

HIST 3000: THE HISTORIAN'S CRAFT

TR, 9:30am-10:50am | Wooten Hall 221 | Spring 2026



Instructor: Dr. Andrew J. Torget

Office: Wooten Hall 258

Office Hours: TR, 2:00pm-3:00pm. If you cannot meet during these times, simply email me and we'll find a time that works for both our schedules.

Email: Andrew.Torget@unt.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the methods that professional historians use to conduct their work and investigate how the craft is practiced in both traditional and non-traditional forms. Students in this course will have the opportunity to get hands-on with how history is practiced, debate the philosophies behind the work and methodologies of history, and create a detailed research proposal for their own historical project. The course emphasizes active learning through discussion, reading, interpretation, and writing, all focused on developing analytical thinking skills.

COMMUNICATION

The best and most reliable way to contact me is via email (Andrew.Torget@unt.edu) and I will do everything I can to respond to you within 24 hours during the workweek (although occasionally I might take up to 48 hours). Please note that I do not regularly check my email during the evenings or on weekends, but I will always prioritize responding to your email as soon as I am able.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Readings for this course will consist of articles, chapters, and primary sources that will be posted on -- or linked through -- Canvas. Each week's readings will be posted onto Canvas by the Friday that precedes the week they are assigned.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY

For this course, you will need access to the following technology:

- A computer with internet access.
- Ready access to Canvas (<https://unt.instructure.com/>), which we will be using extensively for the class. If you need a primer on Canvas, please visit: <https://online.unt.edu/canvas-basics-unt-students>.
- Adobe Acrobat Reader or another program to read PDFs.
- A word processing program to write papers.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Grade Breakdown:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|------------|
| Attendance | 10 percent |
| Participation before Spring Break | 10 percent |
| Participation after Spring Break | 10 percent |
| Weekly Module Assignments | 35 percent |
| Research Prospectus Project | 35 percent |

- Grading will be on a ten-point scale: an A is 90-100; B is 80-89; C is 70-79; D is 60-69; below 60 is an F.
- Most weeks, you will have assignments in a module posted on Canvas, each of which will come with detailed instructions. These will mostly consist of writing assignments that emphasize reflection and reactions to the readings, discussions, and topics for the class.
- Class participation will be judged by the engagement of students in class discussions and activities, their expressed familiarity with assigned readings and content, and their interactions with both the professor and their fellow classmates.
- The major assignment for this course is a “Research Prospectus Project,” wherein each student will select a particular historical project they would like to undertake and then write a detailed prospectus for how best to complete that project. Detailed instructions for this project will be provided both in class and on Canvas.
- For specific due dates, please see the course schedule below.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Please note that each module's assignments (usually writing assignments) are always due by midnight on Thursday for the week they are assigned. The schedule below is also ***tentative*** and subject to change as necessary over the course of the semester.

PART 1: Thinking Like a Historian

Week 1: What is History? (January 13, 15)

- Module 1 assignments due by midnight on January 15.

Week 2: Ethics and Basics (January 20, 22)

- Module 2 assignments due by midnight on January 22.

Week 3: Footnotes, Citations, Arguments (January 27, 29)

- Module 3 assignments due by midnight on January 29.

PART II: Working with the “Evidence” of History

Week 4: Archives and Special Collections (February 3, 5)

- Field trip to UNT Special Collections in Willis Library on February 3!
- Module 4 assignments due by midnight on February 5.

Week 5: Digital Archives (February 10, 12)

- Field trip to the *Portal to Texas History* digital lab on February 12!
- Module 5 assignments due by midnight on February 12.

Week 6: Newspapers (February 17, 19)

- Field trip to the newspaper digitization lab in Willis Library on February 19!
- Module 6 assignments due by midnight on February 19.

Week 7: Oral History (February 24, 26)

- Module 7 assignments due by midnight on February 26.

Week 8: Research Prospectus Project (March 3, 5)

- No assignments due!

NO CLASS week of March 9-13 for Spring Break!

PART III: Interpreting and Putting History into the World

Week 9: Digital History (March 17, 19)

- Module 8 assignments due by midnight on March 19.

Week 10: Museums, Objects, and Curation (March 24, 26)

- Field trip to the Texas Fashion Collection at UNT on March 24!

- Module 9 assignments due by midnight on March 26.

Week 11: Public History (March 31, April 2)

- Field trip this week for a walking tour of Quakertown in downtown Denton!
- Module 10 assignments due by midnight on April 2.

Week 12: History as Entertainment (April 7, 9)

- Module 11 assignments due by midnight on April 9.

Week 13: Public Debates and Controversies (April 14, 16)

- Module 12 assignments due by midnight on April 16.

Week 14: Completing Project (April 21, 23)

- No assignments due!

Week 15: Reflections (April 28, 30)

- Final Research Prospectus due by midnight on April 30!

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance

- Over the semesters, the most reliable predictor of someone's final grade in any of my classes has always been their attendance.
- As such, **10 percent of your grade is straightforward attendance**. I will assess attendance based on the sign-in sheets passed out during each class. And because the unexpected still happens, everyone gets two "free" absences throughout the semester which will not deduct from your grade.
- Attendance will also greatly affect your ability to participate in our in-class discussions and activities, which make up another 20 percent of the course grade.

Canvas (<https://unt.instructure.com/>) will be the central clearinghouse for this course, and we will use it for a variety of purposes:

- Weekly course modules – and the assignments attached to them -- will be posted on Canvas.
- Many assignments will be turned in and graded through Canvas.
- Course announcements will be made on Canvas, in addition to being announced in class itself.

Course Learning Objectives. By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Understand the ethics and methods that guide professional historians.
- Develop experience and skills in analyzing primary sources and secondary texts.
- Analyze historical information, evidence, and arguments.

- Conduct original research in a historical archive.
- Learn how to formulate plans for a significant historical research project.
- Write an effective analytical essay.

General Policies

- **Academic Integrity:** Please become familiar with the University's policy of academic dishonesty found in the Student Code of Conduct (<http://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-012>). The content of the Student Code applies to this course and I refer all cases of cheating and plagiarism to the Provost's office. There will be absolutely no toleration for academic dishonesty or plagiarism. If you choose to cheat or plagiarize on any assignment, you will receive a zero for that assignment and you may fail the course.
- **Artificial Intelligence:** This course requires that YOU engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. All work submitted by students shall be generated solely by the students themselves. The use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) tools like ChatGPT, Gemini, CoPilot, Claude, and others to generate responses to course assignments is prohibited. While these tools can be helpful in particular contexts, they do not align with the goals of this course. Using GenAI to complete any part of any assignment or coursework (unless expressly permitted by the instructor) will be considered a violation of academic integrity. Any submitted work that is determined (at the sole discretion of the instructor) to have been AI-generated will be assigned a zero and addressed according to the Student Academic Integrity policy: <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>.
- **Adult Content Disclaimer:** History is complicated and throughout this semester we will undoubtedly touch on mature and sensitive topics. When controversial subjects arise, be prepared to discuss them as mature adults and with respect toward your colleagues and professor. If you have personal concerns about individual topics or subjects, please discuss those with me as soon as possible.
- **Student behavior** that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at www.deanofstudents.unt.edu.

Extra Assistance:

If you ever need extra assistance with any aspect of the course, your first step should be to contact me. In addition, there are several other valuable resources available to you:

- **History Help Center:** The UNT department of history operates a History Help Center (HHC) located in Wooten Hall 220 (phone: 940-565-4772). The HHC is staffed by graduate students in history and can provide help with studying for an exam, advice on how to study, take notes, and the like.
- **UNT Writing Center:** The UNT Writing Center offers help with all aspects of writing and is a terrific resource. For more information, see: <http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>.
- **UNT Learning Center:** UNT maintains an excellent Learning Center geared entirely toward providing students with resources for improving classroom success, with specialized tutoring and programs on issues such as time management and test-taking strategies. For more information, see: <http://learningcenter.unt.edu/>.
- **UNT Career Center:** UNT has an excellent Career Center—with a dedicated advisor for History Majors—to help you discover potential careers, learn to market yourself, create effective resumes, prepare for interviews, and build valuable networks: <http://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOU

Food/Housing Insecurity

Any student with difficulty accessing sufficient food or who lacks a safe and stable place to live is urged to contact the Dean of Students (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/>). For information about the UNT Food Pantry, please see: <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/food-pantry>.

Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- Student Health and Wellness Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center>).
- Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>).
- UNT Care Team (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care>).
- UNT Psychiatric Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry>).
- Individual Counseling (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling>).

Office of Disability Access Statement:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault:

UNT is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. UNT has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

UNT's Dean of Students' website offers a range of on-campus and off-campus resources to help support survivors, depending on their unique needs. You may reach UNT's Survivor Advocate directly at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students' office at 940-565-2648. You are not alone. We are here to help.

Additional Student Support Services

- Registrar (<https://registrar.unt.edu/registration>)
- Financial Aid (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- Student Legal Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- Career Center (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- Counseling and Testing Services (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- UNT Food Pantry (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/food-pantry>)