

**HIS 301.03**  
**History of Mineral Mining Practices and Environmental Health Impacts**

Satisfies: ESI

M/W, 6:30 – 7:50 PM

Professor Mark Chambers

This course offers an introduction to historical research and writing for history majors. We will practice “thinking like historians” and mastering its core competencies. As our object of practice, we will examine the historical aspects of various types of mineral mining and practices. Since the time of John Smith until today, the Americas have been perceived as one of the earth’s greatest storehouses of industrial metals, coal, and minerals. To take one example from today, the EV battery depends on five critical minerals: lithium, cobalt, manganese, nickel, and graphite. Mining history in the Americas extends back into pre-Columbian times, and we will explore the many changes in the last 150 years or so with the advance of mechanized techniques to extract and refine minerals for global demand. Throughout this period, mining and refining have created negative environmental and health impacts, from worker deaths to polluted air and water. Although readings focus primarily on the U.S., students are welcome to explore other time periods and countries. We will tailor the course to your individual interests.