

Syllabus

HISTORY 301.3
Reading and Writing History:
Indigenous America and Smallpox
M&F 1:00-1:20

Dr. Paul Kelton
Fall 2021
Office SBS S-329

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Hours: 2:30-4:00 pm MW
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Description: In-depth training course in the craft of history, with a systematic introduction to methods, analysis, synthesis, and writing. As the gateway course for the History major senior seminar, HIS 301 teaches students how to locate, organize, and analyze primary and secondary sources, distill the information in intelligible and meaningful writing, and convey one's findings in persuasive and articulate oral presentations.

These skills are taught through a close analysis of how historians have analyzed the experience of Indigenous Peoples of the Americas (a.k.a. American Indians or Native Americans) with smallpox, a deadly virus not present in the Americas prior to 1492 but one that accompanied European colonizers after 1492. You may already know that smallpox epidemics did a great deal of damage to Indigenous Peoples, but the topic has proven rather complex to understand. Particular questions arise concerning the timing in which the disease struck particular Native groups, mortality rates from the disease, the validity of European and Euro-American accounts as well as Native oral history that supposedly document the experience, whether smallpox became a weapon that colonizers consciously and deliberately used against Indigenous Peoples, how Natives responded to the deadly disease, the role of the U.S. government in vaccinating Natives, and the relative importance of smallpox compared to other aspects of colonization in facilitating European/Euro-American expansion and Native dispossession.

Course readings will introduce you to the varied ways that historians have studied the topic. In the first part of the course, we will concentrate on the basics of reading and assessing secondary sources and analyzing and using primary sources. In the second part of the course, you will apply these skills to a historical topic of your choosing. Although readings will focus primarily on the Indigenous experience with smallpox from 1492 to 1890, students are welcome to explore other topics as well. I do reserve the right, however, to set limits on what the topics may be; topics too far outside my ability to effectively guide you and topics too broad or too narrow in scope will not be allowed. Nevertheless, I will help you tailor this course to your individual interests.

General education designation(s) (SBC): [Evaluate and Synthesize Researched Information \(ESI\)](#)

1. Locate and organize information from a variety of appropriate sources.
2. Analyze the accuracy of information and the credibility of sources.
3. Determine the relevance of information.
4. Use information ethically and responsibly.

OBJECTIVES

- Read secondary sources critically by analyzing the author’s thesis, arguments, and motives.
- Analyze primary sources by asking questions about their purpose, argument, presumptions, and limitations.
- Improve your writing, especially with regard to the thesis, structure, and arguments.
- Apply the rules and conventions of scholarly writing, including proper citation and grammar.

Required book:

Marius, Richard A. and Melvin E. Page, *Short Guide to Writing About History*, (9th Ed.)

Additional readings will be posted on our Blackboard site. When we are to discuss a reading please bring your copy to class.

Evaluation: (Instructions and rubrics for each assignment will be provided on Blackboard)

40	Papers #1-4: 10 pts each (each paper 2 pages, double spaced)
10	Marius Quiz #1
10	Marius Quiz #2
10	Questionnaire
10	Topic Statement
10	Bibliography
10	Historiography Presentation
10	Primary Evidence Presentation
10	Paper Presentation
10	First Three Paragraphs
10	Rough Draft
10	Feedback on Partner’s Rough Draft
100	Final Paper (10-12 paragraphs, roughly 5-7 pages double spaced)
46	Attendance
54	Participation
<u>40</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
400	Total

Grading Scale: The plus/minus grading scale will be used:

A	400-372	A-	371-360		
B+	359-352	B	351-332	B-	331-320
C+	319-312	C	311-292	C-	291-280
D+	279-272	D	271-240		
F	239-0				

Blackboard: Copies of all course materials (including all readings other than Marius and Page's Short Guide to Writing About History) will be available on the web through Blackboard, at the course site linked to on [Blackboard](#). If you are not familiar with Blackboard and need information about using it, go to <https://it.stonybrook.edu/services/blackboard/>.

Email: Email is one of the ways I will officially communicate with you for this course. It is your responsibility to make sure that you read your email in your official University email account. For most students that is Google Apps for Education (www.stonybrook.edu/mycloud) but you may verify your official Electronic Post Office (EPO) address at: <http://it.stonybrook.edu/help/kb/checking-or-changing-your-email-forwarding-address-in-the-epo>. If you need technical assistance with email issues, please contact Client Support at (631) 632-9800 or supportteam@stonybrook.edu.

Class Schedule

Part I: Your Apprenticeship

Week 1 INTRODUCTION

August 23: First Day of Classes: Introduction to the class and topic

August 27: Introduction to the historiographical problem
Read: Crosby, "Virgin Soil Epidemics"
 Jones, "Death, Uncertainty, and Rhetoric"

Week 2 Timing

August 30: Excerpts from the De Soto Chronicles related to the "Plague of Cofitachiqui"
 John Archdale, "[A Description of Carolina](#) [1707]," pp. 85-99
 Crosby, *Ecological Imperialism*, chap. 9

September 3: Watch "[Native Americans and Foreign Disease](#)"

Week 3 Timing Continued

September 6: No Class Labor Day

September 10: Kelton, *Cherokee Medicine*, intro and chap. 1
 Paper #1: How and why do scholars disagree about the timing of smallpox's arrival?

Week 4 Native Responses

September 13: Various Accounts Related to Cherokees' Experience with Smallpox
 Martin, *Keepers of the Game* (excerpt)

September 17: Kelton, chapter 2
 Paper #2: How and why do scholars disagree about the Natives responses to smallpox?

Week 5 Germ Warfare?

September 20: Various Documents Related to Fort Pitt Smallpox Attempt, 1763
Fenn, "Beyond Jeffery Amherst"

September 24: Kelton, chaps. 3 & 4
Paper #3: What is the significance of the Fort Pitt smallpox incident of 1763?

Weeks 6 Smallpox, Indigenous Peoples, Vaccination, and the American Story

September 27: Various Documents Related to 1831 Epidemic and US Vaccination Act (1832)
Isenberg, "An Empire of Remedy"

October 1: Kelton, chap. 5 and conclusion
Paper #4: How should Euro-American efforts to vaccinate Indigenous Peoples affect our interpretations of U.S. expansion?

Week 7 Apprenticeship Wrap Up

October 4 Writing Tune Ups
Thinking about Independent Work

October 8 No In Class Meeting instead Independent Virtual Scavenger Hunt
Questionnaires Due

Part II: The Journeyman Stage Begins

Week 8 Thinking About a Topic

October 11: NO CLASS FALL BREAK

October 15: Read Marius and Page, A Short Guide to Writing About History, 1-74
Marius Quiz #1
Be Prepared to Share with the Group Your Ideas about Your Topic

Week 9 Selecting a Topic

October 18: How to Write a History Paper
Read Marius and Page, A Short Guide to Writing About History, 75-158
Marius Quiz #2 Due
Statement of Topic Due to Me

October 22: Individual Meetings with Me
Bibliographies Due

Week 10 Identifying Historiographic Significance

October 25: Presentation of historiography (Students 1-8): Deliver a 3-minute oral report on two historians who have addressed your topic. (Need to read one work by each historian; the work can be an article that you read in-depth or a book that you "gut".) What are the main ideas they present about the topic? What sources have they used? Compare and contrast their works? Do their works complement each other, or do they contrast/disagree? What more is needed to understand the topic? Be prepared to answer questions from your classmates for about 5 minutes.

October 29: Presentation of historiography (Students 9-17): see above.

Week 11 Interpreting Primary Sources

November 1: Presentation of one piece of evidence to the class (Students 9-17): Make a copy of a key piece of evidence from a primary source that you have discovered, bring copies for me and each member of the class, and explain to the class in about 3 minutes why what you found is significant, and be prepared to answer questions from your classmates (about 5 minutes).

November 5: Presentation of one piece of evidence to the class (Students 1-8): See above.

Week 12 Putting Pieces Together

November 8: In Class Writing Workshop/Group Activity

November 12: In Class Writing Workshop/Group Activity

Week 13 Presenting Your Work/Testing Your Ideas

November 15: In Class Paper Presentations, Round 1
[5 Minute Presentation (Can use PowerPoint/5 Minutes for Questions)]
Everyone turns in paragraphs #1-3 to me

November 19: In Class Paper Presentations, Round 2

Week 14 Thanksgiving Break

November 22: Independent Work/Optional Consultations with Me

November 26: NO CLASS THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 15 Peer Review

November 29: Rough Drafts (at least 10 paragraphs) Due to Your Partner (and me)

December 3: Rough Drafts Turned Back to Partner (and me)

Week 16 Grand Finale

December 6 Last Day of Classes/Final Papers Due

POLICIES

University Policies:

Student Accessibility Support Center Statement:

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the Student Accessibility Support Center, 128 ECC Building, (631) 632-6748, or at sasc@stonybrook.edu. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and the Student Accessibility Support Center. For procedures and information go to the following website: <https://ehs.stonybrook.edu/programs/fire-safety/emergency-evacuation/evacuation-guide-people-physical-disabilities> and search Fire Safety and Evacuation and Disabilities.

Academic Integrity Statement:

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty is required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html

Important Note: Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, will be reported to the Academic Judiciary.

Critical Incident Management:

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of University Community Standards any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. Further information about most academic matters can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin, the Undergraduate Class Schedule, and the Faculty-Employee Handbook.

Course Policies:

Understand When You May Drop This Course:

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider withdrawing from a course. Refer to the Stony Brook Academic Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration: http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/registrar/calendars/academic_calendars.

- [Undergraduate Course Load and Course Withdrawal Policy](#)
- [Graduate Course Changes Policy](#)

Incomplete Policy:

Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. Circumstances must be documented and significant enough to merit an incomplete. If you need to request an incomplete for this course, contact me for approval as far in advance as possible.

Course Materials and Copyright Statement:

Course material accessed from Blackboard, SB Connect, SB Capture or a Stony Brook Course website is for the exclusive use of students who are currently enrolled in the course. Content from these systems cannot be reused or distributed without written permission of the instructor and/or the copyright holder. Duplication of materials protected by copyright, without permission of the copyright holder is a violation of the Federal copyright law, as well as a violation of Stony Brook's Academic Integrity.

Online Communication Guidelines and Learning Resources:

Maintain professional conduct both in the classroom and online. The classroom is a professional environment where academic debate and learning take place. I will make every effort to make this environment safe for you to share your opinions, ideas, and beliefs. In return, you are expected to respect the opinions, ideas, and beliefs of other students—both in the face-to-face classroom and online communication. Students have the right and privilege to learn in the class, free from harassment and disruption. The course follows the standards set in the Student Code of Conduct, and students are subject to disciplinary action for violation of that code. If your behavior does not follow the course etiquette standards stated below, the grade you receive for a posting may suffer. I reserve the right to remove any discussion messages that display inappropriate language or content.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Academic and Major Advising (*undergraduate only*): Have questions about choosing the right course? Contact an advisor today. Phone and emails vary—please see website for additional contact information; website: <https://www.stonybrook.edu/for-students/academic-advising/>

Academic Success and Tutoring Center (*undergraduate only*):
<https://www.stonybrook.edu/tutoring/>

Amazon @ Stony Brook: Order your books before classes begin. Phone: 631-632-9828; email: Bookstore_Liaison@stonybrook.edu; website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/bookstore/>

Bursar: For help with billing and payment. Phone: 631-632-9316; email: bursar@stonybrook.edu; website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/bursar/>

Career Center: The Career Center's mission is to support the academic mission of Stony Brook University by educating students about the career decision-making process, helping them plan and attain their career goals, and assisting with their smooth transition to the workplace or further education. Phone: 631-632-6810; email: sbucareercenter@stonybrook.edu; website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/career-center/>

Counseling and Psychological Services: CAPS staff are available by phone, day or night. <http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/caps/>

Ombuds Office: The Stony Brook University Ombuds Office provides an alternative channel for confidential, impartial, independent and informal dispute resolution services for the entire University community. We provide a safe place to voice your concerns and explore options for productive conflict management and resolution. The Ombuds Office is a source of confidential advice and information about University policies and procedures and helps individuals and groups address university-related conflicts and concerns. <http://www.stonybrook.edu/ombuds/>

Registrar: Having a registration issue? Let them know. Phone: 631-632-6175; email: registrar_office@stonybrook.edu; <http://www.stonybrook.edu/registrar/>

SBU Libraries: access to and help in using databases, ebooks, and other sources for your research.

- Research Guides and Tutorials: <http://guides.library.stonybrook.edu/>
- Getting Help: <https://library.stonybrook.edu/research/ask-a-librarian/>

Student Accessibility Support Center: Students in need of special accommodations should contact SASC. Phone: 631-632-6748; email: sasc@stonybrook.edu; <https://www.stonybrook.edu/sasc/>

Support for Online Learning: <https://www.stonybrook.edu/online/>

Writing Center: Students are able to schedule face-to-face and online appointments. <https://www.stonybrook.edu/writingcenter/>