

The Historian's Craft: Migration in World History

University of Wisconsin-Madison

HISTORY 201: spring 2026, 4 credits



Samella Lewis, Migrants, 1967, linoleum cut, Chazen Museum of Art. Depicted are early twentieth century African-Americans migrating to northern cities. Each has their own story, but collectively, they are doing something humans have done since the dawn of time: migrate.

MEETINGS:

Lectures: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:30-3:45 (Ingraham 214)

Discussions: Fridays, various times (see MyUW for your section)

INSTRUCTORS:

Paul Grant - pgrant@wisc.edu; 5212 Humanities - Office hours: Tuesdays, 11-1 and by appointment.

Sagarika Naik (Assistant) – snaik6@wisc.edu; 4272 Humanities – Office hours Tuesdays, 11-1.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course, you will create historical knowledge in the form of original research. The overarching topic is Migration in World History – that is, the study of one of the basic habits of the human species. Building on a theoretical foundation developed in the first half of the semester, in the second half you will conduct an independent research project on cross-community migration, sharing your findings with the class.

Canvas Course URL: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/498887>

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: The Big Picture

Meetings: lecture, 1/21; discussion 1/23.

1/25: Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, chapter 1 (Introduction)

Week 2: Primordial Globalization

Meetings: lectures, 1/26 and 1/28; discussion 1/30.

1/28: In-class Microsoft orientation: please bring a computer to class!

2/1: Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, chapters 2-3

Extra Credit: individual research paper conference #1 (before 3:30 PM on Friday)

Week 3: Agriculture and Trade

Meetings: lectures, 2/2 and 2/4; discussion 2/6.

2/2: Meeting in Memorial Library, room 231. BRING STUDENT ID!

2/6: Discussion sections in Memorial Library, room to be announced.

2/8: Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, chapters 4-5

Register general interests for research paper; identify reference material (Canvas)

Week 4: Ancient Empires and Migration

Meetings: lectures, 2/9 and 2/11; discussion 2/13.

2/15: Read reference or overview material for chosen country

Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, chapters 6-7

Register one key primary source for research paper (Canvas)

Extra Credit: Individual research paper conference #2 (before 3:30 PM on Friday)

Week 5: World Religions and Migration

Meetings: lectures, 2/16 and 2/18; discussion 2/20.

2/22: Submit primary source analysis (OneDrive)

Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, chapter 8

NOTE: Research Proposal due in class next Wednesday (2/25)

Week 6: Slavery and Migration

Meetings: lectures, 2/23 and 2/25; discussion 2/27.

2/25: Research Proposal due in class (hard copy + .docx file in OneDrive).

- 2/27: Discussions: present your research proposal
3/1: Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, chapter 9

Week 7: Settler Colonialism

Meetings: lectures, 3/2 and 3/4; discussion 3/6.

Bibliography project: components due 3/2, 3/4, and 3/6:

- 3/2: Initial bibliography (AI-source list appended to extant sources), paper copies.
3/4: Memorial Library research day (source list fact-checked, revised, augmented).
3/6: Revised + annotated bibliographies, paper copies.

- 3/8: Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, chapter 10

Week 8: Imperialism and Migration

Meetings: lectures, 3/9 and 3/11; discussion 3/13.

- 3/11: Literature Review: BRING TWO PAPER COPIES TO CLASS; submit as Word document in OneDrive
In-class: discuss literature review in table groups
3/15: Read Manning, *Migration in World History*, appendix (Migration Theory)

Week 9: Racial Terror and Migration

Meetings: lectures, 3/16 and 3/18; discussion 3/20.

- 3/16: In pairs/groups: reporting back on peer literature review fact-checking
3/18: Field trip to Chazen Art Museum
3/22: Research Paper: submit detailed outline (OneDrive).

Week 10: Genocide and Migration

Meetings: lectures, 3/23 and 3/25; NO DISCUSSION 3/27.

- 3/25: In-class writing day: BRING A COMPUTER TO CLASS!
3/27: Submit migration theory essay (Canvas)

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SPRING RECESS March 28-April 5

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Week 11: Postcolonial Movements 1: People

Meetings: lectures, 4/6 and 4/8; discussion 4/10.

- 4/6: In pairs/groups: preparing Friday's research presentations
4/8: Complete Research Paper draft due in class (hard copy + .docx file in OneDrive).

Research Symposium: Student Presentations and Peer Comments

4/10: Session 1 (held during regular discussion sections)

4/17: Session 2 (held during regular discussion sections)

Week 12: Postcolonial Movements 2: Languages

Meetings: lectures, 4/13 and 4/15; discussion 4/16.

Week 13: Assimilation

Meetings: lecture, 4/20 and 4/22; discussion 4/24.

Reminder: final paper due next week.

Week 14: Migration over the Generations

Meetings: lecture, 4/27 and 4/29; discussion 5/1.

4/29: In-class group debriefing

5/1: Submit final research paper (hard copy + .docx file in OneDrive).

EXAM WEEK (No exam)

Extra credit: exit interviews (individually, with Dr. Grant) (2 points).

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This course in UW-Madison context:

Catalog Description. Conduct original historical research and convey the results to others. Through engagement with archival materials, become historical detectives; practice defining important historical questions, collecting and analyzing evidence, presenting original conclusions, and contributing to ongoing discussions. Confer individually with and receive feedback from instructors to improve skills of historical analysis and communication in both written and spoken formats. May not be repeated for credit.

Requisites. *Satisfied Communications A requirement. Not open to students with credit for History of Science 211.*

Course Designations and Attributes. *Gen Ed - Communication Part B; 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 4-credit course. The credit standard is met by an expectation of a total of 180 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, library excursions, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. **Global Perspective.** Migration is a constant in world history, but feels new to each person experiencing it. Students will learn how to think through this dynamic, as it manifests in over the centuries and in specific cultures.

2. **Historiographical Thinking.** Through the lens of migration, students will learn how to understand how historical scholarship has evolved in response to present-day needs, such as understanding how labor migration from Africa to Europe challenges what it means to be European.
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. **Peer Review.** Students will learn about the peer review process, including writing and receiving feedback and revising their work.
5. **Cross-Cultural Thinking.** This includes a growing capacity to (1) understand human experience in its global, historical contexts; (2) interpret contemporary events, discussions, and assumptions in light of the complexity of the past, and (3) learn how to effectively understand others, despite differences.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

As noted in the Course Guide, this course is using an Engage eText. Your eText(s) is/are available from the Engage tool in your Canvas course page. We will be using *Migration in World History* (Third Edition) by Patrick Manning and Tiffany Trimmer.

The cost of this eText (plus tax) will be bundled into your tuition. You do not need to purchase this eText from the publisher, however, if you wish to [opt-out](#) of using the eText, please contact me at pgrant@wisc.edu before doing so. If you have already purchased this eText (**must** be the same edition) in a prior course, you will not need to opt-out.

To access your eText(s) and learn more about Engage, follow these steps:

1. In the navigation menu on the left side of your Canvas course, click on **Engage eText**.
2. Select **Launch Unizin Engage** to open the Engage reading platform and access your eText.
3. If you'd like to access the Help menu, do the following:
 - a. Select the **Additional Options** (three vertical dots) icon in the upper right corner of the reader.
 - b. Locate the **Help and Feedback** section.
 - c. Choose **RedShelf Solve (FAQs)** for documentation and how-to's, **Accessibility Support** for assistance with accessibility, or **Submit a Ticket** to submit a support request to RedShelf.

Please familiarize yourself with the Engage platform before the first day of class. Additional resources can be found in the [Unizin eReader User Guide](#) and in the [UW-Madison KnowledgeBase](#).

You will be able to [print](#) the eText if needed (there is no cost to print besides the cost of printing itself), via the Engage tool. A Unizin-branded watermark will appear on the pages. Printed loose-leaf copies of some courses' texts will also be available for an additional charge at the UW Book Store as long as you have not opted out of the program. Check the [UW Book Store's website](#) to see which texts are available to purchase.

If you wish to request an accessible version of the eText, please contact the McBurney Disability Resource Center as soon as possible. More information is available [here](#).

Note 1: Engage works best when viewed online in Firefox or Chrome.

Note 2: This book is common to us all, but is far from the only required reading for this course: you will generate your own reading list for your research project, most of which resides in Memorial Library.

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: research and source analysis, historical writing and revision, and oral communication.

Research and Source Analysis: 30%

Reading responses:

In-class responses to questions about the assigned reading, 5 x 2% 10%

Source analyses:

In-class worksheets analyzing and evaluating historical sources, 4 x 2% 8%

Written work:

Literature Review (week 8; specialist reading on your topic), ca. 750 words 4%

Migration theory (week 10: applying Manning to your research), ca. 750 words 4%

Peer Review:

Fact checking (week 9; responding to peer's annotated bibliography) 2%

Peer presentation comment (week 11 or 12: oral response to peer's presentation) 2%

Writing and Revision: Term paper of original historical research, 3,000-3,500 words 40%

Components:

Register general research interest and identify reference material, 2/8 2%

Identify a key primary source, 2/15 2%

Analysis of key primary source(s) (1 page, due in OneDrive, 2/22) 2%

Research proposal (paper copy due in discussion, 2/27) 4%

Bibliography (5-10 sources, hard copies due in stages, 3/2-6) 4%

Detailed Outline (due in OneDrive, 3/22) 2%

Complete draft (due in OneDrive, 4/8) 4%

Revised Final Draft (due on paper, week 14) 20%

Oral Communication: 30%

Components:

Prospectus presentation (in discussion, week 5 or 6) 3%

Final research presentation (in table groups in lecture, week 12) 3%

Group debriefing (April 29, in table groups in lecture) 4%

Attendance (records kept by Teaching Assistant:

Discussion: 10%

Lecture: 10%

Extra Credit: not required work

Office hours visits with Dr. Grant (5212 Humanities):

Preliminary topic selection, week 2: 1%

Closer topic selection, week 4: 1%

Exit interview, exam week: 2%

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:

Research and Historian's Craft

You will write a 3,000-3,500 word (typically twelve-fifteen pages, if double-spaced at 12 point font) research paper on a theme, individual/family, or method related to cross-community migration (as defined in the textbook by Patrick Manning). You will discuss the topic with your instructors at multiple stages throughout the semester.

To help you break down and prepare for this task, we will learn library research skills and workshop findings; there will be a research proposal of 750-800 words, an annotated source list (bibliography) of 5-10 sources, at least 3 of which peer reviewed, an essay on one or two of your key primary sources, and a complete draft (not a rough 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. At five points in the first half of the semester, you will compose a short, handwritten response to the assigned readings. These responses function as accountability for the readings.

In one of the week 12 lectures, you will give a 5-minute presentation of your research in your table group. You will be graded on the clarity and organization of your mini-lecture, your discipline at adhering to the required time limits, and your flexibility in fielding questions concisely at the end.

Your complete draft will be submitted in week 11, so that you can receive 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 Dr. Grant's mailbox or office on April 29, the final lecture.

There is no rubric: student research will be too methodologically diverse for rubrics to be appropriate. You will instead receive substantial feedback and individual guidance throughout the semester.

Communication and Peer Review

This course satisfies the university's Comm B requirement and thus requires you to work on your skills in public speaking and communication. These come in five 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.

ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES

Microsoft. Students are expected to use Microsoft Office (rather than Google), especially OneDrive, Word, and Teams. If you are not familiar with these professional tools, this is your opportunity to learn, but help is available upon request. Much of your written work will be shared through MS Office.

Canvas. some assignments are disseminated and graded in Canvas (see URL on page 1 above). Do not plan your work according to the due dates in Canvas: most assignments will require offline work (such as library or museum visits).

Classroom Technology. You should bring a computer to class. If you do not have one, you should check out a loaner from the library. At the same time, computers of any variety should remain closed unless we are working together. That is: take notes on paper. Students should not distract other students.

Attendance. Aside from the unpredictable, students are expected to commit to full attendance and participation. Twenty percent of your grade comes from attendance; that score is assigned as a simple percentage of sessions attended. Thus, attending 11 of 13 discussions and 25 of 28 lectures = $8.46\% + 8.92\% = 17.38$ points (= B for that component). Note, however, that much of your grade comes from in-class work—some handwritten, and some oral.

Thus: since you cannot pass this class if you cannot attend, you need to communicate scheduling conflicts with your instructors early in the semester.

Generative Artificial Intelligence. Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and Microsoft CoPilot are very good at assisting in the earliest and final stages of research: at preliminary learning and at polishing writing. They are, at best, only moderate value for the creation of historical knowledge. At worst, they impede its creation.

Your task, in History 201, is to learn to tell the difference.

In this course, you will sharpen your skills as a researcher and writer, in particular by learning to pose compelling research questions and locate high-quality, reliable sources. By relying on AI tools too early in the research process, you short-circuit your ability to think creatively and expansively about which problems really interest you. At best AI presents you with an amalgam of existing knowledge about a topic, but this cannot replace the original thought and discovery that drives the most exciting research. In addition, information provided by AI may be unreliable, and is frequently sourced from internet sites rather than peer-reviewed scholarship.

For these reasons, this course will adopt the following guidelines on generative AI:

- Distrust and Verify. Generative AI models are trained on whatever content we, humans, have posted on the internet. Thus, all AI-generated content is to be treated as worthless unless proven otherwise.
- Do the reading. This is hard work, and the rewards are not immediately apparent. The goal of these assignments is to build up your toolkit of research and analytical strategies, not to produce polished essays.
- For the research paper, you are permitted to use AI tools such as Copilot to polish your language after writing a draft. Please be aware that we will not deduct points for spelling or grammatical errors.

And therefore, this course adopts the following rules:

- You are accountable for everything you submit. AI-generated misinformation is your own. You must be able to substantiate everything you submit. If you cannot, you will get no credit for any assignment in which this misinformation is contained.
 - For example: if you cite a non-existent scholarly article in your bibliography, you will receive a zero in any assignment containing that item.
- You must be prepared to orally explain everything you submit, if called upon.
 - That is: you must not include sources in your bibliography or paper that you yourself have not surveyed. If you cannot defend their inclusion, you will receive a score penalty for any assignment containing that item.
- You will be assigned one or two peers' submitted work to fact check, and will sign your name on that work, risking the same penalty described above.

My purpose in setting these restrictions is to allow you the time and space to develop your own independent voice as a writer, making you a more discerning user of AI.

Peer Review

The gold standard for historical accuracy is peer review—a discipline not without its limitations, but powerful if done right. At a number of points in the semester, you will be tasked with analyzing other students' work: you will fact check their sources, you will respond to their conclusions, and you will reformulate their arguments. Many students are resistant to critiquing others. Generous but rigorous peer review is thus acquired emotional intelligence—and part of your professional skill.

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.

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).