



History 591.01E & 591.1SE  
Historical Methods (CRN 20115 & 20117)  
Spring 2026 Syllabus

**Instructor:** Dr. Jessica Brannon-Wranosky

**Class Meets:** Wednesdays 4:30-7:10 PM

**In Building/Room:** Ferguson SS Room: 304 and on Zoom (link will be provided for Section 1SE students)

**Office Located In** Ferguson Social Sciences (SS) 107

**Office Hours:** Dr. Wranosky's office hours starting November 11, 2025 are available in Navigate360. The link and instructions are listed on the homepage of the content Welcome Message in your D2L class.

**Email:** [Jessica.Wranosky@etamu.edu](mailto:Jessica.Wranosky@etamu.edu) (Email is the best way to reach me)

**D2L Course Website:** located inside "MyLeo" inside your "Apps"  
(<https://leoportal.tamuc.edu/>)

<b>COURSE INFORMATION</b>
---------------------------

**Please Note—**There is also a No AI policy for this course and this is a reading intensive course with assignments due weekly.

**REQUIRED CLASS MATERIALS:**

- 1) REQUIRED—*A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Eighth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers* (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing), by Kate L. Turabian (ISBN 978-0226430577). University of Chicago Press. MUST BE 9th Edition.
- 2) REQUIRED—*The Elements of Style*, Fourth Edition, by William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White.
- 3) OPTIONAL PURCHASE—*Historical Research in Archives: A Practical Guide* by Samuel J. Redman published by the American Historical Association (978-0872292024).
- 4) Students will need access to Microsoft Word, Google Docs (saved as a .docx to upload to the class), or other word processing software that can have files saved as .docx
- 5) The ability to travel to and access archival research materials in person at a publicly accessible repository (this will be discussed further in class).
- 6) The ability to take digital images of some sort of certain research materials for inclusion in the course portfolio (this will be discussed further in class).
- 7) Access to student email.
- 8) A reliable computer/laptop/compatible tablet with reliable internet access to take the course and do each week's classwork.

**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to the methods of historical research, including the framing of research questions; the location, analysis, and evaluation of sources; the construction of argument and counter-argument; and the presentation of results. The goal of this course is to guide each student through the

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

preparation of a conference-length paper or publishable article as well as the process of proposing that paper to an appropriate conference or scholarly journal. Students must successfully complete HIST 590 and HIST 591 or have successfully completed either HIST 590 or HIST 591 and be enrolled in the other before attempting to take their departmental qualifying exams.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

Students will demonstrate their understanding of processes of conducting and utilizing primary historical research.

<b>COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>		
<b>Explanation of Evaluation Criteria:</b>		
<b>Research Paper</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>Grade Breakdown:</b>
<b>Research Portfolio</b>	<b>20%</b>	A = 89.5-100
<b>Ind. Peer Review &amp; Presentation, &amp; Class Attendance and Participation</b>	<b>30%</b>	B = 79.5-89.4
<b>Semester Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	C = 69.5-79.4
		D = 59.5-69.4
		F = 0-59.4

**Required Readings:** All of us will read and discuss the books on the list. They are available for purchase at the campus bookstore, through the Internet, and at many regional book retailers.

**TURNITIN.COM:** All typed assignments, exams, papers, and reviews must be uploaded to the appropriate listing in the course’s turnitin.com space available through the dropbox inside the D2L course.

**Research Paper and Pieces (50% of the final grade):** Students will conduct primary and secondary research on an approved topic and utilize this research in the original creation of a primary research paper of between 6000-7500 words. This word count equates to approximately 20-25 pages of reasonable font, unjustified, with one-inch margins. The 20-25 pages includes a bibliography (not a works cited—there is a difference), all notes, illustrations, and images, and associated text boxes. **The body of the paper (excluding the bibliography, illustrations, notes, images, and textboxes) must be at least 3000 words, but will likely be more to fulfill the larger objective of the assignment.** The paper with all inclusions may not be more than 35 pages—no exceptions (cover pages do not count). The purpose of this assignment is to produce a piece of original research appropriate for either delivery at a conference or submission to an academic journal in article length. Most conference papers are 2800-3000 words (9-10 pages of body text; the author does not read notes/citations), and most journal articles are between 20-30 pages body text.

Additionally, this course is designed as an overview for historical research and professional methods, and as such there is not enough time during the semester to provide intense training on any one method. Therefore, because of the importance of proper, correct, and ethical oral history methods training to protect both interviewers and interviewees—live human research subjects, and because there is not enough time to commit to sufficient oral history training during the semester for this specific course—NOTE: The long standing rule for HIST 591 from the beginning has been and will continue to be that—students will not be allowed to conduct oral history interviews for their research paper, portfolio, or other work for this course, and students will not be allowed to use oral histories they

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

conducted as the interviewers for any work in this course. Disregarding this rule will disqualify the student's research paper for consideration in determining the final term grade, which will automatically result in a failing grade for this course. As humanities/social science scholars, historians should strive to do no harm. As such, proper training in methods and procedures and their implementation is key to the professionally responsible practice of academic history. Students may use publicly available oral history transcripts as part of their research as long as the student was neither the interviewer nor the interviewed in the taking of the oral history, and the oral history was taken prior to the beginning of the course. "In the author's/student's possession" is not considered publicly available for any resource including oral histories.

Further information regarding the research paper assignment will be provided to students verbally by the professor in class and in separate documents available in the online course shell. All instructions are considered official guidelines for the purpose of evaluation and learning. Also—see sections regarding Class Specific Procedures on page 5 of this syllabus and the University and Course Specific AI Use Policy on page 7 of this syllabus.

**Research Portfolio (20% of the final grade):** Students will complete a series of assignments connected to archival and digital research training, which they will show proof of their completion and participation at the end of the summer semester in a research portfolio. Portions of this portfolio will include a research proposal, a working annotated bibliography, a research trip plan and budget, copies of finding guides/aids and physical archival and primary research, copies of digital research, and portions of students' own individual writing placing their research into historiographical context. More information regarding this assignment will be provided to students in a separate document.

**Responsible Conduct of Research Online Training (part of the Research Portfolio grade):** All students in the course are required to undergo online Responsible Conduct of Research training offered by the Texas A&M University-Commerce entitled, "Humanities Responsible Conduct of Research Course 1." Please go to <https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/> and create an account using your university email address. You may then need to add an affiliation—you will add Texas A&M University-Commerce. Once done, you will click View Courses for Texas A&M University-Commerce. You will then enter into the system and then click Add a Course at the bottom of the page under the "Learner Tools for Texas A&M University-Commerce". Then, for Question 1—click the "Humanities Responsible Conduct of Research Course" button. For Question 2—click the "Students conducting no more than minimal risk research" button. Skip Question 3 and skip Question 4, and click "Not at this time" for Question 5. Then click submit.

This is an activity for which students will need to reserve time to complete. It takes several hours. Students must complete this successfully by the due date, email a pdf copy to Dr. Wranosky of the completion certificate on or before the night it is due in order to receive permission from the instructor to continue in the course. This training counts as the required training by the Texas A&M University-Commerce Graduate School and Department of History, and the printed copy of the passing results need to be included in the student's research portfolio for the course at the end of the semester. 80% is considered a passing score. Anything lower, and the student will need to retake the course until a passing score is achieved. If any further training is required for thesis work or other courses, the student will need to work that out with their thesis chair or the professor for the other course. A copy of the certificate must also be included in the portfolio due at the end of the semester.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

**Individual Peer Review & Presentations AND Weekly Group Peer Reviews:** All Students will turn in the final copy of their research paper with correctly formatted cover page, foot/endnotes, page numbers, and embedded images and charts to the class via the corresponding discussion form in an attachment in either Microsoft Word and/or pdf format at the beginning of the class the night they are all due. All students are required to digitally share a copy of each of paper for each of their classmates and one for the professor. Each student will bring a copy of each classmates' paper line by line edited for content, grammar, style and format by the class designated for each paper. We will discuss approximately 2 1/2 papers per night. Each student will also serve as an **individual peer reviewer (part of the semester grade)** for one other classmate. This individual peer reviewer will lead the discussion with a 10 minute presentation on the paper being discussed giving a quick summary introducing the paper and its author, providing a brief overview of suggestions for improvement of the paper AND pointing out strengths and successes of the paper. A print copy of the lead peer-reviewer presentation comments and a Xerox copy of the lead-peer reviewer's hand edits of their peer's research paper will be due as part of the research portfolio. The professor will want to see the peer reviewer briefly prior to class the night of the presentation. For the lead peer reviewer(s) presenting on the last night of class, you will need to have these things completed and turned in as part of your research portfolio.

The peer review process, as all academic reviewing, is not personal and should not be aimed or taken as such—emotional outbursts or disrespect of the professor, fellow students, or guest speakers will not be tolerated in any form or at any time during any portion of the class and may result in the student performing such behavior being dismissed from the class meeting immediately, withdrawn from the course, and academic misconduct charges being filed against the student with the University. Peer Reviews and Reports are part of both the attendance and participation grades and the Research Portfolio, and thus, they need to be taken seriously and effectively utilized.

**Attendance and Class Participation:** Class attendance is crucial to your success in this course. Developmental activities occur every day this class meets, and absences will adversely affect your grade. Habitual absences and tardiness are unacceptable. It is highly encouraged that you are in class promptly so that you do not miss anything or disrupt the rest of the students. Additionally, participation in the class and online is a large part of this portion of the grade. Each student must be involved in both in class and online discussions in order to receive credit for class participation. Simply being physically present is not enough. If a student does not participate in class regularly each week, that week's credit is not earned by the student. Furthermore, if a student is caught using email, accessing non-class related websites, or social networking of any kind during lecture or class activities, the entire class gets a fair warning, no second chance will be issued. On the second occurrence, the student will receive an F as their daily grade. At any time, the professor reserves the right to ban technological devices from classroom use.

Please do not wear headphones turned on or off during class. Have all mobile communication devices turned to silent and put away during all class meetings.

**!!Class "Attendance" and Participation:** Participation both in person and online is crucial to your success in this course. Developmental activities occur every day this class "meets," and "absences" will adversely affect your grade. Habitual "absences" and "tardiness" are unacceptable. Yet, attendance is not enough—Simply being physically present is not enough.. You are graduate students in professional academic training, thus regular, relevant, and insightful verbal participation (both oral and written) is absolutely necessary for your success in this course. Participation in the class is a large part of this portion of the grade.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

**!!Student Conduct and Tone (Online and In Person):** Students are required to respect their instructor and fellow students without exception. This includes using respectful tones and word choices and not over dominating class conversations either online or in person. Students will get one warning from the instructor regarding disrespectful or inappropriate behavior. On the second infraction, a student may be required to undergo disciplinary action, which may include removal from the course.

**Class Calendar and Dates:** While it is highly unlikely that the dates for the reading and assignments would change, I reserve the right to do so if the need presents itself. Any such changes will be announced in the announcements section on the course website homepage. The class calendar will be made available online in the D2L course.

**Accommodations:** This course is designed specifically with most accommodation requests in mind. Having said that, students who have accommodation needs documented and registered with the SDS Office at ETAMU will need to contact the instructor of the course via email for instructions on how to access alternative primary source analysis turn in instructions according to their modification requirements.

#### TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS— LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool:

[https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom\\_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu](https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu)

#### ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or [helpdesk@etamu.edu](mailto:helpdesk@etamu.edu).

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

#### COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor.

Emailing the professor's university email address ([Jessica.Wranosky@etamu.edu](mailto:Jessica.Wranosky@etamu.edu)) is the very best way to reach Dr. Wranosky. In every email, please make sure to provide your full name at the end, which course you are enrolled in, and a description of what your request or question is.

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Dr. Wranosky will communicate with students through the email address they have on file in MyLeo (make sure yours is up to date and working throughout the semester) and D2L announcements. Please check these areas daily and before attending class and throughout the week. If an emergency arises, Dr. Wranosky will post the announcement for the class in one or more of these locations.

In all forms of class communication including all online forums, students are expected and required to maintain a respectful tone and use semiformal to formal language.

## COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

**Audio/Video Recording of Lectures and Class Meetings Policy:** Students in the class have the right to expect privacy and security in their learning environments. Therefore, students will not create audio or video recordings of the materials without explicit professor permission. Further, no photographs, audio or video of the course may be uploaded or shared in any environment online or otherwise—including AI software or online notetaking platforms.

### **AI Use in this Course:**

**NOTE: Use of AI for this course is not allowed in any way. No language spinners. No content creators. ALSO: Do not upload any information from this course to any AI software or website—that is considered academic dishonesty and/or intellectual property theft.**

Uploading any content from this course (including exam review information, exam questions, any sound or video files of anyone in the class, lecture note information, lecture note outlines, and/or any content from the publisher's websites or textbooks) to AI software (including DALL-E, ChatGPT, Grammarly, Grok, etc., breaks copyright laws. To do so is illegal. AI software companies take ownership and use rights of any words, phrases, or files uploaded or used by their software, and students do not own any of the content from this course except for their own student created work. All AI software tracks users, and there are ways to know who uploaded what content. To break such laws is against university student code of conduct, as well as being an illegal action, and proper disciplinary procedures will be taken.

### **AI Use in Courses (Campus Statement):**

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there may be legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course. Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructor's guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed. In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

**Class Calendar and Dates:** While it is highly unlikely that the dates for the reading and assignments would change, I reserve the right to do so if the need presents itself. Any such changes will be

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

announced in class or via the course website. The reading and writing assignments are due at the *start of class* and considered late thereafter.

### **University Specific Procedures**

#### **Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

#### **ETAMU Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

#### **Academic Integrity**

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

#### **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

#### **Office of Student Disability Resources and Services**

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu)

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.etamu.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **Nondiscrimination Notice**

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.etamu.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

### **East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health**

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.etamu.edu/counsel](http://www.etamu.edu/counsel)



<http://telusproduction.com/app/5108.html>

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*

<b>ADDITIONAL HELPFUL RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS</b>
--

**Parking:** If you have parking issues (including not being able to find a parking space) there are a number of general and student lots available on campus, but if you need further help please contact the East Texas A&M University Bursar's Office to obtain information on getting a parking permit. Therefore, parking issues should not cause tardiness or absence.

**Illness:** If you have health related issues (including needing a physician's attention and documentation for missed class/assignments) the East Texas A&M University Student Health Services Center is located in Henderson Hall. By paying student fees, you have the right to see a physician free of charge or for a nominal fee. Student Health Services is located in Henderson Hall, across from Prairie Crossing, on the corner of Lee St. and Monroe St. Their phone number is (903) 886-5853.

**A Detailed Reading Schedule & Due Dates will be provided inside the course D2L online class calendar.**

**The Final Meeting for this class is scheduled according to the final exam schedule, and will occur Wednesday, May 6, 2026, during the regularly scheduled class time.**

**Have a good semester, and please feel free and empowered to approach us with any questions.**

*The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.*