

CAPSTONE: HISTORY AND MEMORY

FALL 2025

HI 460-01

MW 12:30

S-326

INSTRUCTOR: DR. TONA HANGEN

WORCESTER STATE UNIVERSITY

4 CREDITS



COURSE OVERVIEW

Description

The History capstone is the culmination of your Major and invites you to pull together your skills, knowledge, and interests in a small seminar setting focused on a substantive theme. This semester, we consider intersections of **history and memory**, an important and relevant subfield of our discipline. This can include such topics as historic commemoration, cultural memory of the past, how historic sites (or websites / museums / curricula) narrate and present the past, and cultural conflict over what a society collectively chooses to depict or erase from public spaces. Learners will develop an in-depth research inquiry and craft a well-constructed seminar paper, with opportunities to present their research to each other and to our wider campus community. In capstone, we also advance students' individual professional development and career exploration as you approach graduation.

In our discussions and research, we consider such questions as: How have individuals and socially constructed groups (defined perhaps by nation, ethnicity, special interests, region, religion, etc) developed distinctively meaningful narratives about the past? What purposes (and whose interests) have those narratives served? Studying collective memory through analyzing monuments, memorials, public holidays, museum spaces, curricula and so on involves understanding how, why, and in whose interests particular historical interpretations inform our public discourse and contemporary society. This is a particularly relevant topic at our present historical moment, offering chances for us to practice contextualizing current events in light of history.

History Capstone Student Learning Outcomes

Learners in this course will create historical arguments and narratives by generating substantive, open-ended questions about the past and developing research strategies to answer them. Learners also advance their professional and career goals.

In this course, you will ...

1. Define and solve an important scholarly problem using structured research design, effective written communication, critical thinking, and information literacy.
2. Develop your professional skills and goals, presenting your work in formats suited to the discipline of history.
3. Demonstrate understanding of how historians approach problems and construct knowledge, practicing the “habits of mind” of successful historians.
4. Synthesize knowledge and skills from coursework within and outside your History major. Students are invited to develop meaningful connections from courses taken in their major and throughout their previous years at college. For example, your capstone research project might be connected to scholarly interests and intellectual problems that predate the seminar itself.

History Majors: Successful completion of this course is a graduation requirement.

Grading Overview

Attendance and Participation	50		A	282-300	C	222-230
Professional Portfolio	50		A -	270-281	C -	210-221
Research Process	150		B+	261-269	D+	201-209
Final Research Paper	50		B	252-260	D	192-200
Total	300		B -	240-251	D -	180-191
			C+	231-239	E	≤ 179

Note: Extra credit is not available in this course.

Attendance and Participation (A&P) - 50 points

In a seminar as small and intensive as this, each person's prepared participation makes or breaks the class experience. Everyone's contributions are needed and welcomed. Strong attendance is much more than physical presence in the classroom; you need to consistently demonstrate active and respectful engagement with the topics, course readings, and with others' ideas. Factors that can negatively impact your A&P score include silent or unprepared attendance, frequent or unexplained absences, and disrespecting your peers.

Professional Portfolio - 50 points

History is a degree that leads to a wide range of possible fields and careers, and we want you to leave WSU having honed your ability to articulate your strengths and interests. In this course you craft a practical toolkit of artifacts that can be adapted for your own needs as you prepare for graduation and beyond. See Bbd for [details and element rubrics](#).

Portfolio Element	Point Value	Due Date
Prior Writing Sample w/ Explanatory Preface	5	Sept 10
Personal Statement	10	Sept 17
CV or Resume	10	First Attempt: Sept 29 Revised: Oct 20
Professional Writing Example	10	Nov 5
Draft of CSC Application	10	Dec 3
Overall Portfolio - Format and Quality	5	Dec 15
Total = Portfolio Complete with All Required Elements, including Final Paper with Abstract	50	Dec 15

Research and Writing Process - 150 points

The research and writing process occupies most of the semester, with multiple small assignments building up to the final paper. These keep you on task and are designed to help you pace the necessary work to create a high-quality paper by the end of the course.

Article Annotations (25 points): Submit three, as an indication of your ability to locate and interpret relevant secondary sources for your research topic. Of course you will be finding and evaluating more than three sources, so these are representative of your best work and all three must be included in the bibliography of your paper. These should be scholarly journal articles or stand-alone book chapters in edited volumes (not encyclopedia articles nor primary sources). The first one is chosen from the Digital Reader collection on Blackboard, with your annotation being worth 5 points. You will then find and annotate two more articles relevant to your topic, each worth 10 points.

Effective annotations summarize the article / book chapter and explain its usefulness and significance in the context of your own research, in roughly 250 words. Include the full bibliographic Chicago citation. These annotations become very useful in your early drafts, and might even be directly incorporated into the text of your paper.

Define your Topic (10 points): Participate in our class topic workshop (5 points) + Refine your topic after exploring library and online resources (5 points).

Bibliography (25 points): When you only have one semester to conceive and complete a research inquiry, you need to work quickly to define your core readings and texts. Your work-in-progress bibliography demonstrates your ability to correctly employ Chicago Style citation and shows you are on track with finding and evaluating sources. The early deadline gives you time to address any gaps and order any needed materials through InterLibrary Loan. The work-in-progress bibliography should have BOTH secondary and primary sources in it by this point.

Writing Drafts (40 points): Successful academic writing starts early, during (not after) the research process to allow for feedback, introspection, and revision. You'll get familiar with our template and bibliographic citation expectations (5 points), submit an early writing piece (1-2 pages, 10 points), followed by a more developed "skeleton draft" (25 points), with the option of a penultimate draft if you want instructor feedback at a strategic point in the semester.

A "skeleton draft" includes the bones or internal structure of your eventual paper, with some parts of it developed a little more completely than others. It's okay and expected if parts of your draft are rough at this point. It should include, at least: A working title on the title page, a solid and well-crafted introduction, the historiography section, and a clear outline with one or more sections fleshed out, footnotes or endnotes with bibliography of the cited sources so far. Most likely it will be 7-12 pages at this point ("Half Draft").

Peer Review and Feedback (40 points): We will workshop ideas and our writing throughout the term and candidly discuss research challenges and achievements. Meet with a Writing Consultant in a one-on-one coaching session (5 points) by October 22. Earn up to 10 points during a formal peer review session on the skeleton drafts in November + 5 points for either attending an individual writing conference with your instructor OR submitting your penultimate draft for written response. Lastly, take part in a mini-conference presentation of your work at the end of the semester to share and discuss with others (20 points). Presentation formats can include poster, slides of your main points, or oral presentation.

Abstract (10 points): As your paper reaches its final form, you'll write a 150-200 word abstract that serves as a précis and preface for your paper.

Final Research Paper - 50 points

Your final research paper should be 18 - 25 pages, double-spaced, or approximately 5000 words (excluding citations). It needs to be appropriately footnoted or endnoted in Chicago Style, with a complete bibliography. The paper should:

- Define and address a significant scholarly problem related to the course theme
- Employ both primary and secondary sources
- Situate your research within the historiography of your topic

The final version is due on our assigned final exam date, December 15 (we have no final exam). The Paper also gets included into your Portfolio, along with its Abstract.

See full [Grading Rubric](#) on Blackboard.

COURSE MATERIALS

There are **two required books** for this class.

- 1) Catherine Clinton, *Confederate Statues and Memorialization: History in the Headlines* (Univ Georgia, 2019). ISBN paper: 978-0820355573. *We will use this by the second week of class so arrange to have it at the start of semester.*
- 2) Make sure you have a copy of the 9th edition of Turabian (you hopefully already own it from HI 200 Historian's Craft or HI 301 Reading and Writing of History). Turabian, et al. *A Manual for Writers on Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 9e. (Chicago). ISBN: 978-0226-430577 (paper).

All other course readings or materials will be available for free on Blackboard, WSU library resources, open internet resources, or distributed in class.

SYLLABUS

Course Calendar

Reminder, this is a **4-credit course**. Hrs* = recommended **minimum** number of hours you should have spent on our coursework by this date.

The syllabus is subject to change – check the online version for any updates.

Wk	Date	Class Topics & What to Read	What's Due	Hrs*
1	Wed Sept 3	Course Intro and Overview	In-Class "Minute Paper"	
2	Mon Sept 8	Course Themes and Big Ideas Reading: Thompson "Melted Majesty;" Stanley, "Reclaiming History" + One other Digital Reader Resource of Your Choice	Oral Presentation of Chosen Digital Reader Resource	12
	Wed Sept 10	Case Study 1: Confederate Symbols Writing Skill: Strategies for Managing a Large Project Reading: Clinton, <i>Confederate Statues</i> Roundtable (p. 13-70)	Prior Work with explanatory preface posted on Portfolio platform of choice	
3	Mon Sept 15	Whose Confederate Symbols? Writing Skill: Zotero 101 Reading: Lippard, "Heritage or Hate?" + AHA Statements on Confederate Monuments	Annotation 1 (choose from the Digital Reader)	24
	Wed Sept 17	Confederate Symbols In the News Research Skill: JSTOR and Library Search Tools Reading: Clinton, <i>Confederate Statues</i> Top Ten Articles (71 - end)	Personal Statement	

Wk	Date	Class Topics & What to Read	What's Due	Hrs*
4	Mon Sept 22	<i>Theorizing History and Memory</i> Writing Skill: Working with a Template Reading: Trouillot, "The Presence in the Past," Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian" and Cox, "Rewriting History in Stone"	Template w/ Bibliography	36
	Wed Sept 24	<i>Historic Sites</i> Research Skill: Topic Workshop - Bring Turabian Book to Class PD Skill: Resume v. CV, Which Will You Need? Reading: Twitty, "Dear Disgruntled White Plantation Visitors" and Cameron / Gatewood, "Excursions."	Topic Proposal	
5	Mon Sept 29	<i>Library Session - meet in LRC 236 with laptops</i>	Resume or CV - First Attempt	48
	Wed Oct 1	<i>Simming, Reenactment and Embodied History</i> Reading: Magelsson, <i>Simming</i> + Oostindie, "Slippery Paths"	Topic Refined	
6	Mon Oct 6	<i>Group Research Day: Close Reading</i> Reading: Wineburg, "Historical Thinking" Bring Turabian Book to class and one of your own research sources	In-Class "Minute Paper"	60
	Wed Oct 8	<i>Triumphant Nationalism</i> Reading: Bbd resources on "A Heritage to be Proud of"	Annotation 2	
7	Mon Oct 13	<i>University Holiday, No Class</i>		72
	Wed Oct 15	<i>Career Development Session</i> PD Skill: Job Search Strategies	Annotation 3	
8	Mon Oct 20	<i>The Smithsonian, Part I</i> Reading: Linenthal, "Struggling with History and Memory"	Revised Resume or CV	84

Wk	Date	Class Topics & What to Read	What's Due	Hrs*
	Wed Oct 22	Group Research Day Reading: TBA	A Piece of Writing Writing Center Meeting	
9	Mon Oct 27	The Smithsonian, Part II Reading: Bbd resources on current Smithsonian, NPS and NHS review	In-Class "Minute Paper"	96
	Wed Oct 29	Curricula and Classrooms Reading: DJT Executive Order 1/29/2025; NEA, OAH, AHA response statements; Perry, "A Truly Patriotic Education" (see Bbd for links)	Bibliography	
10	Mon Nov 3	War and Memory, Part I Reading: Zertal, "From People's Hall," Brigham, "Politics of War and Memory"		108
	Wed Nov 5	War and Memory, Part II Reading: Harjes, "Stumbling Stones; Elliott, "Our Memorials, Ourselves;" Theriault, "Re-Membering Vietnam"	Professional Writing Example	
11	Mon Nov 10	Storyboarding Workshop w/ Work-in-Progress	Bring Turabian Book to Class	120
	Wed Nov 12	To Revere or Not To Revere: Founding Fathers Reading: Lepore, <i>The Whites of Their Eyes</i> , Hattem, <i>The Memory of '76</i>	Skeleton Draft	
12	Mon Nov 17	Writing Conferences Week Class Activity TBA	<i>Writing Meeting w/ Dr Hangen</i> <i>- * or * - Submit Penultimate Draft before Thanksgiving</i>	132
	Wed Nov 19	Writing Conferences Week Class Activity TBA	<i>Writing Meeting w/ Dr Hangen- * or * - Submit Penultimate Draft before Thanksgiving</i>	
13	Mon Nov 24	Peer Review Session	Peer Review Participation	144

	Nov 26-30 Thanksgiving Break, No Classes			
Wk	Date	Class Topics & What to Read	What's Due	Hrs*
14	Mon Dec 1	Workshop Our Openers & Closers	Bring Turabian Book to Class Due: Abstract	156
	Wed Dec 3	Class Conference	Presentation Draft of CSC Application	
15	Mon Dec 8	Revision Day	Exit Survey	168
	Mon Dec 15	Assigned Final Exam Day No class meeting. There is no final exam. All work is due virtually on Blackboard.	Final Deadline for all Coursework Final Polished Paper with Abstract + Complete Portfolio	180

COURSE POLICIES

Course Pacing and Structure

This course involves a lot of moving parts and it progresses quickly. Stay on top of deadlines so you don't fall behind. Always bring laptops to class, as we will be actively working on course-related tasks in every single session. Our first few weeks are more reading-intensive as we get a handle on theory and main topics and explore possible research directions. Once you each identify your specific individual research topic, we transition into supporting your research, critical thinking, and creating early drafts. In the latter part of the course we are more focused on writing and revising final drafts, writers' workshops and peer review, presenting research, and pulling together portfolios.

Note that this is a **4-credit course**. That represents the equivalent of at least 180 hours of work over a 15-week semester, or approximately **12 hours a week**. We meet for 2.5 hours

a week in most weeks, so expect to spend a minimum of 9.5 additional hours per week reading, conducting research, writing, revising, and preparing portfolio elements. I've provided a minimum target number of hours in the syllabus calendar so you can keep track for yourself.

Technical Specifications

To succeed in this course, you need to be comfortable using Blackboard and WSU email, including uploading documents and making email attachments. You need reliable internet access to prepare for class sessions and use Blackboard and OER materials. You need to be comfortable communicating and writing in standard business English. Adobe Reader and full installation of Microsoft Office (available as free download from WSU Information Technologies) are helpful in any course, including this one. You should know how to insert correctly formatted academic references in Google Docs or Word and how to save and send documents in multiple formats (such as .docx and .pdf). I *highly recommend* (but do not require) a robust digital research management system like [Zotero](#) or [Mendeley](#).

Academic Integrity

All assignments created for this course should be original to this course, must be your own work, and must be your own writing. Whenever and wherever you employ the words or work of others, do so responsibly and cite your sources using standard academic citation format.

Please note: It is a violation of the student code of conduct and academic integrity to plagiarize text or create course assignments using generative AI (such as ChatGPT). Using online text-generation tools irresponsibly short-circuits your course learning and introduces chaotic possibilities for unchecked errors and factual inaccuracies.

Papers or drafts that are clear cases of plagiarism – not inadvertent errors in citation or footnoting – are a serious academic offense and have no place in an advanced capstone course. Plagiarized work is an automatic zero on the assignment and a failing grade (E) for the course. Academic integrity violations are a serious breach of the student Code of Conduct. Please familiarize yourself with and follow the University Policy on Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

If you have questions about plagiarism and how to avoid it, don't hesitate to ask. This course is designed to give you the tools to avoid plagiarism, both in terms of reinforcing what you've already learned about how and why to cite appropriately, and providing structure in a time management-friendly environment so you are not panicked and tempted to outsource to an algorithm.

Student Accessibility

I am committed to providing a learning environment in which all students can succeed. Accommodations requested through Student Accessibility Services (SAS) will be honored. SAS is located in Admin 131, at sas@worchester.edu (Phone: 508-929-8733). If applicable to you, please present SAS documentation as soon as possible so we can design a plan to help you be successful. If you see ways the course can be more inclusive, please let me know.

Getting Help and Support When Needed

I am very aware that each of us is more than our roles as instructor or student, and we all have full and complicated lives outside of class. It's important to me that you are aware of Worcester State student support services to help you navigate life while pursuing your degree. You might find you have unexpected new financial, emotional, social, or even nutritional needs. Services available to you include Residential and Commuter Services, Counseling, Health Services, Multicultural Affairs, Career Development, Student Accessibility Services, and Thea's Food Pantry. Ask me about any of these or learn more in my document, [What if Something Goes Wrong?](#)

We also have excellent academic supports in place which may help you in this class, including the Writing Center, Academic Success Center, Information Technologies, and our stellar Library Reference Services. Our departmental reference liaison is the University Archivist, Ross Griffiths (rgriffiths@worchester.edu) and he's incredibly helpful and generous with his time when it comes to assisting people with history research. Reach out to me or these support services early if you find you are struggling with time management, writing, research bottlenecks, citation questions, or any other aspect of the academic world.

For additional University policies and resources, see the **Syllabi Additional Information** reference document posted under Course Basics in Blackboard. This document is prepared by the Division of Academic Affairs.

INSTRUCTOR INFO

[Dr. Tona Hangen](#) Office: Sullivan 327-D Email: thangen@worchester.edu

Office extension: 508-929-8688 Voicemail / Text: 617-506-9440

Fall 2025 Office Hours TUESDAYS 1:30 - 2:30 and FRIDAYS 12:00 - 2:00

Appointment Link: <https://calendar.app.google/iLPguMTfSuu6Yk9w6>

PROGRESS TRACKER

Use this handy table to track your progress in each of the 3 main areas of the course: Research, Writing, and Professional Development / Portfolio. The blank boxes could be for a completion check mark, the date you turned it in, or the grade you got on it – whatever works for your brain.

	Research		Writing		Portfolio / PD
	Annotation 1 (9/15)		Template + Biblio (9/22)		Prior Work w/ Intro (9/10)
	Annotation 2 (10/8)		Writing Center Mtg (10/22)		Personal Statement (9/17)
	Annotation 3 (10/15)		A Writing Piece (10/22)		Resume or CV Draft (9/29)
	Topic Proposal (9/24)		Bibliography (10/29)		Revised Resume or CV (10/20)
	Topic Refined (10/1)		Skeleton Draft (11/12)		Professional Writing Ex (11/5)
	Peer Review (11/24)		Writing Conference (11/21)		CSC Application Draft (12/3)
	Presentation (12/3)		Abstract (12/1)		Completed Portfolio (12/15)
			Final Paper (12/15)		