**History 489: Borderlands**

Professor Jonathan Rees  
Spring 2021  
Online  
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This is not going to be a conventional history course. It’s an asynchronous, online history course, and most of your work will be a group project that creates a permanent, digital, historical resource on the open Internet using a program called Scalar. There are no set meeting times, although we will meet periodically in small groups at times that don’t conflict with the rest of your schedule. Most of the regular communication will be through Slack, a discussion board outside the campus’ normal Blackboard apparatus.

Having a working e-mail address that you check fairly often is (obviously) one of many electronic requirements related to this course. All formal correspondence with me should go through the e-mail listed above. All assignments should arrive via Slack Direct Message. We'll set Slack up during the first week of class, and you should check Slack regularly as that's where most of the class announcements will arrive.

**Assignments and Grading:**

Every grade in this course will be assigned with your input. That means you will either know exactly what your grade is because it depends simply on your performing a particular writing task or you will get the opportunity to make the case for what your grade is in writing before I put it in the grade book. Stay on schedule and everything will be fine. Do thoughtful work all semester and things will likely be even better.

75% - Group Project (Blog/Process Paper/Final Project Grade components are 25% each)

15% - Deutsch/Montoya Paper (includes draft)

5% - Setting up your tools in a timely manner.

5% - Hamalainen/Johnson Summaries

**Required Books and Tools:**

* Deutsch, *No Separate Refuge*.
* Hamalainen and Johnson, Eds., *Major Problems in the History of North American Borderlands*.
* Montoya, *Translating Property.*
* A free Miro Account.
* A free Scalar account.
* A free Slack account.
* Any blog with an rss reader devoted entirely to this subject is fine. If you don’t know how to blog already, I will teach you how to use WordPress. WordPress comes in free and pay versions. Free is fine for our purposes.

**75% OF YOUR GRADE** will be your digital Group Project. Groups should be organized between the start of class and finalized by February 12. All groups MUST have at least two members in them.  Larger groups will be expected to complete more elaborate projects than smaller groups. The exact topic for the project is open, except for two conditions: a) You need to have at least one person who is willing to join you in this effort (3-person groups are probably ideal) and b) You need to be able to find sources for whatever topic the group chooses. That means you need to start looking for available sources LONG before your group project pitch paper is due.

Every students will be graded on the following three aspects of this assignment:

1) **Overall Project Grade** - The same grade that everyone in your group gets, given at the completion of final presentations at the very end of the semester.  (25%)

2) **Your Blog** - Much of it will describe the research and the acquisition of technological skills needed to complete this project, but not all of it.  (25%)

3) **Your Process Paper** - Due during the final exam period, this will be the place where you make the case that you were primarily responsible for your group project or I'll see that your contribution fell short.  (25%)

The Group Project will begin with a 2-3 page, double-spaced pitch paper, composed by the entire group.  This is where we’ll nail down your topic. This paper should so some rudimentary knowledge of your topic (acquired through research) and hint at where the group project might go by the end of the semester.  Explain why the topic is interesting, historically significant and why it might find an audience on the Internet.  The pitch paper **MUST** include a list of at least 5 relevant digital sources on your topic (so that I can inspect them online and feel certain that your group will be able to complete this assignment). This pitch paper will be accepted, rejected or amended (most likely this last one) and returned to your group ASAP.  While you do not have to follow everything you said you'd do in the pitch at the end of the semester (priorities change) together we will look back to your pitch to help me decide what the final grade on the group project should be.  It is due by 5PM on February 19th. You will not be able to change your topic after this date.

**Your Blog** will be set up during the first two week of class.  I will be looking there for substantive descriptions of your research process, engagement with the course tools and project updates appearing once per week for the rest of the semester.  It doesn’t have to be literary genius. I just need you to describe the work you’ve done on the project. Whether it’s a Scalar-related skill you’ve mastered or a good source you’ve found, you need to put it on a blog post so that your classmates can benefit from your work and I can be sure you aren’t putting everything off to the last second. **If you have done no work on the project that week, I need you to write that in the blog.**  That’s OK maybe once during the semester, but more than once and that will seriously affect both your blog grade and the quality of your final project. Nonetheless, I expect to see at least SEVEN substantive posts over the course of the semester (including a required post the week of March 15th that describes everything you've done to that point in time and everything you plan to do before the final exam period presentation period).

A substantive post is one in which you describe your research process, how you solved a technological dilemma or overcame some other obstacle that will improve the final product that your group produces.  Ideally, each post will appear most weeks by *9AM on Wednesday morning*(looking back on the previous seven to fourteen days of work) and include your work schedule for the coming week so that I can do my best to visit you at your respective archives. Since this is a group project your blogging grade will also depend upon the frequency that others in your group post (since you aren't sharing the work well if they aren't posting).  Therefore, IT IS UP TO YOU TO MAKE SURE THAT OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR GROUP BLOG REGULARLY.

**Your Process Paper** will be a 3-5 page, double-spaced description of what you did on the group project.  It will be due during the final exam period.  I will use it to either give you credit for your inordinate contribution to the group or lower your grade from the group grade so that grades are distributed more fairly.  It is OK to lift language from your blog for this paper, but this work should be considered a self-standing coherent essay in its own right.

If you do not keep up with the required blogging or if I get complaints from other group members that you are not keeping up with the necessary group work, I reserve the right to fail your for the entire assignment long before any of this is due.  That will (obviously) lead to your failure from the entire course.

A flow chart in Miro representing each page of your project is due March 5th at 5PM. While I quite can’t figure out how to do it at the moment I’m writing this, you’ll be posting these boards on Slack in the #scalar-project channel. You’ll be updating this chart for the rest of the semester to reflect the way your project turns out. More about what those updates will look like will be available closer to the time they occur. Each group will have a mandatory Zoom meeting with me the week of April 5th, schedule tbd. I will start leaving comments on your published draft Scalars by the week of April 12th. You should address all of those comments before the final project is due May 3rd.

Send all individual assignments to me via Slack DM.  Grades will be returned the same way. Much more related to this assignment can be found on my Scalar for this course.

**Other Grades:**

1**5% OF YOUR GRADE** will be based upon a paper concerning the books by Deutsch and Montoya.  The question is: *"How do property rights and spaces change with the influx of Americans? How specifically do they change for women?”* In the course of explaining your answer, quote passages from the books to help you demonstrate the justification for your assessment.  The resulting paper should be 5-7 pages long, double-spaced, 1″ margins.  A draft of that paper is due via Slack DM March 12 at 5PM. The final is due via Slack DM by March 19 at 5PM.

I will return your essay via Slack DM with comments. You will reply to those comments on Slack within three days **with a suggested grade** and (more importantly) a reason for that grade, based on the answers to the following questions:

1. What did you learn about how history works by writing the essay?
2. What did you learn about how good writing works by writing the essay?
3. What can you point to in your essay that demonstrates the effort you put into it?

I will respond to those answers with more questions or with comments and (eventually) a final grade with my reasoning for it. Your input on the grading process is due three days after I return your paper with comments. Your participation in the Slack discussions of both books can be incorporated into your input on the grading process.

We’ll do the same thing with your Group Project grades during finals week. One individual paragraph for your blog and individual contributions, one group paragraph for the overall project.  
  
**5% OF YOUR GRADE** will be awarded to everyone who sets up their various free accounts by the end of the second week ofd classes. See the course calendar below for more specific instructions. This grade is A/F.

**5% OF YOUR GRADE** will be awarded to everyone who completes their Hamaleinan/Johnson chapter summaries by the end of the fourth week of class. The instructions for this assignment are at the top of the #major-problems-summaries channel on Slack. The grade is A/F.

I have gone to a great amount of trouble to make the grade book on Blackboard reflect my strange grading philosophy as well as possible. *If I had my way, I would ban grading entirely across the university. Since that isn’t possible, I will promise you now that if the final grading rubric which is programmed into the Blackboard grade book leaves you coming up a little bit short of the next grade level, I will raise your grade to the higher one without even batting an eye.* C- is not an acceptable final grade at CSU-Pueblo. While I use it during the semester as a final grade if you are at that range for your final grade I will have to round either up or down depending upon whether your final number is closer to a “C” or a “D+.”

You must complete all required assignments in order to pass the course.

I am available for online appointments during office hours using Calendly. To reserve a 15 minute Zoom slot click [here](https://calendly.com/drjonathanrees/student-appointment). If you want an appointment outside normal office hours, e-mail me with 24 hours notice and I’ll tell you if I’m free ASAP. Please don't be afraid to ask me a question if anything about this course isn't working or doesn't make sense to you. If you are performing poorly, I may call you in for a MANDATORY Zoom meeting. Failure to respond to Slack messages for two straight weeks risks students failing the entire class by virtue of their poor online "attendance."

**Course Calendar:**

**Weeks 1 and 2 (1/18-1/29): Technical Matters**

The Slack link is in the first announcement on Blackboard. WordPress is [here](https://wordpress.com/). Scalar is [here](https://scalar.usc.edu/works/system/register). You’re going to need a sign in code to start your Scalar account. I’ll try to get it for you ASAP. I’ll invite you to join Miro once I have your e-mail address.

I will accept any blog with an RSS feed that is devoted entirely to this class. If you don’t have one or don’t know how to blog, you should use WordPress above.

I will make appointments with anyone who has trouble setting up or using any of these programs. Calendly is for appointments in my office hours. E-mail me directly for an appointment outside that daily widow. I promise I’ll be flexible.

January 29 at 5PM:All various free accounts should be set up. I’ll see on you on Slack. There’s a link to join Miro at the top of the #scalar-projects channel on Slack. You should e-mail me the URL of your blog. I think for Scalar you should forward your e-mail confirmations to me, but it has been a long time since I signed up for Scalar so I’m not sure that’ll work. Look to Slack for other info on this last one if necessary.

**Week 3 (2/1-2/5): Hamalainen/Johnson Summaries**

Each student will read a different chapter of the Hamalainen/Johnson book, summarize it and post that summary in the #summaries channel on Slack. The purpose here is to give people ideas about research subjects that they might pursue.

February 5 at 5PM: Your Hamalainen/Johnson summaries should be completed and posted on Slack in the #summaries channel.

**Week 4 (2/8-2/12): Group Formation/Begin Reading Montoya**

There will be Zoom Meetings w/ our History Librarian, Alexis Wolstein, and me sometime during the week.

February 12 at 5PM: Groups should be finalized with an e-mail to me.

**Week 5 (2/15-2/19): Research + Montoya Discussion on Slack**

February 19 at 5PM:Group Project pitch paper is due.

**Week 6 (2/22-2/26): Research + Begin Reading Deutsch**

**Week 7 (3/1-3/5): Research + Deutsch Discussion on Slack**

March 5 at 5PM:Group Project Miro flow chart is due.

**Weeks 8 and 9 (3/8-3/19): Research and Montoya/Deutsch Papers**

March 12 at 5PM: Draft Montoya/Deutsch papers are due.

March 19 at 5PM: Montoya/Deutsch papers are due.

**Weeks 10 through 14 (3/22-4/23): Research and Finish Group Projects**

The Week of April 5th:Mandatory Zoom Check in with each group. Exact time tbd. Immediately after those meetings, I will start leaving comments on your published drafts using a program called one [Hypothes.is](http://hyothes.is). More on that closer to the date.

I am available for Zoom meetings with any individual or group during this time. Just drop me an e-mail or Slack message.

**Finals Week:**

May 3 at Noon: All your inputs for grading the Group Project must be complete and sent to me via Slack so that our conversations can run its course by the end of the week when I have to determine final grades.

We will repeat the same grading process for all your project inputs that we did your Montoya/Deutsch papers. Your answers to those questions (What did you learn about history from this project?, etc.) are due two days after you receive my comments. I’ll use those to assign final grades in all three project-related areas. Handing any component of the assignment in early is highly encouraged so that we can complete this whole process even sooner.

**Other Matters:**

<https://www.csupueblo.edu/disability-resource-and-support-center/faculty-staff-resources.html>

If you have a documented disability that may impact your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see the Disability Resource & Support Center (DRSC) as soon as possible to arrange services. The DRSC is located in LARC 169, and can be reached by phone (719-549-2648) and email (dro@csupueblo.edu).

Colorado State University-Pueblo is committed to maintaining respectful, safe, and nonthreatening educational, working, and living environments. As part of this commitment, and in order to comply with federal law, the University has adopted a Policy on Discrimination, Protected Class Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, Intimate Partner Violence, Stalking, & Retaliation. You can find information regarding this policy, how to report violations of this policy, and resources available to you, on the Office of Institutional Equity’s website ([www.csupueblo.edu/institutional-equity](http://www.csupueblo.edu/institutional-equity)).

Please familiarize yourself with the reporting requirements of this policy. Because I am a faculty member, I am a "Responsible Employee." That means I have to report to the Director of the Office of Institutional Equity if you tell me that you were subjected to, or engaged in, of any of the following acts: discrimination, protected class harassment, sexual misconduct, intimate partner violence, stalking, and retaliation.

Academic dishonesty is any form of cheating (including plagiarism) that results in students giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in an academic exercise or receiving credit for work which is not their own. In cases of academic dishonesty, the instructor will follow protocol as identified by their department. Academic dishonesty is grounds for disciplinary action by both the instructor and the Director of Student Conduct and Community Standards. Any student found to have engaged in academic dishonesty may receive a failing grade for the work in question, a failing grade for the course, or any other lesser penalty which the instructor finds appropriate. To dispute an accusation of academic dishonesty, the student should first consult with the instructor. If the dispute remains unresolved, the student may then state their case to the department chair (or the dean if the department chair is the instructor of the course). A student may appeal a grade through the Academic Appeals Board, if eligible.

Academic dishonesty is a behavioral issue as well as an issue of academic performance. As such, it is considered an act of misconduct and is also subject to the University conduct process as defined in the CSU-Pueblo Student Code of Conduct. Whether or not disciplinary action has been implemented by the faculty, a report of the infraction should be submitted to the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards who may initiate additional disciplinary action. The decision by the Office of Student Conduct & Community Standards may be appealed through the process outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

This course participates in the Starfish student success program. Early in the semester, information about student performance in this class will be communicated to each student by email and/or text from Starfish. Attention to suggested actions is encouraged. This information is also available to academic advisors and others involved in supporting student success. Your advisor may then ask to meet with you to discuss your plans for success. The program is designed to promote success among students through proactive advising, and through referral to appropriate resources. Efforts to inform and assist students continues throughout the semester with a mid-semester survey, and instructor concerns or kudos can be posted to Starfish at any time.

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