

University of Wisconsin-Madison
History 201: The Historian's Craft
Race and Belonging in the Midwest
Fall 2020
Mondays: 1:20-3:15

Professor Sasha Suarez
smsuarez@wisc.edu
Office Hours: Online Tuesdays 10-12 and by appointment

Course Description:

This course is designed to inspire robust conversation and analysis about how racial formation, ethnic identities, and settler colonialism have historically functioned within the U.S. Midwest. In recent years – and especially since George Floyd's murder in Minneapolis in May of 2020 – dialogue about racism, anti-Blackness, xenophobia, and anti-Indigeneity has grown dramatically. Much of the Midwest has historically been ignored in national conversation despite tremendous evidence of discrimination, violence, and also activist resistance and community organizing by Black, Indigenous, im/migrant, and communities of color. In this class, we will unpack some of these topics through analyses of primary and secondary source materials and we will discuss how histories of racism, settler colonialism, and nationalism have influenced who is deemed to “belong” in the Midwest.

Central to this course is the elevation of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) experience, voice, and testimony. While we will discuss structural and systemic issues that are at work in the country at large, we will work to frame these within the contexts of the Midwest and also address *how* BIPOC communities have organized community and activated resistance in response to discrimination and violence.

“Race and Belonging in the Midwest” requires us to think beyond traditional archives, because BIPOC presence is often clouded. As such, while we will address traditional archives, we will also be exploring a variety of other ways to find and analyze primary sources. This course is structured around both different kinds of primary historical sources and also narrative productions of history (books, articles, public history, etc.). Many of our readings compliment both the topic of this course and will be used to analyze historical methods in instances where historical materials may be more difficult to unearth.

This course fulfills the Comm-B requirement. Through this course you can expect to learn how to:

- Ask questions – we will work on how to develop historical research questions, how to develop questions from source materials (both primary and secondary), and how to pose conversations for group discussion about course readings and individual research projects
- Find sources – you will learn about footnotes and bibliographies and will learn how to use search engines, archives, and libraries to locate source materials
- Evaluate sources – we will cover how you evaluate sources for credibility and utility once you've found them

- Develop and present an argument, conduct further research, and develop a historical research product – we will go over this in more detail when we discuss writing assignments

A note of importance: given the current public health circumstances and to make sure we are all safe, I ask for your patience and flexibility as we monitor and navigate in-person teaching. I am personally working to make cohesion between our online space and our physical space as fluid as possible in the event that we are required to move entirely online. We may not meet in person every single class period, but I will give you plenty of warning if this happens. For more on university COVID-19 policy, see sections later in this syllabus.

Workload: This is a 3-credit course that meets for 2 hours weekly. Per UW-Madison expectations, you should plan to spend an average of 8 hours per week outside of class reading, writing, completing assignments, and preparing for discussions.

Readings:

Child, Brenda J. *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014.

Miles, Tiya. *The Dawn of Detroit: A Chronicle of Slavery and Freedom in the City of the Straits*. New York: The New Press, 2017.

*All other readings will be excerpts of larger books, articles, and oral histories. We will also watch documentaries and explore digital and public history sites and exhibitions. Written material and links will be provided to you via Canvas. When a reading in an excerpt from a larger work, full citational information will be provided.

Grading Requirements and Assignment Overview:

Below you will find an assignment overview and what percentage each category represents in your overall grade for this course. I will go over assignments in separate documents that will always be available on Canvas.

Assignment Type	Details	Percentage of Grade
Short assignments	You will be assigned several short assignments throughout the course of the semester that are designed to teach you how to locate sources, analyze sources, and develop analytical writing.	30%
Oral Presentation	You will hold 2 short presentations throughout the semester (one on primary sources you have found and one for your final project)	10%

Discussion Participation	When we discuss readings, you will be required to participate both in-person and through the preparation of at least one discussion question on the text.	10%
Final Project	You will generate a 10-12 page research project proposal throughout the course of the semester.	50%

Assignments:

Discussion Questions: Submit at least 1 discussion question prior to class on the course Canvas page. These questions should not have yes/no answers. Instead, you should pose how/why/what questions. We will go over best practices to developing questions in class.

Discussion Participation: You are required to participate in class discussions. This means coming prepared for class to the best of your ability. To assure you receive full participation points, each of you will facilitate class discussion in pairs at least once during the semester.

Short assignments: The short assignments are labeled individually with assigned and due dates in the course schedule below. These assignments are designed to help you learn and practice the skills required for historical research that we will go over during the semester. I will go over these assignments in detail the days I assign them. For full assignment information, you can consult the handouts online.

Oral Presentations: You will hold 2 short presentations throughout the course of the semester. These presentations include the following:

- Primary source presentation and analysis: You will spend 5-10 minutes showing the class 2 primary sources you have found and will use for your final research proposal.
- Proposal Presentation: You will spend 10-15 minutes giving a presentation of your proposal

After I have assigned the presentation assignments, you can consult the full details through the online handouts.

Final Project: As part of this class you will generate a 10-12 research project proposal. This in-depth proposal will address historiographical literature on your topic, an evaluation of sources you uncovered in your preliminary research, and a series of research questions, among other things. We will go over this project in detail. As part of this project, you will be required to complete the following:

1. 1 page research topic proposal **(due Oct. 5)**
2. 5 page project proposal draft **(due Nov. 9)**
3. A peer-review of your project proposals (you will also meet with me individually to discuss both the feedback you received from your peers and to discuss any feedback I have for the further development of your project proposal)

4. Final draft of complete project proposal (**due Dec. 12 11:59pm**)

Classroom Policies:

COVID-19 Procedures: While on campus all employees and students are required to [wear appropriate and properly fitting](#) face coverings while present in any campus building unless working alone in a laboratory or office space. [FACE COVERING GUIDELINES](#)

Face Coverings During In-person Instruction Statement (COVID-19):

Individuals are expected to wear a face covering while inside any university building. Face coverings must be [worn correctly](#) (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) in the building if you are attending class in person. If any student is unable to wear a face-covering, an accommodation may be provided due to disability, medical condition, or other legitimate reason.

Students with disabilities or medical conditions who are unable to wear a face covering should contact the [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#) or their Access Consultant if they are already affiliated. Students requesting an accommodation unrelated to disability or medical condition, should contact the Dean of Students Office.

Students who choose not to wear a face covering may not attend in-person classes, unless they are approved for an accommodation or exemption. All other students not wearing a face covering will be asked to put one on or leave the classroom. Students who refuse to wear face coverings appropriately or adhere to other stated requirements will be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards](#) and will not be allowed to return to the classroom until they agree to comply with the face covering policy. An instructor may cancel or suspend a course in-person meeting if a person is in the classroom without an approved face covering in position over their nose and mouth and refuses to immediately comply.

QUARANTINE OR ISOLATION DUE TO COVID-19: Student should continually monitor themselves for COVID-19 [symptoms](#) and get [tested](#) for the virus if they have symptoms or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. Student should reach out to instructors as soon as possible if they become ill or need to isolate or quarantine, in order to make alternate plans for how to proceed with the course. Students are strongly encouraged to communicate with their instructor concerning their illness and the anticipated extent of their absence from the course (either in-person or remote). The instructor will work with the student to provide alternative ways to complete the course work.

UW-MADISON [BADGER PLEDGE](#)

Technology: Since we need to maintain a minimum of 6 feet of distance during class, it is recommended that you bring a laptop or tablet in case we need to distribute any materials in class. While on your device, please remain focused on our conversations. No shopping, social media, etc. If you're distracted, you cannot fully participate and we want you to be a part of our classroom community.

Late assignments: each day an assignment is late, it will be reduced a full letter grade (for example: an A to a B). If the assignment has not been turned in within a week, you will receive a 0. If you need an extension, please speak with me as soon as possible. Assignments that are late due to illness or other extenuating circumstances will be counted as submitted on time so long as we have discussed a possible timeline to completion.

Academic Honesty and Integrity: All students are expected to abide by UW-Madison's policy for academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of student misconduct can result in disciplinary action including but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. For more information, refer to conduct.students.wisc.edu/misconduct/academic-integrity/ and conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/student-resources/.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence: UW-Madison's policies prohibit sexual harassment and sexual violence (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/102/2020/08/policy-8.17.20.pdf>). Any incidents within the classroom will be taken seriously. Please note that under Title IX, I am required to report disclosure of sexual violence. Any such disclosure will remain private, but should not be understood as confidential. For more information on reporting policies, please refer to <https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/reporting-response-options/>.

Harassment and Discrimination: Absolutely no discrimination or harassment will be tolerated in the classroom. We will be addressing very difficult and sensitive topics and while some disagreement may happen, any personal attacks are strictly prohibited. As per policy at UW-Madison in compliance with that set by the Board of Regents for the University of Wisconsin system, any allegations may be submitted to the Office of Compliance (<https://compliance.wisc.edu/eo-complaint/>).

Diversity and Inclusion Statement:

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Resources:

University Health Services (UHS): The no-cost mental health services at UHS include individual, couple/partner, group counseling, campus-based programming, stress management, and psychiatry services. UHS offers crisis services, which are available 24/7. Visit <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/mental-health/> or call 608-265-5600 for more information. Please refer to their page for updated COVID-19 information regarding their current operations.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities *McBurney Disability Resource Center syllabus statement*: “The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.” mcburney.wisc.edu/instructor/

History Lab: I encourage you to use the History Department’s History Lab if you feel you need help with the writing for this course. <https://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate-program/the-history-lab/>

Writing Center: <https://writing.wisc.edu/>

Schedule

Prior to first in-class meeting please do the following [links on Canvas site]:

- fill out the survey on Canvas,
- Read “Slavery, Freedom and African American Voices in the Midwest,” Melissa Stuckey [link]
- Read “Education America: The Historian’s Responsibility to Native Americans and the Public,” Angela Cavender Wilson [link]
- Listen to (or read) “Why is there ‘Wau’ In So Many Wisconsin Place Names,” Wisconsin Public Radio [link]
- Watch “The Power in Sharing Our Stories,” Kao Kalia Yang x TedTalk [YouTube link]

Sept. 14: Introduction, syllabus review

Assigned: develop potential points of interest for your final project

Archives

Sept. 21: Racial formation, settler colonialism, and how to begin to generate historical questions

Readings due: “Introduction: Racial Formation in the United States,” “Ethnicity,” Michael Omi and Howard Winant in *Racial Formations in the United States* pp. 1-51;

“Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy,” Andrea Smith pp.1-8;

“Historical sources and methods in Indigenous Studies: Touching on the past, looking to the future,” Jean M. O’Brien in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies* pp.15-22 [pdfs]

Due in class: brainstorm of potential research topics for final project

Sept. 28: Settler colonialism in the great lakes + sources and archives

Readings due: *The Dawn of Detroit* pp. 1-96, 247-261 (Introduction, Chapter 1, Chapter 2, A

Note on Historical Conversations and Concepts)
Assigned: "Using Newspapers"

Oct. 5: Anti-Blackness in the Midwest

In-class: Discussion questions for *The Dawn of Detroit*

Readings due: *The Dawn of Detroit* pp. 97-184

Assigned: "Assessing Footnotes," Book Review Assignment

Due: 1 page research topic proposal

Oct. 12: "In-class:" watch "Jim Crow of the North" [58 mn][YouTube link]

Readings due: *The Dawn of Detroit* pp. 185-246;

Due: "Assessing Footnotes," "Using Newspapers"

Oral Histories

Oct. 19: Oral histories

Readings due: "Oral history," William Bauer, Jr in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies* pp.160-168 [pdf]; "Principles and Best Practices," Oral History Association [link]; *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks* pp. 1-52

Assigned: "Finding Primary Sources," "Secondary Source Search Assignment"

Oct. 26: Oral histories cont.

Readings due: *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks* pp. 53-123; Listen to or read oral history from provided options (see Canvas)

Due: "Secondary Source Search Assignment"

Nov. 2: Indigenous Midwest in the 20th century

In-class: discuss readings, oral histories choices

Readings due: *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks* pp. 125-195; Listen to or read oral history from provided options (see Canvas)

Due: Finding Primary Sources

Digital and Public histories

Nov. 9: The 20th century Midwest city: redlining, white flight, and BIPOC activism

In-class: Primary Sources Presentations

Readings due: "Organizing for Fun: Recreation and Community Formation in the Mexican Community of South Chicago in the 1920s and 1930s," Michael D. Innis-Jiménez pp. 144-161; "The Back of the Homefront: Black and American Indian Women in Wisconsin during World War II," Patty Loew pp. 82-103 [pdfs]

Due: 5 page Project Proposal rough draft

Nov. 16: How we present history and why it matters

Readings due: "Making a New Home: Hmong Refugees and Hmong Americans," Erika Lee in *The Making of Asian America* pp.334-356 [pdf]; watch "Hmong Chronicles 3: featuring Kao Kalia Yang and Bee Yang [8:02]; look at "Mapping Prejudice," "States of

Incarceration” sites [links]

Nov. 23: Coalitional activism

In-class: presentations

Readings due: Watch *American Revolutionary: The Evolution of Grace Lee Boggs* [82 mn]; look at “Marching on Milwaukee” site [links]

Nov. 30: Public history and tours

In-class: presentations

Readings due: Listen to/read “Uprooted: The 1950s Plan to Erase Indian Country,” Max Nesterak; “UW – Madison heritage marker honors Ho-Chunk, recognizes land as ancestral home,” Doug Erickson; “Mapping Slavery in Detroit,” University of Michigan [radio programs, articles, video – links]

Dec. 7: student evaluations

Due: Book Review

Dec. 12: Research Proposal Final Draft Due