

HIST 460 / 699 – Section A2 / A3 – Fall 2009 – *3 (0-3s-0)

Nature's Compass

Thursday 12:30-3:20 pm

Location: Tory 2-44

Prof. L. Piper

Office hours: Thursday 10:00 am – 12 noon or by appointment

Office: Tory 2-37

Phone: 492-0855

email: epiper@ualberta.ca

Email policy: I encourage you to come to my office hours to discuss questions you have relating to the course. I will respond to email questions only when the answer cannot be found in the course syllabus or on the course website. I will not grant extensions over email.

Course website: <http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/historyandclassics/moodle/> from this main page you navigate to the course website (HIST 460/699)

Enrolment key: furtrade

Introduction

In his *Fur Trade in Canada* (1930), Harold Innis wrote that Canada “emerged not in spite of geography but because of it.” With the rise of environmental history, historians have come to look at all aspects of non-human nature as dynamic historical actors. This seminar course thus reframes Innis’ observation to ask, how has the natural environment changed the course of Canadian history? We will look at the roles played by plants, parasites, animals, weather, waterways, and rocks in setting Canada’s historical course. We will consider how the environment created bonds that extended beyond Canada’s political borders and the unintended social and economic consequences of intervening in the natural world. Students will consider how history that takes nature into consideration might rewrite dominant narratives. The course will involve seminar discussions, a field trip, and a major research assignment in which each student chooses an important moment or theme in Canadian history and reassesses it’s significance with reference to the natural world.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students will

- 1) know the essential readings in environmental history
- 2) be able to assess the value of environmental history analysis to Canadian history
- 3) understand the value of an historical perspective to contemporary environmental issues

Readings and Seminar Schedule

I have prepared a list of 16 possible topics, from which you as a group have to choose 10. Many of the weeks have book reading assignments, others are exclusively articles. Don't be deceived: although books might appear more time-consuming, it is often easier to understand and analyse books as compared to multiple articles. As well, history remains a book-based discipline and therefore many of the most important works in environmental history are books without article counterparts. Choose wisely.

The article and chapter readings are all available online through the course moodle. Any of the assigned books are available in the library, with at least one copy on reserve. I have also confirmed that copies of all these books are available for purchase online through chapters.indigo.ca or amazon.ca.

699 Evaluation

Historiography Paper

Date due: October 15

Value: 25 %

Requirements: Details about this assignment are provided on a separate handout.

Research Paper

Date due: 1st draft – November 12
final copy – 2 weeks after presentation

Value: 45 %

Requirements: Details about this assignment are provided on a separate handout.

Research Presentation

Date due: schedule to be arranged once research papers have been submitted.

Value: 5 %

Requirements: 10 minute presentation in which the student describes the research, the thesis statement, and the results. If you want to use any audio/visual material (e.g. powerpoint presentation, film, overheads etc.) that is permitted, but you will have to inform the instructor at least 1 week in advance of the presentation.

Class Participation

Value: 25 %

Requirements:

- Class participation will be evaluated based upon active involvement in the weekly seminar discussions. Students are expected to be prepared for each class, having read all the required materials, and to thoughtfully contribute to discussions.
- Each graduate student will be responsible for leading one seminar discussion.
- In the weeks when research presentations are held and part of this grade will include the critique each student prepares on a classmate's paper and on their contribution to discussions of each other's research.

460 Evaluation

Annotated Bibliography

Date due: September 24

Value: 15 %

Requirements: prepare a bibliography of 10-15 sources with annotations that are around 150 words in length (1 paragraph). The annotations should describe and assess the source. For more information about annotated bibliographies see <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm> (although please note that you should use Chicago style, not MLA as the format for references).

Primary Source Assignment

Date due: October 15

Value: 10 %

Requirements: Details about this assignment are provided on a separate handout. The basic project involves selecting a primary source relevant to the major research paper and evaluating this source in a short essay of 750 words.

Research Paper

Date due: 1st copy – November 12
final copy – 2 weeks after presentation

Value: 45 %

Requirements: Details about this assignment are provided on a separate handout.

Research Presentation

Date due: schedule to be arranged once research papers have been submitted.

Value: 5 %

Requirements: 10 minute presentation in which the student describes the research, the thesis statement, and the results. If you want to use any audio/visual material (e.g. powerpoint presentation, film, overheads etc.) that is permitted, but you will have to inform the instructor at least 1 week in advance of the presentation.

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Grading

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value
Excellent	A+	4
	A	4
	A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3
	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	C+	2.3
	C	2
	C-	1.7
Poor	D+	1.3
Minimal Pass	D	1
Failure	F	0

Evaluation will be completed and expressed in raw marks throughout the course. Grades (using the letter-grading system) will be assigned only to the final distribution of mark totals for the course. Such assignment will be based on a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in this class and remain unofficial until approved by Faculty Council or its designate (i.e. Associate or Assistant Dean).

Late / missed assignments and extensions

All assignments are due **at the beginning of class** on the date indicated.

For the first copy of the Research Paper due November 12th I will NOT accept any late papers. Your classmates require copies of your paper to prepare their critiques and you must therefore deliver your paper on time. If you do not meet this deadline you will fail the research paper and presentation and therefore fail the course.

For all other assignments, if they arrive late you will be docked a full letter grade (an A will drop to a B, a B- to a C- and so forth) for the first day, and a further partial letter grade (B+ drops to a B) for each week after that.

Example: An assignment receives an A when submitted on the due date Sept 26.

It arrives Sept 27 and receives a B.

It arrives between Sept 28 and Oct 2 and receives a B-.

It arrives between Oct 3 and Oct 9 and receives a C+, and so forth.

For assignments other than the Research Paper I am willing to grant extensions provided either of the following conditions is met:

- 1) The extension is requested by the student in person (i.e. not over email) prior to the due date and there is a good reason for why the extension is needed.
- 2) A doctor's note or other appropriate documentation is provided for an extension requested on or after the date the assignment is due.

University Policies

The policy regarding course outlines can be found in ' 23.4(2) of the University Calendar.

Regarding access to past or representative evaluative course material (GFC 23.4): As this course does not include a final exam this policy is Not Applicable.

Academic Integrity

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at <http://www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/governance/StudentAppealsRegulations.cfm>) and avoid any behaviour which could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.” (GFC 29 SEP 2003)

Students are advised that the Code of Student Behaviour is published in the University *Calendar* and should be reviewed since ignorance is not acceptable as a defence in cases of academic offences.

I have attached a separate sheet on Academic Integrity for your reference.

Online Research & Reference Sites

I encourage the use of online materials for research and reference purposes.

Early Canadiana Online

<http://www.canadiana.org/>

(Access this via the Library Catalogue or from a campus computer)

Library and Archives Canada

<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/>

NiCHE: Network in Canadian History and Environment

<http://niche.uwo.ca/>

Dictionary of Canadian Biography

<http://www.biographi.ca/>

Oxford English Dictionary

<http://dictionary.oed.com/>

(Access this via the Library Catalogue or from a campus computer)

Chicago Manual of Style

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/>

(Access this via the Library Catalogue or from a campus computer)

David Rumsey Historical Map Collection

<http://www.davidrumsey.com/>