

Oil and Mining in World History
University of Wisconsin-Madison
HISTORY 229: fall 2023, 3 credits



Fabrice Monteiro, Untitled #11, 2016. A representation of Ogun, the Nigerian god of iron—draped in technological waste. The fiery mass wielded by Ogun refers to a method for burning away plastic insulation from copper wires. The process, often performed by youths, produces highly toxic smoke.

MEETINGS:

Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-3:45 (1131 Humanities)

INSTRUCTOR:

Paul Grant - pgrant@wisc.edu 5212 Humanities - Office hours: Fridays, 9-12 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Regardless of your major, petroleum and mining are involved. The extraction industries are both good and bad, but are intensely globalized. An overview of the global issues—economic, social, political, and cultural—is followed by case studies in selected world regions. Students conduct independent research against historical problems defined by their career interests and backgrounds, and report back to the class. Students are introduced to UW-Madison’s resources for further work in future semesters.

Canvas Course URL: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/376197>

This course in UW-Madison context:

History 229 is a topics course, which changes from year to year. **Catalog Description:** Explores topics that involve at least two continents. Topics vary reflecting the interests, expertise, and innovating intention of the instructor.

Requisites. *Sophomore standing.*

Course Designations and Attributes. *Breadth – Humanities; Level – Intermediate; L&S Credit - Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S*

Instructional Modality. Live in classroom. Attendance required.

Credits. This is a 3-credit course. The credit standard is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which include regularly scheduled instruction, student meeting times during my office hours, reading, writing, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. **Global Perspective.** Ore and petroleum extraction, economics, and cultural impact vary across many local contexts. Students will learn how to think through this global-local dynamic.
2. **Historiographical Thinking.** Students learn how historical scholarship evolves in response to contemporary needs, such as energy scarcity, geopolitical rivalries, or climate change.
3. **Historical Research and Writing.** Students will be able to (1) critically read primary texts; (2) evaluate and formulate historical arguments on the basis of original source evidence, for the purpose of developing original research.
4. **Generative Artificial Intelligence.** Students will explore the use of AI in historical research, both for what it has to offer as a tool and for its potential challenges.
5. **Revision.** Students will learn about the peer review process, including writing and receiving feedback and revising their work.

COMMON READINGS (required)

1. Brian C. Black, *Crude Reality: Petroleum in World History*, 2nd edition (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020)
2. Additional common readings available digitally through the library.

Note: most of your reading will be in support of your individual research project – thus most of your reading time is not listed below.

ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING SCALE

Grades are assigned on the basis of accumulation of points over the course of the term (up to 100; see below). In theory, each student could get an A (or could fail). For the most part, you accumulate points through short written work.

Grading scale:

Fewer than 60 points = F; 60-70 = D; 70-77 = C; 78-82 = BC; 83-87 = B; 88-92 = AB; 93 or greater = A

Student work is organized around three skills in the historian's toolkit: elaboration (critical reading and source analysis), deliberation (clear communication and conversation), and research (historical writing and revision).

Elaboration: 33%

Components:

Badger Work (critical reading): 12%

- Response to readings (3 x 2% = 6%)
- Review of main secondary source for research paper (4%)
- Inventory of UW resources for further research (2%)

Beaver Work (research exercises and write-up). Prompts in class: 6 x 2% = 12%

- Memorial Library orientation workshop
- Microsoft for research
- Generative AI for research
- Library research
- Detailed outline with footnotes
- References and style workshop

Crane Work (drawing broad conclusions): 9%

- Self-introduction (Canvas discussion thread): week 1 2%
- Video journals, in Canvas (7 x 1% = 7%)

Deliberation: 34%

Components:

Presentation: 20%

- Prospectus presentation, week 6 5%
- Research update, week 9 5%
- Final research presentation, week 14 10%

Conversation: 14%

- Research Questions defined (group discussion): week 4 3%
- Peer Review of research updates: week 10 3%
- Exit interview: exam week 3%
- Overall Contribution (attendance plus value added) 5%

Research: Term paper of original historical research 33%

Components:

- Two individual conferences with instructor (first ungraded, second 3%) 3%
- Research proposal (paper copy due in class, week 6) 3%
- Annotated bibliography (paper copy due in class, week 9) 2%
- Complete draft (due on paper, week 12) 5%
- Revised Final Draft (due on paper, week 15) 20%

Grading complaints

I entertain grading complaints, but I require live discussion. If you wish for me to reconsider a score, you must: 1) Submit a formal request to me (by email), and 2) come to discuss the issue in person, justifying your complaint substantially (as in: explaining your answer/argument). I can be quite generous, but this formality is part of your learning experience.

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

Research

You will write a 10-page (2500 words) research paper on an individual person or a theme or topic we have dealt with in the course. You will discuss the topic with Dr. Grant at multiple stages throughout the semester.

To help you break down and prepare for this task, we will work in the library, we will workshop your findings; there will be a research proposal of 3 pages (750-800 words), an annotated source list (bibliography), and a complete draft due ahead of the final submission. You will also present your interim findings to the class, and receive feedback and questions from your peers and instructor.

In week 14, you will be asked to give a 7-10 minute presentation of your research. You will be graded on the clarity and organization of your report, the quality of your source analyses, and your ability to field questions concisely at the end.

Your complete draft will be turned in to Dr. Grant and shared with other students, so that you can get and respond to feedback on your work. This paper will be graded on the depth and breadth of your research, the clarity and importance of your argument, and the written execution of your narrative.

The final paper will be due on paper in the week 14 meeting.

Communication

This course requires you to work on your skills in public speaking and communication. These come in four forms:

- **Craft Writing:** smaller exercises to develop your skill at clarity and elegance in communication will supplement your formal historical writing.
- **Group process:** part of your grade comes from your work at thoughtful interaction with your classmates, both written (peer reviews) and spoken (including thoughtful listening).
- **Public speaking:** each student will present multiple times before the class.
- **Exit interviews.** At the end of the term, each student will have an individual conversation with the instructor, ascertaining next steps, whether in historical research or career.

ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES

Canvas. Most (but not all) online work will involve Canvas, where it will be graded. NOTE: scores in Canvas are not the same as your grade-in progress.

Microsoft. Your @wisc.edu email address comes with a rich suite of tools for academic productivity. Students will be expected to use these (rather than Google Docs or Apple), especially SharePoint, Word, and Teams; Microsoft's AI tools will also be used

Attendance. Aside from the unpredictable, students are expected to commit to full attendance and participation. To miss two sessions is to miss an entire week. Students who miss four sessions will see a two-point reduction in their participation grade.

Late Work. All assignments are due on the day indicated below (sometimes on paper, and sometimes online). All work submitted late without prior arrangement will receive a five-point grade reduction each day (e.g., an 85% grade would become an 80% after one day late).

Generative Artificial Intelligence. This year is transitional in our academic experience with AI. For that reason, I expect open conversation about AI: with more practice and experience, the better our collective insights will become. Major breakthroughs in AI put an increased premium on user judgment. Artificial intelligence is potentially useful but is not without its risks, especially in its struggles with misleading information.

Thus: students are not required to create accounts with third party services, but are expected to work on their facility and discernment with AI as a writing tool whenever possible. At the same time, you must submit both AI-generated text, including whatever prompts you used, along with your own revised text for comparison.

History Lab. The History Lab is the Department of History's in-house writing center. Our graduate student staff offer expert, one-on-one advising on your History/History of Science projects, both in-person and virtually. No matter your stage in the writing process—choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, or revising your drafts—the History Lab staff will help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Visit our [website](#) for instructions on how to schedule an appointment with a Lab TA, or to find tips, guides, and other resources for all of your writing assignments.

Academic Integrity. By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary [sanctions](#) include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Due dates for readings and hard (paper) copies of assignments = class time (2:30 p.m.).

Due dates for online submissions = 11:59 p.m.

UNIT 1: GLOBAL INTRODUCTION: OIL and MINING

After an introduction, two weeks on mining, four on petroleum, and two more on mining

Week 1: The Big Picture

Wednesday, Sept. 6

Write:

- Due in Canvas, 9/10 self-introduction (video upload in discussion thread)
- Due in Canvas, 9/10: video journal 1: top issues you need to learn about for your future

Week 2: Early Mining

September 11 and 13

Read:

- Due 9/11: Brian Black, *Crude Reality*, Introduction + chapter 1
- Due 9/13: Kris Lane, *Potosi: The Silver City That Changed the World*, Introduction
<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/stable/j.ctvj7wm45>

Write:

Hard Copy DUE IN CLASS, 9/13: Memorial Library orientation workshop

Week 3: Mining and Early Capitalism

September 18 and 20

Read:

- Due 9/18: Jeanette Graulau, *The Underground Wealth of Nations*, Introduction
<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/stable/j.ctvqc6g5t>
- Due 9/20: Martin Lynch, *Mining in World History*, chapter 1
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/wisc/detail.action?docID=850999>

In-Class Work:

Individual research paper conference #1 (ungraded)

Write:

- Due in Canvas, 9/24: reading notes in OneDrive (SharePoint links submitted in Canvas)
- Due in Canvas, 9/24: video journal 2: Oil and Your Family

Week 4: Introducing Petroleum

September 25 and 27

Read:

- Due 9/25: James G. Speight, *An Introduction to Petroleum Technology, Economics, and Politics*, chapter 1
<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/wisc/detail.action?docID=818531>
- Due 9/27: Brian Black, *Crude Reality*, chapter 2

In-Class Work:

Monday: Group discussion of research paper questions

Wednesday: Individual research paper conference #2 (graded)

Write:

- Due 9/27: Response to readings # 1 (Lane, Graulau, and Lynch), hard copies

Week 5: Industrial Imperialism

October 2 and 4

Read:

- Due 10/2: Brian Black, *Crude Reality*, chapter 3
- Due 10/4: Brian Black, *Crude Reality*, chapter 4

In-class:

- Robert McNally, *Crude Volatility: The History and the Future of Boom-Bust Oil Prices*, introduction
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/10.7312/mcna17814>

Write:

- Due in Canvas, 10/08: Generative AI for Research
- Due in Canvas, 10/08: video journal 3: Global Perspectives

Week 6: Oil and Nationalism

October 9 and 11

Read:

- Due 10/9: Brian Black, *Crude Reality*, chapter 5
- Due 10/11: Brian Black, *Crude Reality*, chapter 6

In-class:

- Robert McNally, *Crude Volatility: The History and the Future of Boom-Bust Oil Prices*, ch. 8
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/10.7312/mcna17814>

Present:

Monday: Present your research proposal (oral only, no PowerPoint)
Continued on Wednesday if necessary

Write:

- Due in Class, 10/09 (hard copy): research proposal
- Due 10/11: Response to readings #2 (Brian Black, ch. 1-6), hard copies

Week 7: Oil and Liberalism

October 16 and 18

Mental Health Week. We meet as scheduled, but no readings or writings due.

Week 8: Mining after Imperialism

October 23 and 25

Read:

- Due 10/23: your main secondary source for research paper – be prepared to discuss

Write:

- Due 10/25: review of main secondary source for research paper, hard copies
- Due 10/29: Memorial Library Research Log (Canvas)

Week 9: A New Resource Scramble

October 30 and November 1

In-Class Writing: BRING A COMPUTER TO CLASS!

- Titles and Abstracts; AI fact-checking

Read:

- Due 10/30: Brian Black, *Crude Reality*, chapter 7-end

Write:

- Due 11/01: Annotated bibliography for research paper, SharePoint link submitted in Canvas
- Due 11/06: video journal 4: Carbon Transition

UNIT 2: REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Four week overview by continents

Week 10: Latin America

November 6 and 8

Read: common readings done in-class:

- David R. Mares, *Resource Nationalism and Energy Policy: Venezuela in Context*, chapter 4
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/10.7312/mare20294>
- Ibrahim Al-Muhanna, *Oil Leaders: An Insider's Account of Four Decades of Saudi Arabia and OPEC's Global Energy Policy*, chapter 6
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/10.7312/almu18974>

Write:

- Due 11/06: in-class updates on your research, plus abstract posted on Canvas discussion board
- Due 11/12: response to at least two peers in Canvas discussion board
- Due 11/12 (Canvas): Detailed research paper outline including references

Week 11: West Asia

November 13 and 15

Read: common readings done in-class:

- Ibrahim Al-Muhanna, *Oil Leaders: An Insider's Account of Four Decades of Saudi Arabia and OPEC's Global Energy Policy*, chapters 2 and 3
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/10.7312/almu18974>

Write:

- Due 11/15: Response to readings #3: Mares in conversation with Al-Muhanna. Hard copies due in class.
- Due 11/19: Crane work #5 – video journal (Canvas)
- Complete Research Paper draft due in class next week (Nov. 20) (hard copy + .docx file in SharePoint)

Week 12: Africa (+Thanksgiving)

November 20

NOTE: NO CLASS WEDNESDAY, 11/22 (THANKSGIVING)

No written work due (but prep for video journal 6)

Week 13: Eurasia

November 27 and 29

Read: common readings done in-class

- Ibrahim Al-Muhanna, *Oil Leaders: An Insider's Account of Four Decades of Saudi Arabia and OPEC's Global Energy Policy*, chapter 10
<https://doi-org.ezproxy.library.wisc.edu/10.7312/almu18974>

Write:

- Due 11/29: Inventory of UW resources for future study (hard copies due in class)
- Due 12/03 in Canvas: video journal 6 - Thanksgiving and My Family
- Research paper: final draft due in class next week (12/13): (hard copy + .docx file in SharePoint)

UNIT 3: Conclusions

Student research presentations and the road ahead

Week 14: Your Research

December 4 and 6

Present:

- Final research presentations, including PowerPoint

Write:

- Research paper: final draft due in class next week (12/13): (hard copy + .docx file in SharePoint)

Week 15: The Road Ahead

December 11 and 13

Write:

- Due 12/17 in Canvas: video journal 7 - My Next Steps

In-Class Work: Group debriefing (ungraded)

EXAM WEEK (no exam)

- Exit Interviews (individually, with Dr. Grant) (graded)