HIST 313: Exploration, Adventure, and Science in America
Course Syllabus
Fall 2018
Tuesday/Thursday:
Room:

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E-mail: cstrang@unr.edu
Office Hours: _______, or by appointment.

Course Description:

This course investigates the history of American exploration from the pre-Columbian era to the present. It focuses on how science and technology affected exploration and territorial expansion and how scientific knowledge and various technologies developed in response to social conditions both at home and in the field. We will also examine how the knowledge that explorers produced impacted society, science, culture, and imperialism. We interrogate the experiences of diverse explorers (including European, Euro-American, Native American, and African American explorers) as well as the impact that these explorers had on the peoples they encountered. In the first part of the course, which covers the pre-Columbian era to 1776, we will study early Native American explorers, Vikings, and early European explorers. We will examine how scientific and technological developments in Europe supported and influenced the “discovery” of America and how encounters with the New World changed European science and society (perhaps even inspiring the “scientific revolution”). The second part of the course will analyze the scientific ideas and goals behind the exploration of the continent by people like Lewis and Clark and the roles that such expeditions played in driving both U.S. expansion and the development of American science between 1776 and 1900. The final third of the course deals with exploration since 1900, including journeys to the arctic, outer space, and under the sea. These twentieth-century expedition relied on new scientific and technological breakthroughs but also raised new questions and challenges. We will examine both continuities and changes across these three eras of American exploration.

Core Objectives:

This course satisfies Core Objective 9 of the Silver Core Curriculum.

- **CO9. Science, Technology, and Society**: Students will be able to connect science and technology to real-world problems by explaining how science relates to problems of societal concern; be able to distinguish between sound and unsound interpretations of scientific information; employ cogent reasoning methods in their own examinations of problems and issues; and understand the applications of science and technology in societal context.

This course develops Core Objectives 1 and 3 through critical analysis of readings and argument-based presentations and essays. Moreover, by examining topics such as African-American and Native American explorers—as well as the impact that European exploration had on both of these groups—this course also develops Core Objectives 10.

- **CO1. Effective Composition and Communication**: Students will be able to effectively compose written, oral, and multimedia texts for a variety of scholarly, professional, and creative purposes.
• **CO3. Critical Analysis and Use of Information.** Students will be critical consumers of information, able to engage in systematic research processes, frame questions, read critically, and apply observational and experimental approaches to obtain information.

• **CO10. Diversity & Equity.** Students will develop a set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate attentiveness to and analysis of diversity and equity.

**Skills-Based Curriculum**

The history program at UNR helps students to develop proficiency in broadly applicable skills while mastering specific subject areas. In addition to learning about the major developments before, during, and after the Revolutionary War, students will have opportunities to practice and improve the following skills in this course.

- Critically analyze primary sources in depth
- Critically evaluate secondary sources and be aware of the historiographical nature of these sources
- Critically analyze cultural texts
- Engage in historical research which synthesizes, integrates, and analyzes the aforementioned sources
- Write a well-crafted essay
- Formally present research projects
- Effectively utilize major bibliographic and research engines

**Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Correlation to Core Objectives**

Students successfully completing this course will be able to

1. Analyze and understand the role of science and technology in inspiring and shaping the exploration of America through class discussion and written assignments (CO 1, CO3, CO9, CO10).
2. Analyze and understand how explorer’s expeditions and their encounters with local inhabitants affected scientific knowledge and how this affected our society and environment. (CO3, CO9, CO10)
3. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources relating to exploration and its impact on science, culture, and imperialism through class discussion and oral presentations. (CO3, CO9, CO10)
4. Craft arguments and evince them in a clear and persuasive manner, both in writing and in oral presentations (CO1, CO3)

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**Required Readings:**


Geoffrey Symcox and Blair Sullivan, eds., *Christopher Columbus and the Enterprise of the Indies: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford/St. Martins, 2005)

Jay Buckley and Jeffrey Nokes, *Explorers of the American West: Mapping the World through Primary Documents* (ABS-Clio, 2016)

*** Other readings listed on the syllabus are available on Canvas.

**Requirements and Grade Distribution for HIST 313:**
- Class participation and Pop Quizzes on readings: 10%
- Research Essay: 30%
- Primary source presentation: 20%
- Movie Review: 10%
- Exam 1: 10%
- Exam 2: 10%
- Exam 3: 10%

The Plus/Minus system of grading applies in this course.

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<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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**Attendance and Participation:** Participation and questions in class are greatly encouraged and expected. Attendance, participation, and pop quizzes on the readings will combine to make up 10% of your final grade. Please bring all assigned reading to class. And please arrive on time!

**Research Essay:** This must be 10-15 pages long. It should focus on how a particular explorer (or exploring expedition) developed or applied scientific knowledge and/or technology in response to specific social and environmental challenges. These explorers can be from any cultural background active during any period from the pre-contact era through to the Space Age. The paper should be based on primary source research. I encourage you to choose a topic that interests you. *These essays should make an argument:* that is, they should make a claim that is supported by evidence in the primary sources. The best essays will make creative, original arguments.

**Primary Source Presentation:** Each student will give an oral presentation to the class. There will be 1 or 2 of these most Thursdays (students will have the opportunity to pick a day on a signup sheet). Each presentation should be five to ten minutes long. Each presentation will focus on analyzing one primary source: the goal is 1) to provide a summary of the source, 2) put it in historical context, and 3) suggest a couple historical arguments that the source could potentially support.

You must find and choose this primary source yourself. Options include: journals by explorers; original documents pertaining to exploration (for example, NASA sources for moon landing); maps or illustrations by explorers; etc. The library has many such sources, including The “American West” database, [http://www.americanwest.amdigital.co.uk.unr.idm.oclc.org/](http://www.americanwest.amdigital.co.uk.unr.idm.oclc.org/) (Use the “themes” tab to search for sources pertaining to “Pioneers, Hunters, and Explorers.”)

- **Grading Criteria for presentation:**
  - Appropriateness of the source.
  - Quality of presentation (preparedness, images, etc.)
  - Appropriateness of historical context.
  - Possible interpretations of the source (what arguments could historians make with it?)
  - Response to audience questions.
• **Presentation Tips:**
  o You can choose to analyze a manuscript, printed text, map, image, etc.
    ▪ But this must be a primary source.
  o I expect you to consult secondary sources in order to put the source in historical context.
  o The historical context should include relevant information on the historical events, themes, and individuals necessary to make sense of the source.
  o An image of the source (even if it is just a photograph of a manuscript) helps give your audience a better sense of what the source is like.
  o Be clear about who, what, where, when.
  o Be clear about WHY the source is significant.
  o Prepare! Do not assume you can stand up and wing it. Practice your presentation, time it, and be prepared to answer questions from the professor and other students.

**Movie Review:** This can be on any movie of your choice (feature film or documentary). This should be 2-3 pages in length. *I encourage you to be creative with this assignment:* film reviews can take several forms, so feel free to analyze the movie as you think most appropriate and interesting. A few suggestions (not requirements) are to include: a brief overview of what the film is about; analysis of how the film or particular actors represent explorers (and why they represent them that way); comparison with similar films; context (historical and/or contemporary); historical accuracy (and does accuracy matter?); significance to the history of film; the film’s political agenda, etc.

**Exams 1 and 2:** These will be held in class and will be on all materials hitherto covered in this course, including lectures, in-class discussions, and readings. Bring a bluebook and please write in pen.

**Exam 3:** This will be held during finals week and will be on all materials covered since the midterm, including lectures, in-class discussions, and readings. Bring a bluebook and please write in pen.

**All papers are due in class on paper on the dates stipulated; 10% of the total possible grade will be deducted for each day an assignment is late.**

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**Class Reminders:**

**Cell-phones and Computers:** Please remember to turn off your cell phones during class. You are welcome to use a computer to take notes during lectures; however, it should not be used to check your email, your Facebook account, or play games, etc. while in class. These activities not only distract you, but also distract everyone around you. Please be courteous and wait until our class is over to engage in such activities.

**Email Correspondence:** Please make sure that you identify yourself when you send a message to me, as well as use proper salutations (Dear Prof. Strang, ).

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the Disability Resource Center (www.unr.edu/drc) (Pennington Student Achievement Center, Suite 230) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

**Taping Class:** Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only
with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

**Equal Opportunity and Title IX:** The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, whether on or off campus, or need information related to immigration concerns, please contact the University's Equal Opportunity & Title IX office at 775-784-1547. Resources and interim measures are available to assist you. For more information, please visit: [https://www.unr.edu/equal-opportunity-title-ix](https://www.unr.edu/equal-opportunity-title-ix).

**Academic Success Services:** Your student fees cover usage of the Math Center (775) 784-4422, Tutoring Center (775) 784-6801, and University Writing Center (775) 784-6030. These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

**Online Course Evaluations:** Your chance to evaluate this course will appear two weeks before the last day of classes in the form of a new course on your WebCampus home page. This new course contains only the evaluation survey. These online course evaluations are extremely important to your instructor and to the department, so please take a few minutes to complete your course evaluation when it becomes available. The evaluation is completely anonymous and your comments can never be connected with your name. Instructors cannot see the evaluation course on WebCampus and will not have access to the contents of these evaluations until after final grades have been posted.

**Quality Guidelines for All Written Assignments**

A is an exceptional grade reserved for work of exceptional quality. This grade is for essays that have all the qualities of the B essay, and in addition are well written and display analytical skills and/or originality. The last two criteria are extremely important. A essays do not merely summarize material from the readings or lectures. In addition, ideas must be expressed clearly, no matter how insightful or interesting they are.

B denotes work that is above average in quality. It demonstrates that the student knows and understands the material covered in class and being analyzed, and that s/he is capable of synthesizing it into a competent essay. It is accurate, detailed, and well organized, with an introduction, an argument, and a conclusion. Usually, either writing problems or a lack of analysis is what prevents a B essay from being an A.

C is given for work that is average. The student shows familiarity with the material, answers the central questions posed, and is mostly accurate, but lacks the sophistication of either the B or A student. The C essay might make general points but fail to support them with specific evidence or details, or it might have problems with organization or writing style. Sometimes a C essay is merely a collection of facts, with no coherent theme or thesis.

D is given for work that is inadequate. It omits important points, contains more than a few inaccuracies, and is badly organized. It is does not answer the central questions posed in the assignment. It suggests one of three things: 1) the student has barely been paying attention to the course, 2) s/he has problems understanding the material, 3) s/he has problems expressing ideas in writing.

**Style Requirements for All Written Assignments**

1. Utilize 1-inch margins on all sides. Use 12 point type. The print must be dark; print not easily readable will be rejected. Please use normal sized font (like Times New Roman).
2. Assignments should be double spaced (except in the case of a lengthy direct quotation; see #4 below).
3. Direct quotations should be used sparingly to emphasize a particular point. Papers or essays that consist of a string of long quotations from the text without any (or only cursory) analysis will be returned as unsatisfactory.
4. Single space and double indent quotations over 4 lines in length.
5. Remember: do not plagiarize. (See further comments below).
6. Number all pages.
7. Do not add an extra space between paragraphs.
8. Please remember that one or two sentences do not make a paragraph: a paragraph should begin with a topic sentence (a sentence that makes a claim). The rest of the paragraph should be devoted to supporting that claim.
9. Please use spell check and proof for grammatical errors such as sentence fragments and run-on sentences. It is true that this is not an English grammar course; but, sloppy writing distracts from otherwise interesting ideas and intriguing critical analysis.
10. Use Chicago Style footnote citations for primary and secondary sources. For guidelines on proper citation format, see: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is a serious form of academic misconduct and it will not be tolerated in this class. Plagiarism, according to the UNR catalog, is defined as “submitting the language, ideas, thoughts or work of another as one's own.” The “work of another” includes any material used in your essays (e.g. books, articles, internet sites, documents, lecture notes, or handouts from this and other courses, etc.) Acknowledge all such material – even if you paraphrase it or summarize certain sections and don't quote it directly.

Please note that Plagiarism in History 406D/606D will result in a grade of F for the course.

How to Avoid Plagiarism [Information taken from owl.english.purdue.edu.]

A. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of somebody else’s words or ideas.
B. When does a writer need to document or cite information?

1. When using or referring to somebody else’s words or ideas from a magazine, book, newspaper, song, TV program, movie, Web page, computer program, letter, advertisement, or any other medium;
2. When using information gained through interviewing another person;
3. When copying the exact words or a “unique phrase” from somewhere;
4. When reprinting any diagrams, illustrations, charts and pictures; and,
5. When using ideas that others have given you in conversations, lectures or email.

- Quotations must be identical to the original and must be cited.
- Paraphrasing involves putting a passage or information from source material into your own words. Paraphrasing must be cited.
- Summarizing involves putting the main idea(s) or points of another author into your own words. Summarizing also must be cited.

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Class Schedule:

- Week 1
• Week 2
  o Tues: America’s First Explorers: Technology, Amerindians, and Vikings
  o Thurs:
    ▪ Weaver, Chapters 2 and 3
    ▪ Excerpts from Voyages to Vinland (Viking Sagas)

• Week 3
  o Tues: European Cosmology and Columbus (or, why Columbus Sailed South)
  o Thurs:
    ▪ Weaver, Chap 4.
    ▪ Symcox and Sullivan, 1-118

• Week 4
  o Tues: Exploration, Science, and the Atlantic World
  o Thurs:
    ▪ Symcox and Sullivan, 140-171
    ▪ Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, “Crusading and Chivalric Epistemologies: Iberian Influences on Early Modern Imperial Science”
    ▪ Antonio Barrera Osorio, “Empiricism in the Spanish Atlantic World,” in Science and Empire in the Atlantic World

• Week 5
  o Tues: English Explorers in New Worlds
  o Thurs:
    ▪ Weaver, chapter 5
    ▪ Excerpts from Journals of John Smith
    ▪ Excerpts from Journals of James Cook

• Week 6
  o Tues: Recap Discussion: American Exploration before 1776
  o Thurs:
    ▪ EXAM 1

• Week 7
  o Tues: The Early United States and the West: An Overview
  o Thurs:
    ▪ Weaver, Chapter 6
    ▪ Buckley and Nokes, xv-xxxi

• Week 8
  o Tues 3/8: Jeffersonian Science in the Field: The Lewis and Clark Expedition
  o Thurs: 3/10:
• Extracts from Lewis and Clark journals, in Buckley and Nokes, 1-38
• Extracts from Zebulon Pike journals, 39-72
• Alan Taylor, “Jefferson’s Pacific: The Science of Distant Empire”

• Week 9
  o Tues 3/15: The Military, Western Exploration, and American Science
  o Thurs 3/17
    ▪ Extracts from Stephen H. Long’s journals, Buckley and Nokes, 127-156
    ▪ Extracts from John C. Frémont’s journals, Buckley and Nokes, 239-266

• Week 10
  o Tues: No Class, Spring Break
  o Thurs: No Class, Spring Break

• Week 11
  o Tues 3/29: Native American and African American Explorers
  o Thurs 3/31:
    ▪ Extracts from James C. Beckwourth’s Travels, Buckley and Nokes, 213-238
    ▪ Christopher Steinke, “Here is my country”: Too Nè's Map of Lewis and Clark in the Great Plains,” William and Mary Quarterly (2014)

• Week 12
  o Tues 4/5: Recap Discussion: Exploration Before 1900
  o Thurs 4/7:
    ▪ EXAM 2

• Week 13
  o Tues 4/12: New Frontiers: Science and Exploration After 1900
  o Thurs 4/14:
    ▪ Weaver, Chapter 7
    ▪ Extracts from Vannevar Bush, Science, the endless frontier; a report to the President on a program for postwar scientific research (1945)

• Week 14
  o Tues 4/19: Technologies of Survival: The Arctic
  o Thurs 4/21
    ▪ Robinson, The Coldest Crucible

• Week 15
  o Tues 4/26: Outer Space and Under Sea
  o Thurs 4/28:
    ▪ Excerpts from journals of William Beebe
    ▪ Excerpts from journals of Apollo Mission
• Week 16
  o Tues 5/3: Recap Discussion: American Exploration before 2019
  o RESEARCH ESSAY DUE

• EXAM 3 [date t.b.a.]