern Era
Reading: Popkin, From Herodotus to H-Net, Ch 2 & 3

Th Sept. 06  The 19th Century: Academic Scholarship and Scientific History
Reading: Popkin, From Herodotus to H-Net, Ch4-5
last day to register for classes

Fr Sept. 07  Response Paper 2: email by 5pm

Week 3

T Sept. 11  Testimony
Reading: Beverly, Testimonio: The Politics of Truth (chapters to be assigned)

Th Sept. 13  Reading: Beverly, Testimonio: The Politics of Truth (chapters to be assigned)

Fr Sept. 14  Response Paper 3: email by 5pm
Week 4

T Sept. 18 Memory
Reading: Arias & Stoll (eds.), The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy (chapters to be assigned)

Th Sept. 20 Reading: Arias & Stoll (eds.), The Rigoberta Menchú Controversy (chapters to be assigned)

Fr Sept. 21 Response Paper 4: email by 5pm

Week 5

T Sept. 25 Justice
Reading: Golsan, Ch. 5: “The Trial of Paul Touvier: The Law Revises History,” from Vichy’s Afterlife: History and Counterhistory in Postwar France (University of Nebraska Press, 2001) &


Fr Sept. 28 Response Paper 5: email by 5pm

Week 6
Justice

T Oct. 02 Subaltern Histories
Reading: Trouillot, Silencing the Past, pp. 22-30 & 70-74

Th. Oct. 04 NO CLASS: work on response paper (Dr. Sanos is at a conference)

Fr Oct. 05 Response Paper 6: email by 5pm

Week 7

T Oct. 09 Hidden Histories
Reading: Popkin, From Herodotus to H-Net, Ch. 6

* from the collection edited by Joan W. Scott (ed.), Feminism and History (Oxford University Press, 1996)

Fr Oct. 12 Response Paper 7: email by 5pm
Week 8

T Oct. 16  History from the margins
Reading: Zemon-Davis, “Women’s History” & Scott, “Gender as Category of Political Analysis” (reserve)

Th Oct. 18  Reading: Perez, “Queering the Borderlands: The Challenges of Excavating the Invisible and the Unheard,” (reserve)
* from the collection edited by Antonia Castañeda et al., Gender on the Borderlands (University of Nebraska Press, 2007).

Fr Oct. 19  Response Paper 7: email by 5pm

Week 9
Subaltern Histories

T Oct. 23  Narrative (I): The Archive
Reading: Lisa Leff, “Archive Thief” (reserve)

Th Oct. 25  Narrative (II): The Stories We Tell
Reading: Hunter, introduction, To Joy my Freedom (reserve)

Fr Oct. 26  Response Paper 8: email by 5pm

Week 10

T Oct. 30  Narrative (III): Historical Fiction
Reading: Spiegelman, Maus Vol. I

Th Nov. 01  Reading: Spiegelman, Maus Vol. II

Fr Nov. 02  Response Paper 9: email by 5pm

Week 11

T Nov. 06  Narrative (IV): How We Write History
Reading: Ruiz, “Nuestra América: Latino History as United States History” (reserve)

Th Nov. 08  NO CLASS: work on response paper (Dr. Sanos at a conference)

Fr Nov. 09  Response Paper 10: email by 5pm.
Week 12

T Nov. 13  Oral History (I)
Reading: Thompson, “The Voice of the Past: Oral History” (reserve)
* both articles are taken from the collection, The Oral History Reader (edited by Robert Perks & Alistair Thomson, Routledge, 3d ed., 2015)

Th Nov. 15 Reading: Ramirez, “A Living Archive of Desire: Teresita La Campesina and the Embodiment of Queer Latino Communities,” (reserve)

Week 13

T Nov. 20 Workshop for Reflection Paper

Th Nov. 11 NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING

Week 14

T Nov. 27 Film Showing: Paris is Burning (Jennie Livingston, 1991)

Th Nov. 29 Film Showing: Paris is Burning

Week 15

T Dec. 04 LAST CLASS: REFLECTION RESPONSE PAPER TO HAND IN.
Last day to withdraw

Week 16
Dec. 10-13
Individual meetings for overview of class performance
* please make an appointment the week before.