

**HIS 3942/3G22  
History Practicum  
U.S. Crises, 1968 to now  
Spring 2019**

Course Meets MWF period 7 (1:55-2:45 p.m.) in Keene Flint 117  
Instructors Dr. Louise Newman, [lnewman@ufl.edu](mailto:lnewman@ufl.edu)  
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### The History Practicum

“Practicum” means doing practical work, and the history department’s practicum introduces students to the basic practices of historical investigation. It is designed to help students develop fundamental skills in critical reading, analytical thinking, historical research, and argumentative writing, all of which are needed to succeed in the major and which will serve students well in their future endeavors, no matter what profession or occupation they pursue after graduation.

These skills include learning how to:

- effectively communicate ideas about history, both orally and in writing
- find and interpret various kinds of evidence that bear on a historical problem
- identify the thesis-argument in the work of others
- frame a historical problem for consideration and compose lucid analyses of historical documents
- provide complete citations for documentary evidence, following the Chicago Manual of Style
- master editing techniques to improve one’s own writing
- provide constructive feedback on others’ work

### Description of the course topic

Our subject matter enables us to trace the continuities in political, economic and cultural events that have garnered headlines over the 50-year period from 1968 to 2018, beginning with Nixon’s presidency, and extending midway through Trump’s term in office. The course poses a series of basic questions for examination: can past events help us understand present-day events? How do current actors (politicians, journalists, social activists and others) use or misuse historical information? What role might historians play in analyzing current events? Topics will include the nation’s role in global affairs and conduct in the wars against Iraq and Afghanistan; economic crises that have led to increasingly large disparities in wealth; cultural concerns about environmental disasters (past and future), and the criminalization of blacks.

### Course objectives

- Become comfortable with the kinds of logic and inductive reasoning that historians find credible (causes, contingencies, coincidences)
- Understand why dates, facts and details matter so much to historians and how they go about interpreting such information to make an argument about the significance of specific events
- Be able to identify and explain the different kinds of approaches and methodologies that historians use in trying to make sense of historical data
- Learn to work with visual sources-- artifacts, photographs and other historical evidence

- Develop the skills in critical reading and thinking (how to identify and assess the author’s thesis argument and presentation of evidence, how to effectively summarize others’ work, how to paraphrase a thesis-argument), which are necessary to succeed in the history major
- Develop the skills in argumentative writing (how to compose an original thesis, how to structure a formal academic essay, which are necessary to do well in history courses)
- Practice some of the basic steps in researching and writing a paper on an historical topic, including identifying a topic, formulating a historical question about that topic, identifying and analyzing relevant primary sources to help answer the question, coming up with a hypothesis (an answer to the question) and “proving” the hypothesis by supporting it with relevant information and persuasive argumentation
- Learn how to follow instructions and style sheets in order to present historical work in a professional manner, which includes learning how to introduce quotations into an essay and how to format footnotes and bibliographies

### Questions concerning historical argument and methodology discussed in this course

- Why do historians study the past and keep writing about events that are “over”?
- What is the difference between history and historiography?
- What are the essential characteristics of a good historical narrative? Do historical accounts need to be objective? neutral? fair? credible? truthful? How do we know if they are these things?
- Does historiography have to be presented in a particular form or genre (i.e. a written text, such as a book or article) in order for it to have validity or authority as a credible account of history?
- Do we have the same expectations of and standards for historical narratives that are presented in a visual form (films, documentaries, photographs, cartoons, drawings, illustrations) or aural/oral forms (lectures, lyrics, speeches, stories, interviews, oral histories) as we do of written historiography?
- Why are primary sources so essential to understanding what happened and to the writing historical narratives? How do historians interpret such sources? What does a “careful reading” of a primary source entail? What does it mean to contextualize a primary source or an event?
- What is the advantage of using many different (kinds of) sources? Why do historians value accounts that address the same issue/problem from multiple perspectives? Why do historians value accounts that offer multiple causes to explain why change occurs?

### Required readings

The required readings for this course include books, articles published in anthologies or academic journals, and information that appears on websites. There are approximately 150 pages of reading required each work (sometimes more), and some weeks students will also be required to watch a documentary film in addition to the reading assignment.

The following books are required and may be purchased from an area bookstore or an online bookseller.

### Required texts that must be purchased (listed in the order in which they will be read)

- **Rampolla, Mary.** *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. Ninth edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2018. Cost: \$31.29 Amazon Prime to buy, slightly cheaper to rent. The earlier editions are out of date and not as good. Do not buy them no matter how much money you can save by doing so. This is the most important book assigned in the course and it will prove invaluable to you as a history major. Please spend the extra money to purchase the ninth edition. All page references contained in the syllabus are to this edition.
- **Kutler, Stanley I., ed.** *Watergate: A Brief History with Documents*. Second edition. Wiley Blackwell, 2010. Cost: \$27.45 Amazon Prime (used copies available for significantly less.)

- **North**, Oliver L and Novak, William. *Under Fire: An American Story*. Zondervan, 1991. Cost. \$15.29 Amazon Prime (used copies available for significantly less.)
- **Magdoff**, Fred and Yates, Michael. *The ABCs of the Economic Crisis*. New York: Monthly Review, 2009. Cost. \$13.42 Amazon Prime (used copies available for significantly less.)
- **Clark**, Anna. *The Poisoned City: Flint's Water and the American Urban Tragedy*. New York: Metropolitan Books & Henry Holt, 2018. Cost. \$18.21 Amazon Prime (used copies available for significantly less.)
- **One full-length scholarly monograph** on a topic relevant to the course.

#### Articles and book chapters to be downloaded from Course Reserves

- **Alexander**, Michelle. "The Rebirth of Caste," in *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*. Revised Edition. New York: The New Press, 2012, pp. 20-58, 265-270.
- **Bailey**, Beth and Immerman, Richard H., eds. "Introduction" to *Understanding the U.S. Wars in Iraq & Afghanistan*. New York: New York University Press, 2015, 1-17.
- **Byrne**, Malcolm. *Iran-Contra: Reagan's Scandal and the Unchecked Abuse of Presidential Power*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2017, 1-16, 321-326, 335-339., 342-44, 403-11.
- **Dyson**, Michael Eric. "Unnatural Disasters: Race and Poverty," in *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster* New York; Perseus Books, 2005, 1-14, 223-225.
- **Henriques**, Diana B. "Epilogue," from *A First-Class Catastrophe: The Road to Black Monday, the Worst Day in Wall Street History*. New York: Henry Holt, 2017, 282-288, 373-375
- **Kornbluh**, Peter and Byrne, Malcolm, eds., *Iran-Contra Scandal: A Declassified History* New York: The New Press, 1993, v-xii, 1-10.
- **Reich**, Robert. "Critical Lessons We Didn't Learn from the Financial Crisis." *Newsweek*. November 17, 2018. <https://www.newsweek.com/2018/10/05/robert-reich-critical-lessons-we-didnt-learn-financial-crisis-opinion-1123466.html>
- **Reynolds**, Michael A. "The Wars' Entangled Roots: Regional Realities and Washington's Vision," in Bailey and Immerman, eds., *Understanding the U.S. Wars in Iraq & Afghanistan*, New York: New York University Press, 21-53.
- **Olson**, Keith. *Watergate* (2003, 2016), pages to be determined.
- **Stiglitz**, Joseph. *Rewriting the Rules of the American Economy: An Agenda for Growth and Shared Prosperity*. W.W. Norton, 2016, 10-23, 97-122.
- **Woodward**, Bob and Bernstein, Carl. *Final Days*. (1976), pages to be determined.
- **More readings may be added at a future date.**

#### Material accessed from Websites and on-line Archives

- <https://www.archives.gov/research/investigations/watergate/roadmap>
- <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-primary-source/>
- <https://pitt.libguides.com/citationhelp>

In addition, students will be working on research projects that will require that they identify, locate and read additional primary and secondary materials.

#### Documentaries and Hollywood Films (Students will choose one to watch and write about)

- *Inequality for All* (Robert Reich's analysis of the 2008 recession)
- *Inside Job* (2010; Charles Ferguson's analysis of the 2008 recession)
- *An Inconvenient Truth* (Al Gore's discussion of global warming)
- *All the President's Men* (Alan Pakula, 1976; about Watergate scandal)
- *Kill the Messenger* (Michael Cuesta, 2014; based on book by Shou; about journalist Gary Webb's exposure of the Iran-Contra, crack cocaine crisis)
- *The Big Short* (Adam McKay, 2015; based on Michael Lewis' analysis of the 2008 recession)
- *American Made* (Doug Liman, 2017) Hollywood film about an American pilot recruited by the CIA to fly clandestine operations in what will become known as the Iran-Contra affair.)

#### Graded assignments (1000 total points)

Graded assignments include a wide variety of assignments: short writing exercises and the researching of a historical topic, using primary sources. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments must be typed and presented formally. Points will be deducted for not following verbal or written instructions concerning the presentation and submission of an assignment.

- Written instructions and grading rubrics for major assignments (those worth more than 100 points) will be distributed at least one week before the assignment is due.
- Some assignments must be submitted on-line through the course website on Canvas, located at [lss.at.ufl.edu](https://lss.at.ufl.edu), while other assignments must be typed, printed out and handed in (in hard copy) at the start of the class period. Often the instructions state that students are required to submit both electronic and hard copies, so students need to follow instructions carefully, as partial submissions will not be graded.
- Students should keep both hard and electronic copies of all their work in case there are any problems in the submission, grading, or the recording of the grading of assignments.

#### The final course grade is based on 1000 points, determined as follows:

##### Attendance (100 pts)—see attendance policy below.

##### Exercises and Short Essays (400 pts)

- Restate thesis arguments from historical monographs of different lengths (articles and books)
- Paraphrase a paragraph from an historiographical source
- Analyze the value/usefulness of a primary source
- Analyze a photograph
- Analyze how an historian uses a primary source to support/illustrate a point
- Introduce a quotation into a text and cite the source (parenthetical notes, footnotes, endnotes)
- Locating relevant Primary and Secondary Sources for an historical topic and citing them in a bibliography using appropriate, consistent formatting (Chicago Manual of Style is often the preferred format.)
- Peer Review—Commenting in a helpful way on a fellow student's writing

##### Longer Assignments (500 pts)

- Midterm. Analyzing a historiographic conversation among historians (200 pts)
- Final Assignment, Part 1. Prospectus (Research Question, Primary Source Analysis, Preliminary Bibliography (100 pts)
- Final Assignment, Part 2. Final Project (Title Page, Abstract, 5-page paper, Annotated Bibliography (200 pts)

**Extra Credit opportunities**

- Occasionally, students will be able to earn extra points by attending a public lecture.

**Grading Scale**

Letter grades for the course will be assigned according to the following point scale:

Letter Grade	Total Points	GPA Equivalent
A	950-1000	4.0
A-	900-949	3.67
B+	875-899	3.33
B	850-874	3.0
B-	800-849	2.67
C+	775-799	2.33
C	750-774	2.0
C-	700-749	1.67
D+	675-699	1.33
D	650-674	1.0
D-	600-649	0.67
E	<600	0

**Policies regarding attendance, participation and assignments**

- Unlike most other history courses offered by the University of Florida, this course has a significant “workshop” component, which requires students’ presence in class every day. Regular daily attendance is critical to the pedagogy of the course, so attendance will be taken at every class meeting, and there will be penalties in the form of point deductions for absences, lateness and dismissals as discussed below.
- 100 points are devoted to attendance. As a general rule, absences are not excused—they always count. The policy allows for one free absence so that a brief illness or scheduling conflict does not have to be explained or documented. In other words, students may have one absence and still receive the full 100 points. Students who are absent two times will receive 90 points; three absences 80 points, four absences 70 points. Students who are absent five or more times will receive 0 out of these 100 points and additional point deductions may be applied. Habitual lateness may be treated as an absence and points deducted according to the policy stated above. If there are circumstances that will prevent you from arriving to class on time and staying the entire period, please inform your instructors immediately.
- Students are expected to have completed all reading and writing assignments by the beginning of class on the date specified on the syllabus. Whenever possible, students should bring hard copies of the books and articles to class. Students who come to class unprepared to discuss the readings, or without the assignments that are due that day, may be dismissed from class and counted as absent. Any points associated with the session’s activities will be forfeited.
- In general, no late work will be accepted unless accompanied by documentation from the Dean of Students or Health Services of a serious illness. However, in the case of exceptional or unforeseen circumstances, students needing an extension of a deadline may request one from the instructor in advance of the deadline.

- To ensure that students are learning the necessary skills, which build one upon the other, students must complete and submit assignments in the sequence in which they are assigned and will not be allowed to submit a later assignment until all the former assignments have been completed. This means that students must keep up with readings and assignments in order to do well in the course. If unforeseen circumstances arise that may cause you to fall behind, please let the instructor know about those circumstances as soon as possible.

**General course policies**

- Students are expected to arrive on time, be attentive and respectful during class, and remain until class is dismissed. Habitual or severe lateness will be treated as an “absence” and penalized with point deductions (see above). Requirements for class attendance and assignments in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found in the Undergraduate Catalog <<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>>.
- Computers (laptops, tablets, cell phones) are permitted, but students caught using them inappropriately-- e.g., texting, emailing or using social media-- will be asked to leave the classroom and will be counted as absent from the session.
- Students requesting accommodation for disabilities must register with the Dean of Students Office (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/>) and obtain proper documentation to be submitted to the instructor during the first week of the semester. **Instructors are not obligated to grant accommodations after the first week of the semester.**
- The University depends upon students to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course. These evaluations are conducted online <<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>>, typically during the last two weeks of the semester. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <<https://evaluations.ufl.edu/>>.
- All students must adhere to the University of Florida’s standards of academic honesty. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states: “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” A copy of the student code of conduct may be found at <https://www.dso.ufl.edu/scer/process/student-conduct-honor-code>.

The student code of conduct also forbids plagiarism, which includes the following:

- Turning in a paper that was written by someone else (i.e., papers written by another student, a research service, or downloaded off the Internet); or written by you for another course.
- Copying a significant portion of work written by another author without using quotation marks and without acknowledging the source through a commonly accepted style of footnoting.
- Paraphrasing text written by another author without referencing that author within the text and by using a commonly accepted style of footnoting.
- Using someone else’s unique idea or concept without acknowledging the original author and source in the text and by using a commonly accepted style of footnoting.

**Weekly schedule**

**Class meets MWF from 1:55-2:45 in Flint 117. Attendance is required at all class meetings.**

- Mondays** are usually devoted to discussing all the assigned readings for the week.

Students are required to bring hard copies of the week's readings to class, along with their notes and questions about the readings.

- **Wednesdays** will involve discussions of primary sources and/or in-class workshops, with students working individually or in groups on special activities designed to improve their skills in active reading and analytical writing. These activities cannot be made up, so students who are absent from class or who do not bring the required materials will forfeit any points associated with these assignments. We will be consulting Rampolla's text regularly, so students are required to bring this book to class every day. Again, failure to do so may result in dismissal from class, and any points associated with the session's activities will be forfeited.
- **Fridays** are devoted to completing the Wednesday workshops, special campus visits and other fun activities. At various times during the semester, students will be required to visit archives and libraries on campus. On other Fridays, we will do individual and group exercises in class. These exercises are crucial in terms of mastering the required skills needed to do well on the assignments. Again, these activities cannot be made up, so students who are absent from class or who do not bring the required materials will forfeit any points associated with these exercises.

Due to holidays, class will **NOT** be held on the following dates:

- Jan 21 (M) Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday
- Feb 18 (M) Presidents' Day
- Mar 4-8 (M, W, F) SPRING BREAK
- Apr 19 (F) Good Friday

### Weekly Overview of topics and selected readings

(See detailed schedule for a guide to the readings and a full listing of assignments.)

**Week 1.** (Jan 7, 9, 11) Introduction: Headlines and Histories  
Start keeping track of news stories in a journal (due in week 8).  
**Rampolla**, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. Ninth edition. (Bring this book to every class, especially on Fridays), chs. 1 and 2.  
**Assignment Due: News Article with Photograph due Friday**

#### Unit 1. The War on Terror, 9/11

**Week 2.** (Jan 14, 16, 18) 9/11 (2001) as a turning point  
**Bailey** and Immerman, eds. "Introduction," to *Understanding the U.S. Wars in Iraq & Afghanistan*, 1-17. PDF available from course reserve.  
**Rampolla**, chs. 1, 2, 3. (Students need to purchase this text as soon as possible.)  
**Rael's** advice to history majors. Print out the guidelines for how to read a primary source: <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-primary-source/>

**Week 3.** (--, Jan 23, 25) 9/11, continued/ Predatory or Active Reading  
**Reynolds**, "The Wars' Entangled Roots," in **Bailey** and Immerman, eds., *Understanding the U.S. Wars*, pp. 21-53, available from course reserve.  
Reread Rampolla, chs. 1, 2, and 3 and Rael's website, given above.  
Actively Reading and Summarizing a Secondary Source/ **Assignment Due on Monday**

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#### Unit 2. Presidential Cover-ups, 1973, 1986

**Week 4.** (Jan 28, 30, 1) Watergate & the Impeachment of Richard Nixon, 1973  
**Kutler**, ed., *Watergate: A Brief History With Documents* (2010). Students need to purchase this text.  
**Woodward** and Bernstein, *Final Days*. (1976). PDF available on Course Reserves.  
**Keith Olson**, *Watergate* (2003, 2016), PDF available on Course Reserves.  
<https://www.archives.gov/research/investigations/watergate/roadmap>

**Week 5.** (Feb 4, 6, 8) Iran-Contra, Oliver North & Ronald Reagan's Plausible Deniability, 1986  
**North**, *Under Fire: An American Story* (1991). Students need to purchase this text.  
**Kornbluh** and Byrne, eds., *Iran-Contra Scandal: A Declassified History* (1993), excerpt on Course Reserve.  
**Byrne**, *Iran-Contra* (2017), excerpt on Course Reserve.

**Week 6.** (Feb 11, 13, 15)  
**Assignment Due**

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#### Unit 3. Market Failures 1987, 2008 ... 2019?

**Week 7.** (-- Feb 20, 22) Black Monday (October 19, 1987) and the Great Recession of 2008  
**Magdoff** and Yates, *The ABCs of the Economic Crisis* (2009). Students need to purchase this text.  
**William Isaac**, *Senseless Panic* (2010) (lib copy on course reserves)  
**Henriques**, "Epilogue," from *A First-Class Catastrophe* (2017), excerpt on Course Reserve.

**Week 8.** (Feb 25, 27, Mar 1) Preventing Market Failures in the Future  
**Stiglitz**, *Rewriting the Rules of the American Economy* (2016), excerpt on Course Reserve.

Reich, *Beyond Outrage* (2012), excerpt on Course Reserve.  
 Reich, " " excerpt on Course Reserve.  
**Midterm Assignment Due (200 pts)**

**Week 9. (Mar 4, 6, 8) Spring Break –No Classes**

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**Unit 4. Environmental and Racial Crises, 2005, 2014**

**Week 10.** (Mar 11, 13, 15) What do Hurricane Katrina and Flint-Michigan have in common?  
 Clark, *The Poisoned City* (2018). Students need to purchase this text.  
 Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water* (2007), excerpt on Course Reserves

**Week 11.** (Mar 18, 20, 22) Mass Incarceration stemming from Clinton's policies of the 1990s  
 Alexander, "The Rebirth of Caste," in *The New Jim Crow* (2012), excerpt on Course Reserves

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**Unit 5. The Research Paper (Bring Rampolla to every class.)**

**Week 12.** (Mar 25, 27, 29) **Assignment Due**

**Week 13.** (Apr 1, 3, 5) Locating Sources and Taking Notes/ **Prospectus Due (100 pts)**

**Week 14.** (Apr 8, 10, 12) Moving from Topic to Thesis: Formulating a Suitable Research Question

**Week 15.** (Apr 15, 17, 19) Titling your Essay and Refining your Thesis-Argument

**Week 16.** (April 22, 24) Conclusion/ **Final Paper Due (400 pts)**

**Detailed Schedule of Classes, Required Readings and Writing Assignments**

**Wk 1.** (Jan 7, 9, 11). Introduction

**M Headlines versus Histories (Documents, Textual Evidence, Chronologies, Narratives)**

- What's the difference between a primary source that documents an event, a journalistic chronicling of an event and a historical analysis of an event?
- What have been the major headlines since the start of the New Year (2019)? Which of these headlines do you think will become the basis for histories yet to be written?

To do in class: Subscribe to a major daily newspaper of your choice (*New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, etc.) and follow one or two online news outlets with the intent of trying to get different perspectives on the important news items of the day. Start paying attention to the headlines. Choose one story and begin keeping a log of how that story develops over the course of the semester. This log will form the basis of an assignment due later in the semester.

**Reading Assignments: Rampolla, chapter 1, pp. 1-7.** Why Study History (available from Course Reserves)

**W Interpreting Evidence/Analyzing Primary Sources**

**Reading Assignments: Rampolla, chapter 2.** Working with Sources, 8-25.  
 Peruse Patrick Rael's website: <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/>, especially his discussion about "How to Read a Primary Source," <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-primary-source/>

**F Newspaper Article and Photographic Evidence**

**Assignment Due at the start of Friday's class, Jan. 11:**

Be prepared to show your classmates and lead a discussion about a news story that also contains a photograph. Choose a news story that you believe will one day be a primary source for a historical narrative. (consult Rampolla, p. 14, 33-39)

**To Hand in: Two hard copies** of the article and photograph, along with 2 copies of a description of the photograph, including whatever you could find out about who took it and explaining what it shows us-- what historical value might it have in the future? (max word count 300 words). Please be sure to include citations/websites to indicate the sources you used for this assignment, following Chicago Manual style formats, as indicated in Rampolla, 117-151.

(This assignment is ungraded but necessary to be allowed to continue in the course.)

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**Wk 2** (Jan 14, 16, 18) **9/11/2001 as a turning point [Secondary Source analysis]**

**M** What happened on 9/11?

- How long did it take before primary sources pertaining to this event began to appear?
- How long did it take before historical accounts pertaining to this event began to appear?
- What kinds of sources do journalists and historians use to document this event?

**Reading Assignment:** Bailey and Immerman, Introduction to *Understanding U.S. Wars...* in conjunction with Rampolla, Ch.3, pp. 26-31 and esp. Tips for Writers, p. 30 and Patrick Rael's "Predatory" Reading, <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/predatory-reading/>

**Bring to class** (be prepared to hand it in); a print out of Bailey and Immerman's "Introduction," indicating important points with highlighting, underlining, asterisks, etc. Write comments and questions in the margins and write a summary of the first seven pages of this article (minimum word count: 150 words), following guidelines in Rampolla, p. 31. (50 pts)

W What arguments do Bailey and Immerman make about 9/11?

**Reading Assignment:** Re-read Bailey and Immerman, in conjunction with Patrick Rael's "Predatory" Reading, <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/predatory-reading/>

F Workshop: Assessing the Significance of News Stories of 2018.

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