



SYLLABUS

HIST 2301 The History of Texas P01 Spring 2024

General Course Information

Information Item	Information
Instructor:	Dr. Ralph Morales
Section # and CRN:	P01 #23878
Office Location:	Virtual office only in Spring 2024
Office Phone:	936-261-3200
Email Address:	Remorales@pvamu.edu
Office Hours:	VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS THROUGH ZOOM, M, W, F, 2PM THROUGH 4PM OR BY APPOINTMENT
Mode of Instruction:	Face to Face
Course Location:	A.I. Thomas 114
Class Days & Times:	Tuesday and Thursday 3:30PM-4:50PM
Catalog Description:	HIST 1333 History of Texas: 3 semester hours. Survey of Texas from Spanish colonization to the present. Emphasis will be placed on contributions made to the state of Texas by various ethnic groups.
Prerequisites:	None
Co-requisites:	None
Required Text(s):	Howell, et al. <i>Beyond Myths and Legends: A Narrative History of Texas</i> , 4th ed. S.C. Gwynne, <i>Empire of the Summer Moon</i>
Recommended Text(s):	

General Course Information Table

Student Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:	Program Learning Outcome Alignment	Core Curriculum Outcome Alignment
1. Learn the Basic Facts of Texas History		
2. Be better able to think critically, recognize change over time, and demonstrate an understanding how actions have consequences		
3. Relate present-day issues and experiences to those of the past, in order to provide a better basis for appreciating challenges and possibilities of contemporary times		
4. Supplement knowledge of sources and methods of learning Texas history		

5. Develop a global perspective by recognizing and remarking upon relationships between domestic and foreign affairs		
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Major Course Requirements

Method of Determining Final Course Grade

Course Grade Requirement	Value	Total
1. Exam 1	20	20%
2. Exam 2	20	20%
3. Exam 3	20	20%
4. Exam 4	20	20%
5. Precis	10	10%
6. Discussion Forum Participation	10	10%
Total:	100	100%

Course Grade Requirement Table

Grading Criteria and Conversion:

A = 100-90
 B = 89-80
 C = 79-70
 D = 69-60
 F = 59-0

Detailed Description of Major Assignments:

Assignment Title or Grade Requirement	Description
1. Exam 1	A fifty question multiple choice exam covering the material in Weeks 1 through 4
2. Exam 2	A fifty question multiple choice exam covering the material in Weeks 5 through 8
3. Exam 3	A fifty question multiple choice exam covering the material in Weeks 9 through 12
4. Exam 4	A fifty question multiple choice exam covering the material in Weeks 13 through 16
5. Precis	Students will write a paper critiquing a book assigned by the professor
6. Forum Discussion	Students will participate in bi-weekly discussions over questions or issues suggested by the professor. This will take place entire in Canvas.

Course Procedures or Additional Instructor Policies

Taskstream

Taskstream is a tool that Prairie View A&M University uses for assessment purposes. One of your assignments may be required to be submitted as an "artifact," an item of coursework that serves as evidence that course objectives are met. If applicable, more information will be provided during the semester by your department, but for general information, you can visit Taskstream via the link in eCourses.

Week	Description
Week One (1/16/24) : Topic Description Readings: Assignment (s):	Introduction, Pre-Columbian Texas and the Emergence of Modern Spain Read Chapter One in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> by Howell, Volanto, et. al. Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page
Week Two (1/22/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment (s):	The rise of Spain and the beginning of the Conquest Read Pages 25-34 in Chapter 2 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page
Week Three (1/29/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	The Creation of Spanish North America and La Casta Read pages 35-47 in Chapter 2 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page
Week Four (2/5/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	The end of the Spanish Empire and the Mexican war for Independence Read PowerPoint posted in Canvas Post to discussion forum, complete review sheet and Exam 1 on Canvas on 2-8-24
Week Five (2/12/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	The Settlement of Mexican Texas Read Chapter 3 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page. Begin reading S.C. Gwynne's <i>Empire of the Summer Moon</i>
Week Six (2/19/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	The Texas Revolution and the Creation of the Texas Republic Read Chapter 4 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page
Week Seven (2/26/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	The Trials and Tribulations of the Texas Republic under Houston and Lamar Read Chapter 5 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page
Week Eight (3/4/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	The fight for Texas Annexation Read PowerPoint posted in Canvas Post to discussion forum, Complete review sheet and Exam 2 on Canvas on 3-7-2024
Week Nine (3/18/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment:	The War with Mexico and the new Texans Read Chapter 6 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page

Week Ten (3/25/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	Ethnic Unrest and Texas in the 1850's Read PowerPoint in Canvas Post to discussion forum on Course Canvas page and Precis on Empire of the Summer Moon due online 3-28-24
Week Eleven (4/1/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	Texas and the Civil War, 1861-1865 Read Chapter 7 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum complete review sheet and Exam 3 on Canvas on 4-4-2024
Week Twelve (4/8/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	The beginning of Reconstruction in Texas Read pages 181-185 in chapter 8 of <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum, Edmund Davis and Radical Reconstruction in Texas, 1868-1873
Week Thirteen (4/15/24): Topic description Readings: Assignment(s):	Read pages 186-200 in Chapter 8 of <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Canvas Course Page The Bourbon Democrats and Reform in Texas
Week Fourteen (4/22/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	Read chapter 9 <i>In Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Canvas Course Page Populism, Progressivism and Texas
Week Fifteen (4/29/24): Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	Last day of classes 4-26-24 Read Chapters 10 and 12 in <i>Beyond Myths and Legends</i> Post to discussion forum on Canvas Course Page
Week Sixteen: Topic Description Readings: Assignment(s):	FINAL EXAM WEEK Complete review sheet and Exam 4 on Canvas

Student Support and Success

John B. Coleman Library

The library and its partners have as their mission to provide resources and instructional material in support of the evolving curriculum, as a partner in Prairie View A&M University's mission of teaching, research, and service and to support the University's core values of access and quality, diversity, leadership, relevance, and social responsibility through emphasis on ten key areas of service. It maintains library collections and access both on campus, online, and through local agreements to further the educational goals of students and faculty. Phone: 936-261-1500; Website: [J. B. Coleman Library](#).

Academic Advising Services

Academic Advising Services offers students a variety of services that contributes to student success and leads towards graduation. We assist students with understanding university policies and procedures that affect academic

progress. We support the early alert program to help students get connected to success early in the semester. We help refer students to the appropriate academic support services when the student is unsure of the best resource for their needs. Some students are supported by faculty advisors in their respective colleges. Your faculty advisor can be identified in PantherTracks. Advisors with Academic Advising Services are available to all students. We are located across campus. You can find your advisor's location by academic major at the [Academic Advising Website](#), Phone: 936-261-5911.

The University Tutoring Center

The University Tutoring Center (UTC) offers free tutoring and academic support to all registered PVAMU students. The mission of the UTC is to help provide a solid academic foundation that enables students to become confident, capable, independent learners. Competent and caring staff and peer tutors guide students in identifying, acquiring, and enhancing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to reach their desired goals. Tutoring and academic support is offered face-to-face in the [UTC, in virtual face-to-face sessions](#), and through [online sessions at PVPlace](#). Other support services available for students include Supplemental Instruction, Study Break, Academic Success Workshops, and Algebra Study Jam. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 307; Phone: 936-261-1561; Email: pv tutoring@pvamu.edu; Website: [University Tutoring Center](#).

The Writing Center

The Writing Center provides well-trained peer tutors that assist students with writing assignments at any stage of the writing process. Tutors help students with various writing tasks from understanding assignments, brainstorming, drafting, revising, editing, researching, and integrating sources. Students have free access to Grammarly online writing assistance. Grammarly is an automated proofreading and plagiarism detection tool. Student must register for Grammarly by using their student email address. In addition, students have access to face-to-face as well as virtual tutoring services either asynchronously via email or synchronously via Zoom. Location: J. B. Coleman Library, Rm. 209; Phone: 936-261-3724; Website: [The Writing Center](#); [Grammarly Registration](#).

Academic Early Alert

Academic Early Alert is a proactive system of communication and collaboration between faculty, academic advisors, and PVAMU students that is designed to support student success by promptly identifying issues and allowing for intervention. Academic Early Alert helps students by providing a central location to schedule advising appointments, view advisor contact information, and request assistance. Students who recognize that they have a problem that is negatively affecting their academic performance or ability to continue school may self-refer an Academic Early Alert. To do so, students will log in to PVPlace and click on Academic Early Alert on the left sidebar. Phone: 936-261-5902; Website: [Academic Early Alert](#).

Student Counseling Services

The Student Counseling Services unit offers a range of services and programs to assist students in maximizing their potential for success: short-term individual, couples, and group counseling, as well as crisis intervention, outreach, consultation, and referral services. The staff is licensed by the State of Texas and provides assistance to students who are dealing with academic skills concerns, situational crises, adjustment problems, and emotional difficulties. Information shared with the staff is treated confidentially and in accordance with Texas State Law. Location: Hobart Taylor, 2nd floor; Phone: 936-261-3564; Website: [Student Counseling Services](#).

Office of Testing Services

Testing Services serves to create opportunities by offering suite of exams that aid in the students' academic and professional success. Currently we administer entrance (HESI A2), college readiness (TSI assessment), Prior Learning (CLEP, DSST), and proctored exams. Location: Wilhelmina Delco, 3rd Floor, Rm. 305; Phone: 936-261-3627; Email: aetesting@pvamu.edu; Website: [Testing Services](#).

Office of Diagnostic Testing and Disability Services

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 believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, contact the Office of Disability Services. As a federally-mandated educational support unit, the Office of Disability Services serves as the repository for confidential disability files for faculty, staff, and students. For persons with a disability, the Office develops individualized ADA letters of request for accommodations. Other services include: learning style inventories, awareness workshops, accessibility

pathways, webinars, computer laboratory with adapted hardware and software, adapted furniture, proctoring of non-standardized test administrations, ASL interpreters, ALDs, digital recorders, livescribe, and a comprehensive referral network across campus and the broader community. Location: Hobart Taylor, Rm. 1D128; Phone: 936-261-3583; Website: [Disability Services](#).

Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS)

Distance Learning, also referred to as Distance Education, is the employment of alternative instructional delivery methods to extend programs and services to persons unable to attend college in the traditional manner. The Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS) supports student learning through online, hybrid, web-assisted and 2-way video course delivery. For more details and contact information, visit: [CIITS Student Webpage](#); Phone: 936-261-3283.

Veteran Affairs

Veteran Services works with student veterans, current military and military dependents to support their transition to the college environment and continued persistence to graduation. The Office coordinates and certifies benefits for both the G.I. Bill and the Texas Hazlewood Act. Location: Evans Hall, Rm. 102; Phone: 936-261-3563; Website: [Veteran Affairs](#).

Office for Student Engagement

The Office for Student Engagement delivers comprehensive programs and services designed to meet the co-curricular needs of students. The Office implements inclusive and accessible programs and services that enhance student development through exposure to and participation in diverse and relevant social, cultural, intellectual, recreational, community service, leadership development and campus governance. Location: Memorial Student Center, Rm. 221; Phone: 936-261-1340; Website: [Office for Student Engagement](#).

Career Services

Career Services supports students through professional development, career readiness, and placement and employment assistance. The Office provides one-on-one career coaching, interview preparation, resume and letter writing, and career exploration workshops and seminars. Services are provided for students at the Northwest Houston Center and College of Nursing in the Medical Center twice a month or on a requested basis. Distance Learning students are encouraged to visit the Career Services website for information regarding services provided. Location: Anderson Hall, 2nd floor; Phone: 936-261-3570; Website: [Career Services](#).

University Rules and Procedures

Academic Misconduct (See Student Planner)

You are expected to practice academic honesty in every aspect of this course and all other courses. Make sure you are familiar with your Student Planner, especially the section on academic misconduct (see *University Administrative Guidelines on Academic Integrity*). Students who engage in academic misconduct are subject to university disciplinary procedures. As listed in the PVAMU Undergraduate Catalog, Graduate Catalog, and the Student Planner, the following are examples of prohibited conduct. This list is not designed to be all-inclusive or exhaustive. In addition to academic sanctions, any student found to have committed or to have attempted to commit the following academic misconduct may also be subject to disciplinary review and action as outlined in the PVAMU Student Planner.

Forms of Academic Dishonesty:

1. **Cheating:** Deception in which a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered information on an academic exercise that he/she has not learned, giving or receiving aid unauthorized by the instructor on assignments or examinations. Examples: unauthorized use of notes for a test; using a "cheat sheet" on a quiz or exam; any alteration made on a graded test or exam which is then resubmitted to the teacher.
2. **Plagiarism:** Careless or deliberate use of the work or the ideas of another; representation of another's work, words, ideas, or data as your own without permission or appropriate acknowledgment. Examples: copying another's paper or answers, failure to identify information or essays from the Internet and submitting or representing it as your own; submitting an assignment which has been partially or wholly done by another and claiming it as yours; not properly acknowledging a source which has been summarized or paraphrased in your work; failure to acknowledge the use of another's words with quotation marks.

3. **Multiple Submission:** Submission of work from one course to satisfy a requirement in another course without explicit permission. Example: using a paper prepared and graded for credit in one course to fulfill a requirement and receive credit in a different course.
4. **Conspiracy:** Agreeing with one or more persons to commit an act of academic/scholastic dishonesty.
5. **Fabrication of Information/Forgery:** Use or submission of contrived, invented, forged, or altered information in any assignment, laboratory exercise, or test; tampering with or production of a counterfeit document, particularly documents which make up the student's academic record. Examples: making up a source or citing nonexistent publication or article; representing made up data as real for an experiment in a science laboratory class; forging a change of grade or student withdrawal record; falsifying any document related to a student academic exercise.

Nonacademic Misconduct (See Student Planner)

The University respects the rights of instructors to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires campus conditions that do not impede their exercise. Campus behavior that interferes with either (1) the instructor's ability to conduct the class, or (2) the ability of students to benefit from the instructional program, or (3) the rights of others will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such disruptive behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Such incidents will be adjudicated by the Office for Student Conduct under nonacademic procedures.

Sexual Misconduct

Sexual harassment of students and employees at Prairie View A&M University is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Any member of the university community violating the university's sexual harassment policy will be subject to disciplinary action. In accordance with the Texas A&M University System guidelines, your instructor is obligated to report to the Office of Title IX Compliance (titleixteam@pvamu.edu) any instance of sexual misconduct involving a student, which includes sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, and sexual harassment, about which the instructor becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. The faculty and staff of PVAMU actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes respect that is free from sexual misconduct, discrimination, and all forms of violence. If students, faculty, or staff would like assistance, or have questions, they may contact the Title IX Coordinator at 936-261-2144 or titleixteam@pvamu.edu. More information can be found at the [Title IX Webpage](#) including confidential resources available on campus.

Pregnancy, Pregnancy-related, and Parenting Accommodations

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination, which includes discrimination based on pregnancy, marital status, or parental status. Students seeking accommodations related to pregnancy, pregnancy-related condition, or parenting (reasonably immediate postpartum period) are encouraged to contact Student Disability Services or the Dean of Students' Office for additional information and to request accommodations. More information can be found at this [webpage](#).

Non-Discrimination Statement

Prairie View A&M University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity in its programs and activities. The University is committed to supporting students and complying with the Texas A&M University System non-discrimination policy. It seeks to establish an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you experience an incident of discrimination or harassment, we encourage you to report it. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are individuals who can meet with you. The Director of Equal Opportunity & Diversity has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies, and can be reached at Harrington Science Building, Suite 109 or by phone 936-261-1744 or 1792.

Class Attendance Policy (See Catalog for Full Attendance Policy)

Prairie View A&M University requires regular class attendance. Attending all classes supports full academic development of each learner whether classes are taught with the instructor physically present or via distance learning technologies such as interactive video and/or internet. Excessive absenteeism, whether excused or unexcused, may result in a student's course grade being reduced or in assignment of a grade of "F". Absences are accumulated beginning with the first day of class during regular semesters and summer terms. Each faculty member will include the University's attendance policy in each course syllabus.

Student Academic Appeals Process

Authority and responsibility for assigning grades to students rests with the faculty. However, in those instances where students believe that miscommunication, errors, or unfairness of any kind may have adversely affected the instructor's

assessment of their academic performance, the student has a right to appeal by the procedure listed in the University Catalog and by doing so within thirty days of receiving the grade or experiencing any other problematic academic event that prompted the complaint. Students can file Academic Complaints and/or Grade Appeals at this [webpage](#).

Technical Considerations

Minimum Recommended Hardware and Software:

- Intel PC or Laptop with Windows 10 or later version; Mac with OS High Sierra*
- Smartphone or iPad/Tablet with Wi-Fi*
- High speed Internet access
- 8 GB Memory
- Hard drive with 320 GB storage space
- 15" monitor, 800x600, color or 16 bit
- Sound card w/speakers
- Microphone and recording software
- Keyboard & mouse
- Most current version of Google Chrome, Safari or Firefox

*Smartphone, Google Chrome books and Android tablets may not be supported. iPads are the only tablets supported.

Note: Be sure to enable Java & pop-ups in the Web browser preferences

Participants should have a basic proficiency of the following computer skills:

- Sending and receiving emails
- A working knowledge of the Internet
- Microsoft Word (or a program convertible to Word)
- Acrobat PDF Reader
- Windows or Mac OS
- Video conferencing software

Netiquette (online etiquette)

Students are expected to participate in all discussions and virtual classroom chats as directed. Students are to be respectful and courteous to others on discussions boards. Foul or abusive language will not be tolerated. Do not use ALL CAPS for communicating to others AS IT CAN BE INTERPRETED AS YELLING. Avoid slang terms such as "wassup?" and texting abbreviations such as "u" instead of "you." Limit and possibly avoid the use of emoticons. Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm as tone is sometimes lost in an email or discussion post and the message might be taken seriously or sound offensive.

Video Conferencing Etiquette

When using Zoom, WebEx or other video conferencing tools, confirm the visible area is tidy, clear of background clutter, inappropriate or offensive posters, and other distractions. Ensure you dress appropriately and avoid using high traffic or noisy areas. Stay muted when you are not speaking and avoid eating/drinking during session. Before class session begins, test audio, video and lighting to alleviate technology issues.

Technical Support

Students should go to the [Password Reset Tool](#) if they have password issues. The page will provide instructions for resetting passwords and contact information if login issues persist. For other technical questions regarding eCourses, call the Center for Instructional Innovation and Technology Services (CIITS) at 936-261-3283 or email ciits@pvamu.edu.

Communication Expectations and Standards

Emails or discussion postings will receive a response from the instructor, usually in less than 48 hours. Urgent emails should be marked as such. Check regularly for responses.

Discussion Requirement

Online courses often require minimal to no face-to-face meetings. However, conversations about the readings, lectures, materials, and other aspects of the course can take place in a seminar fashion. This will be accomplished by the use of the discussion board. The exact use of discussion will be determined by the instructor.

It is strongly suggested that students type their discussion postings in a word processing application such as Word and save it to their PC or a removable drive before posting to the discussion board. This is important for two reasons: 1) If for some reason your discussion responses are lost in your online course, you will have another copy; 2) Grammatical errors can be greatly minimized by the use of the spell-and-grammar check functions in word processing applications. Once the post(s) have been typed and corrected in the word processing application, copy and paste to the discussion board.

COVID-19 Campus Safety Measures [NOTE: Delete this section when the COVID-19 pandemic is over]

To promote public safety and protect students, faculty, and staff during the COVID-19 pandemic, Prairie View A&M University has adopted policies and practices for the Fall 2020 academic term to limit virus transmission. Students must observe the following practices while participating in face-to-face courses and course-related activities (office hours, help sessions, transitioning to and between classes, study spaces, academic services, etc.):

- **Self-monitoring** - Students should follow CDC recommendations for self-monitoring. Students who have a fever or exhibit symptoms of COVID-19 should participate in class remotely and should not participate in face-to-face instruction.
- **Face Coverings** - Face coverings (cloth face covering, surgical mask, etc.) must be properly worn in all non-private spaces including classrooms, teaching laboratories, common spaces such as lobbies and hallways, public study spaces, libraries, academic resource and support offices, and outdoor spaces where 6 feet of physical distancing is difficult to reliably maintain.
- **Physical Distancing** - Physical distancing must be maintained between students, instructors, and others in course and course-related activities.
- **Classroom Ingress/Egress** - Students must follow marked pathways for entering and exiting classrooms and other teaching spaces. Students should leave classrooms promptly after course activities have concluded, should not congregate in hallways and should maintain 6-foot physical distancing when waiting to enter classrooms and other instructional spaces.
- **Face-to-face Class** - To attend a face-to-face class, students must wear a face covering (or a face shield if they have an exemption letter). If a student refuses to wear a face covering, the instructor should ask the student to leave and join the class remotely. If the student does not leave the class, the faculty member should report that student to the Office for Student Conduct for adjudication. Additionally, the faculty member may choose to teach that day's class remotely for all students.
- **COVID-19 Guidelines for Student Conduct Adjudication** - The mandatory COVID-19 Training/Certification taken by all students serves as the 1st Warning for violation of COVID-19 Guidelines.
 - 1st incident: upon review of Incident Report and finding of responsibility — Conduct Probation
 - 2nd incident: upon review of Incident Report and finding of responsibility — Suspension
 - Consult the Code of Student Conduct in the Student Planner or [Student Conduct website](#) for additional information on Conduct Probation and Suspension.
- **Personal Illness and Quarantine** - Students required to quarantine must participate in courses and course-related activities remotely and must not attend face-to-face course activities. Students should notify their instructors of the quarantine requirement. Students under quarantine are expected to participate in courses and complete graded work unless they have symptoms that are too severe to participate in course activities. Students experiencing personal injury or illness that is too severe for the student to attend class qualify for

an excused absence. To receive an excused absence, students must provide appropriate documentation to the Office for Student Conduct, studentconduct@pvamu.edu.

What is a Précis?

noun

noun: **précis**; plural noun: **précis**; noun: **précis**; plural noun: **précises**

1. a summary or abstract of a text or speech.

Instructions/Guidelines for Book Précis Assignment:

Length: Approximately 2-3 typed, complete double-spaced pages

For this assignment, you'll write a précis on the supplemental reading (book) used in this course.

Late work will not be accepted. Précis 2 will need to be submitted via Taskstream. Both précis assignments must be turned in as a stapled, 12pt font paper with 1.25 inch margins. Papers not stapled or not in the proper format will not be graded and will receive a grade of zero.

Guidelines:

Form:

A précis is a summary and critical evaluation of a piece of scholarly work. It will typically take the following form:

Full bibliographic citation in Chicago of Style Manual format of the book.

First paragraph: an objective summary or abstract of the publication. This paragraph should present the information as objectively as possible. You'll have a chance to critique the argument in the second part of your précis. You should **not** use the abstract published for the book. The first paragraph should contain the following information:

The overall argument that the author is making, including the author's thesis, the logical thread of the argument, the kinds of support provided, and so forth. If the author invents or uses special terms to argue the case, mention and define them.

The context for the argument: What critics or points of view is the author attempting to refute? Where does the author's argument fit into the larger critical discussion of the issue? Is the author attempting to overturn certain assumptions about the work, and, if so, what are those assumptions?

Second paragraph: a critical analysis of the publication. In this paragraph, you'll assess the strengths and weaknesses of the article and discuss the implications of its reasoning for future study of the work. These questions may help you get started:

What parts of the article were especially strong or insightful, and why?

In what parts of the essay (if any) did the author make claims that were not supported by the evidence? Were there any flaws in the logic of the piece?

In what ways is this book useful for understanding the historical topic covered? How significant is it?

You may use more paragraphs if you need to, but you should follow this basic format.

GUIDE TO WRITING BOOK REVIEWS

I. General Remarks

A book review or precise should be informative and meaningful to someone who has not read the book in question. An effective review should contain an analysis of the author's thesis (point of view), a discussion of his (or her) method of reasoning, and a critical evaluation of his (or her) sources. For examples of academic book reviews, you are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED** consult a recent copy of the Journal of American History or American Historical Review (both are in the library).

II. Style --

A. FORMAT -- Put your name, course and section number (single spaced) in the upper left-hand corner of the first page of your review. Papers containing unusually large margins (more than 1.25 inches), title blocks, not double spaced, or fonts larger than 12 points will be returned without a grade.

The paper should be between 2 and 3 pages in length. Anything shorter or longer will be penalized. (3 pages means, 3 full pages)

The following form of bibliographical heading **MUST** be used. Failure to provide a proper heading will result in the automatic deduction of five points.

Author, Title (City of Publisher: Publisher, Year of Publication; reprint, City of Reprint Publisher: Reprint Publisher, Year of reprint Publication).

SAMPLE HEADING:

Edward Countryman, A People In Revolution: The American Revolution and Political Society in New York, 1760-1790 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981; reprint, New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1989).

The paper is **due** in class on **the date listed in the syllabus**. Any paper turned in after the due date will not be accepted.

B. GRAMMAR AND SYNTAX -- Your review should be written in concise, grammatically correct English. An effective analysis of the author's thesis and evaluation of his argument, rather than the essay's length, should determine whether or not your paper is complete.

When you introduce a person for the first time in the review, use his (or her) full name.

It is not necessary to use titles such as Mr., Dr., or Professor preceding the author's name. Avoid writing in the first person (the use of "I think", "I believe", etc. does not provide for a professional review.) Do not use passive voice.

Do not use profanity, slang, or unique colloquialisms. Remember, you are writing a scholarly review, not an email.

When using quotations, enclose the page number (or numbers) of the quotation in parentheses at the end of the quoted passage. EX: (p. 15), or (pp. 21-23). For example, "The literature on military professionalism has largely concentrated on such attributes as education, inculcation of military ethics, and socialization of the officer corps," (p. 235). Use one "p." if the quotation comes from one page or "pp." if it begins on one page and continues to the next. All material taken directly from the book you are reviewing (or any other book, journal, magazine, or newspaper) must be put in quotation marks and cited properly. If not, this constitutes plagiarism and is subject to appropriate punitive action.

Avoid extensive quotations. More than six lines of quotes per page is "extensive."

C. PROOF READING: You might consider writing your assignment at least two days in advance and then spend time reviewing and revising it. Regardless, carefully proof read your assignment for typos, misspellings, duplicate words, and other grammatical mistakes. If possible, read it aloud. Reading a paper aloud is a very good way of picking up redundant or repetitive phrases, awkward sentence construction, contradictory statements, etc. It will also assist you in adhering to the style outlined in points A and B, as each individual offense will result in the automatic deduction of five points.

III. Summary and Thesis --

A. SUMMARY: Your review should give the reader a concise summary of the scope and content of the book. No more than one paragraph of a three-page review should be devoted to the content of a book.

B. ANALYSIS: YOUR EVALUATION OF THE AUTHOR'S THESIS IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE REVIEW. The thesis is the author's interpretation or point of view regarding the subject of the book. Simply stated, what point is the author trying to make in his book? You must discuss and analyze how convincingly the author presents the thesis. You should devote considerable attention to the discussion and analysis of the author's thesis, as well as to your own . . .

IV. Critical Evaluation --

A. WRITING STYLE: Evaluate the author's writing style (did you like it? why or why not?). How well did the author organize the book? Is the book mainly chronological narrative or topical analysis?

B. RESEARCH: Evaluate the author's sources and documentation. Did the author base his (or her) book mainly on secondary works (other books, journal articles), or did the notes include primary sources (newspapers, diaries, collections of letters and contemporary documents). How well did the author's evidence support his (or her) thesis?

C. ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIALS: Were maps, charts or illustrations included in the book? If so, were they clear, informative and well chosen?

D. OVERALL ASSESSMENT: Your evaluation of the above points may be either favorable or unfavorable. Was the author's thesis convincing? What were the book's strong points? What were its weak points?