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# Texas History

HIST 4320 | MWF 12:20-1:15pm | Ratliff Building South 01031 | No Prerequisites

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**Professor:** Dr. Tim Seiter | **Email:** TSeiter@UTTyler.edu | **Office:** CAS 130 | **Hours:** Appt.

This course surveys significant themes and events in Texas history. We will explore well-trodden subjects such as the Texas Revolution, and lesser-known, but just as significant events such as the Battle of Medina, La Matanza, and the forced removal of Native peoples from Texas. Throughout the semester, students will engage in an interactive learning experience. For example, we will dedicate an entire week to a “Reacting to the Past”-style role-playing game focused on Spanish Texas. By the end of the course, students will understand how events from before the twentieth century continue to shape Texas today.

## Learning Outcomes

1. Understand and reflect on how Texas came to be.
2. Recognize that history is far less objective than most make it seem.
3. Identify where to find accurate sources of information on Texas.
4. Think critically and creatively about a complex array of subjects and themes, including environmental change, fear mongering, Native dominance, and racial discrimination.
5. Learn that *everything* has a history.
6. Become aware of what professional historians do for a living.

# Assignments

## Reading Reports - 30%

- Answer questions about the assigned readings, submit your answers before class, and discuss the readings during class.
- Example: <http://tinyurl.com/rz7tz49m>.

## Grading Scale

A: > 89.5  
B: 79.5 - 89.4  
C: 69.5 - 79.4  
D: 59.5 - 69.4  
F: 59.4 or below

## Discussion Leader - 10%

- Choose a day to lead discussion, review the assigned materials, and guide our class conversation.
- Signup sheet: <https://tinyurl.com/ea3k58mf>

## Role Playing Participation - 10%

- Fully participate in the Spanish Texas role-playing game in Week 5. If you cannot attend, you will instead complete a book review assigned by Dr. Seiter.

## A History of Something Texan - 30%

- Write and present a history of something Texan to the class.
- Full instructions: <https://tinyurl.com/wehun58u>

## Final Connection Exam - 20%

- Connect the class's major themes in a final essay that you can complete at home.
- Full instructions: <https://tinyurl.com/4f848ysz>

*Due dates for every assignment are labeled on the course calendar below.*

## Extra Credit

**Academic Events:** A multitude of UT Tyler departments regularly host public lectures and events on campus. Students may receive up to *one* point on their final grade for doing the following: (1) Provide evidence that you attended the entire event. (2) Write an essay of at least 300 words that provides the lecture's primary argument(s), a summary of content, and a discussion of at least one way in which the presentation relates to a historical topic from our course. (3) Email me the essay within two weeks of the event.

**Pop Quizzes:** Periodically throughout the semester, I will distribute a pop quiz to our class. If you pass that pop quiz (70% or higher), I will drop your lowest reading report grade.

## Class Policies

**AI:** In rare cases, generative AI may be used with prior instructor permission and appropriate attribution. If permission is not obtained and AI usage is detected, then the assignment will receive a zero, and the student will be reported to the UT Tyler Honor Council. The student who cheated may also receive an immediate “F” for the course.

**Attendance:** I will keep attendance, but I will not penalize you for missing class. However, the greater the number of classes you skip, the more difficult it will be to pass.

**Late Work:** All assignments received late (without an excused absence) will receive a 10-point deduction from the total grade for every 24-hour period they are late, beginning at the due date/time. Assignments received more than five days late (without communication with the professor) will receive a grade of "zero."

## Readings & Schedule

All of the required readings are freely available on Canvas.

Date	Day of Week	Topic	Theme	Readings/Due Dates
8/25	Monday	<b>Class Introduction:</b> Expectations	Subjectivity	
8/27	Wednesday	<b>Discussion:</b> The Historian's Profession	Subjectivity	
8/29	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> The Power of History and How to Cite Properly	Subjectivity	William Arens, <i>The Man-Eating Myth</i>
<b>Week 2</b> (millions of years ago-1600s)				
9/1	Monday	Labor Day	Environmental History	
9/3	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> Texas's Pre-Human Landscape and The Journey to Texas	Environmental History	
9/5	Friday	<b>Activity:</b> The Little Ice Age in Texas	Environmental History	Barr, "There's No Such Thing as Prehistory"
<b>Week 3</b> (~30,000 years ago-1680s)				
9/8	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> Native Peoples of Texas and Their Trade Routes	Native Peoples	[Census Day]
9/10	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Blackspot	Native Peoples	

9/12	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Native Peoples	Andrés Reséndez, <i>A Land So Strange</i>
<b>Week 4 (1690s-1700s)</b>				
9/15	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> Sieur de La Salle	Imperial Contests	
9/17	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Talons and the Spanish	Imperial Contests	
9/19	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Imperial Contests	Huntington and Franklin, "The Talon Brothers' Interrogation"
<b>Week 5 (~1700s)</b>				
9/22	Monday	<b>Lecture and Activity:</b> Spanish Texas Roleplaying Game	Spanish Texas	
9/24	Wednesday	<b>Activity:</b> Spanish Texas Roleplaying Game	Spanish Texas	
9/26	Friday	<b>Activity:</b> Spanish Texas Roleplaying Game	Spanish Texas	[No Readings]
<b>Week 6 (1810-1850s)</b>				
9/29	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> The End of Spanish Texas	Mexican Texas	
10/1	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Battle of Medina	Mexican Texas	
10/3	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> <i>Changing National Identities at the Frontier</i>	Mexican Texas	Andrés Reséndez, <i>Changing National Identities at the Frontier</i>
<b>Week 7 (1820s-1830s)</b>				
10/6	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> Westward Expansion, Stephen F. Austin, Filibusters,	Stealing Texas	
10/8	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> Those We Know, and Those We Don't	Stealing Texas	
10/10	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Stealing Texas	<i>Forget the Alamo, The 1836 Project, and the Texas State Historical Association</i>
<b>Week 8 (~1830s)</b>				
10/13	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Texas Rangers and The Karankawas	Native Erasure	
10/15	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Cherokee, the Tonkawa, and other Tyler-adjacent Natives	Native Erasure	
10/17	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Native Erasure	Kelly Himmel, <i>The Tonkawas and Karankawas</i>
<b>Week 9 (~1840s)</b>				



10/20	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Comanches	Mexican-American War	[Last Day to Withdraw]
10/22	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Mexican-American War	Mexican American War	
10/24	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Mexican American War	Brian DeLay, <i>War of a Thousand Deserts</i>
<b>Week 10 (~1860s)</b>				
10/27	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> Enslavement in Texas	Civil War	
10/29	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> Texas's Involvement	Civil War	
10/31	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Civil War	Annette Gordon-Reed, <i>On Juneteenth</i>
<b>Week 11 (1870s-1900s)</b>				
11/3	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Failures of Reconstruction	Racial Discrimination	Writings of John Reagan (1865) and the Colored Men's Convention (1873)
11/5	Wednesday	<b>Activity:</b> The Makings of Lynching Culture	Racial Discrimination	
11/7	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Racial Discrimination	Terry Anne Scott, <i>Lynching and Leisure</i>
<b>Week 12 (1870s-1930s)</b>				
11/10	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> Railroads and Cattle	Changing Economies	
11/12	Wednesday	<b>Lecture:</b> Oil and Timber	Changing Economies	
11/14	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	Changing Economies	<i>Giant Under the Hill</i> or <i>Gusher</i> Documentary [Annotated Bibliography Due]
<b>Week 13 (1900s-1920s)</b>				
11/17	Monday	<b>Lecture:</b> The Texas Rangers	Racial Discrimination	
11/19	Wednesday	<b>Watch:</b> La Matanza (1910-1920)	Racial Discrimination	
11/21	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	U.S. Aggression	Monica Muñoz Martínez, <i>The Injustice Never Leaves You</i>
<b>Week 14 (1910s-1950s)</b>				
11/24	Monday	Bonnie and Clyde in Texas	World Wars	
11/26	Wednesday	Texas and Texans in World War II	World Wars	
11/28	Friday	<b>Discussion:</b> Student-led.	World Wars	Ben Johnson, <i>Texas</i>

Week 15 (1950s-Present)				
12/1	Monday	Student Project Presentations	History of Something Texan	
12/3	Wednesday	Student Project Presentations	History of Something Texan	
12/5	Friday	Student Project Presentations	History of Something Texan	History of Something Texan Due
Week 16				
TBD	12/8 — 12/12	Final Exam and Final Day (TBD)	Finals	Final Connection Exam

*The class schedule is subject to change throughout the semester.*

## Other Syllabus Statements

**Academic Honesty (and Dishonesty):** Violations of the UT Tyler Honor Code will be acted upon in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in the Student Handbook. Any act of academic dishonesty (plagiarism or cheating) will result in an immediate grade of zero on the assignment and be reported to the UT Tyler Honor Council. The student who cheated may also receive an immediate "F" for the course.

**Disability Accommodations:** Students who need academic accommodations for a disability must first register with the UT Tyler Office of Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR). Students can visit <https://www.uttyler.edu/academics/success-services/disability-services/> to begin the process. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, but rather require advance notice in order to implement.

**Sexual Harassment:** All forms of sexual harassment, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence and stalking, are violations of UT Tyler's Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy and may also violate Texas law. Students who wish to file a complaint or to receive more information about the grievance process may contact Blake Bumbard, UT Tyler's Title IX Coordinator, at [bbumbard@uttyler.edu](mailto:bbumbard@uttyler.edu) or 903.565.5760. Please note that faculty and staff are mandatory reporters. If students notify faculty or staff of sexual harassment, they must report it to the Title IX Coordinator.

**Religious Observance:** Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence.

**Medical-Related Absences:** To ensure academic continuity and avoid any course penalties, students should follow procedures described by their instructors in order to be provided with appropriate modifications to assignments, deadlines, and exams.

**Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities:** Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled university extracurricular activity will be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments that were missed as a result of their participation. However, it is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements for make-up work with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examinations or other missed assignments.

**Mental Health Resources: On-Call and Ongoing Counseling Services:** Throughout the academic year, students may encounter different stressors or go through life experiences that impact their mental health and academic performance. Students who are in distress or have concerns about their mental health can schedule a same-day or next-day appointment to speak with a counselor by calling Counseling Services. Counselors are available at any time, day or night for students in crisis at this number: 903.566.7254.

Additionally, for any kind of crisis, you can reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline/Crisis Text Line by calling or texting 988. You can also reach Trans Lifeline at 877.565.8860.