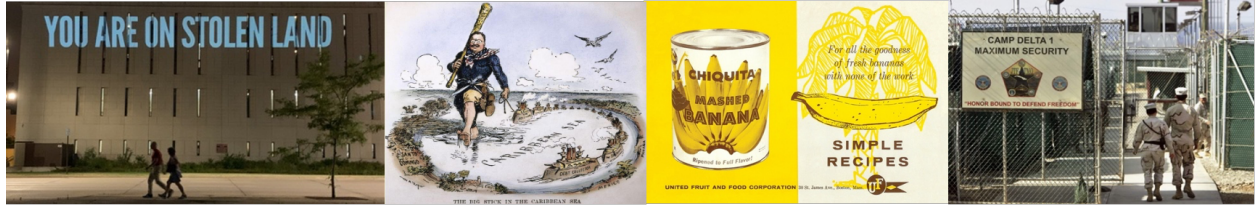




HISTORY 201

The Historian's Craft: The United States Empire University of Wisconsin-Madison Fall 2023



Wednesdays 1:20-3:15pm 5255 Humanities

Professor Allison Powers Useche, PhD

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1pm-3pm in 4120 Humanities or by appointment

Email: auseche@wisc.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The United States is often described as the world's first modern constitutional democracy, and the American political system has been promoted as a model for representative government around the world. But the United States is also and always has been an empire, occupying territories, governing subjects, and managing populations through decidedly undemocratic forms of rule. This course explores how tensions between theories of political universalism and colonial power hierarchies have shaped the development of the United States from the nation's origins as an Atlantic settler colony to its current status as a sprawling global empire. How has the U.S. projected power from the 18th century to the 21st? What disparate forms have imperial interventions taken, and why did they change over time? How have distinct modalities of empire recast patterns of labor, wealth distribution, migration, policing, environmental management, and racialized and gendered inequities? What strategies have individuals, communities, and nations used to challenge the legitimacy of United States colonial governance? We will grapple with these questions and more by analyzing a wide range of primary sources in addition to scholarship written by historians interpreting the past. This is a discussion-based seminar designed to support and challenge you as you work toward an original capstone project. Students will define their own historical questions, track down and analyze evidence, and contribute to ongoing discussions about the legacies of empire in the United States and the world today.

FORMAT:

This course will meet in person on Wednesday afternoons from 1:20-3:15pm. The first half of each seminar will be devoted to discussion of the assigned readings. The second half will include a series of research and writing workshops designed to help you work toward your final papers. Since we meet only once a week, it is crucial that you are present at each session. That said, if you are feeling unwell, please do not come to class. Instead, email me and we will arrange a meeting via Zoom to discuss what you missed.

HIST 201 is divided into three parts. We will begin by learning how to analyze primary and secondary sources. In Part Two of the class, you the students will begin to track down and interpret sources related to your own interests concerning histories of United States imperialism. Part Three is devoted to helping you complete a final capstone paper using the sources you have uncovered. You will learn to formulate a viable



and interesting research question, carry out original research, and build a persuasive argument using these historical sources. The capstone paper will give you the opportunity to select a topic of your own choosing, and to do the work that historians do in interpreting the past.

CREDIT HOURS

The credit standard for this 3-credit course 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 or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of two hours per week), reading, writing, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus. The expectation is that you will work at least 2 hours outside of the class for every hour in the classroom. Because this course focuses so intensively on research, writing, and speaking, it fulfills Part B of the General Education Communication Requirement (Comm B).

REGULAR AND SUBSTANTIVE STUDENT-INSTRUCTOR INTERACTION

One of the benefits of our smaller seminar format is that we will get to know each other well. During our weekly seminar meetings I will provide direct instruction, clarify information about course content, facilitate discussion of the course materials, and lead research and writing workshops. I will additionally be available during my office hours each week for one-on-one meetings. If you cannot make my office hours but would like to meet, please email me and we will find an alternative time. I try to respond to all emails within 24 hours. If you have an urgent or time-sensitive matter to discuss, please include "URGENT" in the subject line of your email and I will reply as soon as possible.

COURSE WEBSITE, LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM & DIGITAL INSTRUCTIONAL TOOLS

All course materials are available on our [Canvas site](#).

REQUIRED READINGS:

All required readings will be posted to our course Canvas site. Your reading assignment each week will consist of 2-3 book chapters or scholarly articles written by historians about the past—what we call "secondary sources"—in addition to 3-4 shorter "primary sources" produced during the period that we are studying. We will talk in class about how to approach the readings, but plan to read the secondary sources more quickly by focusing on each author's argument and use of evidence. You will want to read the primary sources more closely. These documents are shorter but often take longer to interpret. A few questions to consider as you complete the readings each week include: how do the primary sources support, challenge, or expand on the historical narratives offered by the secondary sources? What can we learn from analyzing these documents together that we might not necessarily get from reading one source on its own? What do these sources leave out or obscure? If you are ever feeling overwhelmed by the readings or find that they are taking you too long to get through, please do not hesitate to come by my office hours so we can discuss strategies for completing each week's assignment within a few hours.

OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) Ask and answer informed questions about the past
- 2) Understand how historians make history and why our understandings of the past change over time
- 3) Evaluate arguments about history and weigh in on existing historical debates



- 4) Find and analyze sources using archival and library collections
- 5) Develop, present, and communicate arguments
- 6) Produce an original piece of historical scholarship
- 7) Gain a nuanced understanding of the United States Empire past and present

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT:

GRADING

Participation: 25%

Weekly Reading Reflections: 15%

Leading Discussion Section: 10%

Topic and Research Question: 5%

Paper Proposal and Outline: 10%

Rough Draft and Peer Review: 10%

Final Paper: 20%

Final Presentation: 10%

GRADING SCALE

A (92.50+); AB (87.50-92.49); B (82.50-87.49); BC (77.50-82.49); C (69.50-77.49); D (60-69.49); F (Below 60)

PARTICIPATION (25%)

Participation in seminar meetings is critical to your success in this course and is required. Please come to class each week prepared to engaged the readings and your peers. Discussions provide the opportunity for you to clarify and consolidate your understanding of the material, flex critical thinking skills, and hear the viewpoints of your fellow students. You can miss one seminar meeting no questions asked. If you end up needing to miss more classes due to health issues (including mental health), quarantine, or any other extenuating circumstances, let me know and we will create alternative assignments so that your participation grade will not be affected. No medical documentation of the illness will be required. Please take care of yourselves and let me know how I can support you this semester.

LEADING DISCUSSION: (10%)

Each student will select one week to co-lead discussion for our seminar. In this assignment you will flex your analytic skills by introducing the readings to frame our discussion; your research skills by tracking down two additional primary sources to consider during our conversation; and your communication skills by presenting your findings to the seminar. During this week you will work with a partner to open our meeting with a brief (5 minute) response to the readings followed by introduction of 3-5 discussion questions and two primary sources related to the week's themes. One of these primary sources should come from an assigned secondary reading (for example a map or a quote that the author analyzes). The other should come from a digitized archival collection that we have worked with in the course. Please plan to meet with me at some point the week prior to your presentation. I can help you find the kinds of primary sources you are looking for, and to refine your discussion questions.

Your opening presentation should include four key elements:



- Identify the arguments of each of the secondary source readings and place their authors in dialogue. How are the readings similar, and how are they different? What kinds of evidence does each author use to support their interpretation of the past?
- Evaluate how the week's primary sources support or challenge the historical arguments that you encountered in the secondary sources
- Research **two additional primary sources** that will allow us to deepen and nuance our discussion of the week's themes
- Pose 3-5 questions to guide our discussion of the readings

I will circulate a presentation sign-up sheet during our first seminar meeting.

WEEKLY READING REFLECTIONS (15%)

During the first two thirds of the course, you will submit a short post on Canvas before each weekly discussion in response to the week's readings. Each post should be 1-2 paragraphs in length. You may choose to focus your analysis on one or two of the sources, but your post should make clear that you have completed and engaged all of the week's assigned readings. ***All weekly reading reflections must be completed by 11:59 PM on Tuesday evenings.***

Options for weekly response posts:

- Answer one or more of the reading questions that I will post to Canvas on Wednesday afternoons
- Reflect on something from the readings that interested you, surprised you, or confused you
- Consider how one or more of the week's primary sources relate to the secondary source readings
- Respond to another student's post, ideally using "Helpful Language for High Quality Discussion" posted to our course Canvas page (source: UW Madison Discussion Project)

During the final third of the course there are no assigned readings as you will be working toward your capstone research projects. Each week you will submit one piece of writing that builds toward your final paper.

TOPIC AND RESEARCH QUESTION (5%)

Submit a one paragraph explanation of the topic and possible research question that you plan to explore in your final paper. Why do you find this topic interesting or compelling? What do you hope to learn in your research? What kinds of primary sources could you potentially use in order to answer your research questions? This can be preliminary and it is fine if your topic and question change as you progress in your research. ***Due by midnight on Tuesday, November 7 by midnight via Canvas***

RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND OUTLINE: (10%)

Build on your research question to craft a research proposal and outline, including an annotated bibliography with at least two secondary sources and three primary sources that you will use to answer your research question. We will go over a more detailed prompt and rubric for this assignment later in the semester. ***Due by Monday, November 15 at midnight via Canvas***

ROUGH DRAFT (10%)

You will be graded only on the completion of your rough draft. We will go over a more detailed prompt and rubric for this assignment later in the semester. Rough drafts will be returned with comments from the



professor that should be addressed in your revisions. ***Due by Tuesday, November 28 at midnight via Canvas***

PEER REVIEW (10%):

Peer review is a crucial part of how historians make history. All scholarly books and articles must pass through a process of review by experts in the field before being published. But even before submitting scholarship to be considered for publication, historians (myself included!) rely on friends and colleagues for feedback on works in progress. Because this course is designed to prepare you to produce an original piece of historical scholarship, I have built several stages of peer review into the writing process. As you conceptualize, draft, and revise your capstone project you will:

- Meet with me to talk about your initial research ideas
- Read and offer comments on one classmate's rough draft
- Receive written feedback from me on your topic, proposal, outline, and draft

To receive full credit for the peer review portion of the course you will need to participate in each of the meetings outlined above and incorporate the suggestions you receive into your revisions.

CAPSTONE ASSIGNMENT RESEARCH PAPER (20%)

Build on your draft to complete a 7-10 page capstone project, drawing on primary and secondary sources to answer an original research question of your choosing. To answer this question, you should engage 3-5 primary sources and 2-3 secondary sources. Students taking the honors option for the course should write a 10-page paper that engages 5-7 primary sources and 4-5 secondary sources. ***Due by midnight on December 15 via Canvas***

FINAL RESEARCH PRESENTATION (10%)

This presentation of your research is modelled on the ways historians share our scholarship at professional conferences. During our final seminar meeting at the Pyle Center on campus, you will distill your capstone paper into a five-minute talk through which you communicate the significance of your original historical research to your peers. The presentation will be graded on its coherence (does it have a clear argument?), use of sources (does it utilize effectively both primary and secondary sources, including through visual slides?), relevance (does it engage with histories of the United States empire?) and polish (is it well-rehearsed and presented in a compelling manner)?

DEADLINES AND EXTENSIONS:

You are welcome to request an extension on any of the graded assignments for the course if the requirements of other classes, workplace responsibilities, family commitments, health concerns, or other issues make it difficult to submit an assignment on time. All requests for extensions made 24 hours in advance of the deadline will be granted. Requests for extensions made on or after the deadline will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

STUDENTS' RULES, [RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES](#)

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

I aspire to create a classroom strengthened by students who feel heard, safe, and supported. If you have concerns about any aspect of the course, please let me know. 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.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES STATEMENT

I am committed to providing any accommodations that will enable you to thrive in our course, including but not limited to those requested through the McBurney Disability Resource Center. 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. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

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 action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. I encourage you to think critically about the advantages and risks of using Generative AI in educational settings. Consulting an AI program should never be a substitute for your own careful analysis of our course materials—not least because these programs notoriously invent quotes that do not in fact exist, then attribute them to authors past and present. This course is designed to train you to produce original historical research and scholarship. Please do not outsource your writing assignments to machine learning programs that often reproduce existing biases and misconceptions. Submitting AI-generated text for course assignments is plagiarism—a serious form of academic misconduct. Historians include careful citations for all of the sources that we analyze in our scholarship. ChatGPT is not a citable authority, and the sources that AI programs cite are not reliable. If you would like some help getting started with any of your writing assignments for this course, please come to office hours to about your ideas.

[Academic Calendar & Religious Observances](#)

COURSE EVALUATIONS

You will be provided with several opportunities to evaluate this course and your learning experience. Your participation is an integral component of this course, and your confidential feedback is important to me. You will receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying you that your course evaluation is available. In the email you will receive a link to log into the course evaluation with your NetID. I strongly encourage you to participate in this anonymous course evaluation and will provide you with time in seminar to complete the evaluation.



SCHEDULE OF CLASSES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Week 1: Introduction—Thinking Like Historians, Seeing Empire

Wednesday, September 6

Workshop: What are primary and secondary sources? How do historians use different kinds of sources to interpret the past?

PART I: SOVEREIGNTY, TERRITORY, POPULATIONS

Week 2: Unsettling Colonial Narratives

September 13

Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Michael Witgen, *Seeing Red: Indigenous Land, American Expansion, and the Political Economy of Plunder in North America* (2022) Chapter 1: A Nation of Settlers [35-44 and 80-89]

Nick Estes, *Our History Is the Future* (2019) Chapter 3: War [pp. 107-131]

Elizabeth Ellis, *The Great Power of Small Nations* (2022) Chapter 9: Remembering, Forgetting, and Mythologizing the Petites Nations [pp. 229-243 and 249-254]

Primary Sources:

1. Choose **one primary source from a secondary reading** (for example a map, a painting, a political speech, or a law) to analyze. How does the author use this source as evidence to support their argument?

2. **Choose three** of the following primary sources to analyze:

<https://oursharedfuture.wisc.edu/primary-sources/>

Workshop: What is an archive? How do historians use digitized archives to find primary sources related to particular topics or time periods?

Week 3: Citizens and Subjects: Rethinking 1848

September 20

Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Rosina Lozano, *An American Language* Chapter 4: A Language of Citizenship

Maurice Crandall, *These People Have Always Been a Republic* Chapter 5: Refusing Citizenship: Pueblo Indians and Voting during the United States Territorial Period [pp. 177-189 and 220-225]

Beth Lew-Williams, *The Chinese Must Go* excerpt [pages 153-162]

Primary Sources:

Senecú Pueblo Case before US Mexico Claims Commission (1868)

Luisa Rentería Case before US Mexico Claims Commission (1868)



Juan Cortina Condemns Anglo-Americans for Land Theft (1859)
El Corrido de Juan Cortina (1860s)

Workshop: What is historiography? How can we identify arguments in secondary sources? How do historians frame their arguments as part of a broader conversation in the field?

Week 4: Overseas Empire I: Interpreting the Wars of 1898

September 27

Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Ada Ferrer, *Cuba: An American History* Part V American Interregnum
Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire* Chapter 4 Teddy Roosevelt's Very Good Day
Noenoe Silva, *Aloha Betrayed* (2004) Chapter 4 The Anti-Annexation Struggle

Primary Sources:

President McKinley Asks Congress to Authorize War on Spain (1898)
Emilio Aguinaldo on American Imperialism in the Philippines (1899)
Petitions Against the Annexation of Hawai'i (1897)

Workshop: Finding and interpreting primary sources using online newspaper databases

Week 5: Overseas Empire II: Beyond Annexation

October 4

Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Teemu Ruskola, "Canton is Not Boston: The Invention of American Imperial Sovereignty," *American Quarterly* 57:3 (2005)
Marixa Lasso, *Erased: The Untold Story of the Panama Canal* Chapter 2: The Canal Zone in 1904
Peter James Hudson, *Bankers and Empire: How Wall Street Colonized the Caribbean* Chapter 1: Colonial Methods

Primary Sources:

Secretary of State Hay, Declaration of Open-Door Policy in China (1899-1900)
The May Case, *Guatemala v. United States* (1900)
Roosevelt Corollary to the Monroe Doctrine (1904)
1915 Treaty between the United States and Haiti [focus on the Preamble and Articles I-XI]

Workshop: How can we ask original and compelling historical research questions? Haven't historians already asked it all before? (No!)

PART II: 20TH AND 21ST CENTURY RECONFIGURATIONS

Week 6: Pointillist Empire

October 11



Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Harvey Neptune, *Caliban and the Yankees: Trinidad and the United States Occupation* Chapter 5

Daniel Immerwahr, *How to Hide an Empire* Chapter 21: Baselandia

Rebecca Herman, *Cooperating with the Colossus: A Social and Political History of US Military Bases in World War II Latin America* Chapter 3 Base Labor [excerpt]

Primary Sources:

"Rum and Coca-Cola"—Compare original Lord Invader and Andrews Sisters versions (1945)

Petition from the Marshallese People Concerning the Pacific Islands (1954)

Workshop: Building an Annotated Bibliography

Week 7: Decolonization

October 18

Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Keisha Blaine, *Set the World on Fire: Black Nationalist Women and the Global Struggle for Freedom* Chapter 5: Pan-Africanism and Anti-Colonial Politics

Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future* Chapter 5: Red Power

Johanna Fernández, *The Young Lords: A Radical History* (2020) Chapter 2: Coming of Age in the 1960s

Primary Sources:

Malcolm X's Speech at the Founding Rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (1964)

The Alcatraz Proclamation (1969)

El Plan Espiritual de Aztlán (1969)

Interview with Sylvia Rivera on 1970s STAR and Young Lords Activism (1998)

Workshop: Finding and Interpreting Legal Documents as Primary Sources
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Week 8: From the Cold War to the Wars on Drugs and Terror

October 25

Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Mimi Thi Nguyen, *The Gift of Freedom: War, Debt, and Other Refugee Passages* (2012) Chapter 3: Race Wars, Patriot Acts [excerpt]

Mary Dudziak, "What is a War on Terror?" from *WarTime: An Idea, Its History, Its Consequences* [excerpt]

Lina Britto, *Marijuana Boom* Chapter 5: Two Peninsulas: Narcotics Diplomacy and the War on Drugs

Harvest of Empire Film Screening [in seminar]



Primary Sources:

School of The Americas Training Manual: CIA, *KUBARK Counterintelligence Interrogation*, July 1963
Hamdi v. Rumsfeld (2004)
Valeria Luiselli, *Tell Me How It Ends: An Essay in Forty Questions* Part II: Court (2017)

Workshop: Archives of Global Capitalism

Week 9: Governing Through Debt

November 1

Readings:

Secondary Sources:

Greg Grandin, *Empire's Workshop* Chapter 12: The Third Conquest of America
Ed Morales, "The Roots of Puerto Rico's Debt Crisis—And Why Austerity Will Not Solve It," *The Nation* (July 8, 2015)
Quinn Slobodian, *Crack Up Capitalism* Chapter 10: Silicon Valley Colonialism
Elizabeth Ellis, "Centering Sovereignty: How Standing Rock Changed the Conversation" in *Standing with Standing Rock* (2019)

Primary Sources:

"First Declaration from the Lacandon Jungle, Today We Say 'Enough is Enough!' (Ya Basta!)," EZLN Command (1993)
"Why A Hedge Fund Seized an Argentine Navy Ship in Ghana," *NPR* (October 22, 2012)
"This Fight Has Become My Life, and It's Not Over": An Interview with Zaysha Grinnell (2016)
Bad Bunny, "El-Apagón—Aquí Vive Gente" (2022)

Topic and Research Question due by midnight on Tuesday, November 7 by midnight via Canvas

Workshop: From Research Question to Research Proposal

PART III: WORKING TOWARD YOUR CAPSTONE PROJECT

Week 10: Starting to Think About Your Capstone Project

November 8

Workshop: Preparing for our Research Trip to the WHS

Week 11: Archival Research

November 15

Workshop: Visit to the Wisconsin Historical Society—meet in our usual seminar room and we will walk over to the WHS together

Research Proposal due by midnight on Tuesday, November 14 via Canvas

Week 12: No Class—Thanksgiving Break



November 22

Professor Powers will provide feedback on your research proposal

Week 13: Peer Review

November 29

Paper draft due to Professor Powers and your peer review partner by Tuesday, November 28 at midnight. We will read, discuss, and workshop papers with peer review partners in seminar on November 29.

Workshop: Peer Review of Drafts
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Week 14: Using Peer Review suggestions for Final Revisions

December 6

Week 15: Final Research Presentations

December 13

Special final seminar meeting with conference style presentations in the Pyle Center. Come ready to present your research, argument, and conclusions!

<i>Final Papers are due December 15 by 11:59pm on Canvas</i>
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CAMPUS RESOURCES

THE HISTORY LAB: A resource center where experts (Ph.D. students) will assist you specifically with your history related courses and papers. No matter your stage in the writing process — choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, revising your drafts — the History Lab staff can help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Schedule a one-on-one consultation at <http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>.

THE WRITING CENTER: Another writing resource on campus that provides one-on-one consultations with students to assist them with writing assignments. The writing center is open to all courses (not only history related ones). You can find more information about hours & how to schedule an appointment on their website: <http://www.writing.wisc.edu/index.html>.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These might include strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. University Health Services can help with these or other issues you may experience. Help is always available. You can learn about free, confidential mental health services available to you; call 608-265-6600 (option 2) or visit uhs.wisc.edu.

SURVIVOR RESOURCES: All students deserve to be safe and respected at UW-Madison. Free, confidential resources are available on and off campus for students impacted by sexual assault, sexual harassment, dating violence, and stalking (regardless of when the violence occurred). You don't have to label your experience to seek help. Friends of survivors can reach out for support too. A list of resources can be found at <https://www.uhs.wisc.edu/survivor-resources/>

BADGER RECOVERY: Badger Recovery is a university affiliated recovery community for UW-Madison students in recovery from substance use disorders and their allies. Students in recovery from something other than alcohol and/or drugs may also find our community of support and services helpful and are welcome. To learn more about Badger Recovery, our peer to peer all recovery meetings, or our non-clinical staff support go to uhs.wisc.edu/recovery or email us at recovery@uhs.wisc.edu.

University Health Services

Undergraduate Academic Advising and Career Services

Office of the Registrar

Office of Student Financial Aid

Dean of Students Office