Department of History/College of Arts and Letters

HIST 200. History and Theory.

Fall 2023 ver. 9-18-23 updated

Part 1: Course information

Time and place: Thursdays 6-8:50 p.m. in ARC 1008.

Instructor information

Instructor: Aaron J. Cohen, PhD.
Office hours: TuWeTh 1:30-2:30 p.m. or by appointment in Tahoe Hall 3092 OR via Zoom @ https://csus.zoom.us/my/cohenofficehours.
E-mail: cohenaj@csus.edu.

Catalog description

Study of the theoretical schools and debates that have most influenced historical research and writing in the modern era. The course will introduce students to both important theoretical texts and their applied use. It is designed to provide an intellectual foundation for subsequent graduate-level history seminars.

Registration details

Graded: Graded Student.
Units: 3.0.
Prerequisite: None.

Textbooks and course materials

Required texts

1. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Routledge Classics Edition only. ISBN 9780415254069.
2. Other reading material available for download from the Canvas site

Students will also read four academic monographs of their choice.

Course technology requirements

Handouts and assignments are distributed only via Canvas. **Students have a responsibility to access course materials and assignments in a timely manner**; the instructor will not be held responsible for any circumstances, technical or personal, that prevent access to course material.

The use of artificial intelligence to complete assignments without instructor permission is considered by the university to be academic dishonesty. Any work determined to be AI generated in this class will be treated as the equivalent of plagiarism according to the policies in this syllabus.

All required technology is available at low or no cost through student support services at Sac State. The CSUS library and Instructional Resource Technology office provide **free laptops** and Microsoft Word for students to use on a short- or long-term basis. Students may use personal computers, but they must meet the following requirements:

- High-speed internet connection.
- Access to Canvas throughout the semester.
- Ability to use Zoom, Microsoft Word, and Adobe software.

Do NOT use Google Docs OR portable devices as word processors in this course. Use a computer and the desktop version of MS Word. To obtain your free desktop version of MS Word (and Microsoft 365), go to office365.csus.edu and login with your Sac State login and password. Click on "Install Apps."

Technical assistance

For technical questions, please:

- See Canvas for Students for common Canvas questions and solutions.
- Email the Academic Technology Center in AIRC 2005.
- Call (916) 278-7337.

Crisis Assistance & Resource Education Support (CARES)

If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial or other unique circumstances that are impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away. The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student.

Services to Students with Disability (SSWD)

Sacramento State is committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where course or instructional content are usable by all students and faculty. If you believe that you require disability-related academic adjustments for this class, please immediately contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) to discuss eligibility. A current accommodation letter from SSWD is required before any modifications, above and beyond what is otherwise available for all other students in this class will be provided.

Title IX information

Sac State is committed to supporting students and fostering a campus environment free of sexual misconduct and gender-based discrimination. If a student chooses to disclose to a faculty or staff member an experience related to sexual misconduct which includes, but is not limited to rape, relationship violence, or stalking, all faculty and staff members are obligated to report this disclosure to the university's Title IX Coordinator. Contact Sac State's Title IX Coordinator, Skip Bishop, at (916) 278-5770 or email at william.bishop@csus.edu. Upon receipt of the report, the Title IX Coordinator will contact you to inform you of your rights and options as a

survivor and connect you with support resources, including resolution options for holding accountable the person who harmed you.

Students who elect not to discuss their experience with the Title IX Coordinator can speak confidentially to the following confidential resources: Student Health & Counseling Services at The WELL On Campus Phone Number: 916-278-6461 Website: www.csus.edu/shcs. Campus Confidential Advocate – Laura Swartzen Email: weave@csus.edu. On Campus Phone Number: 916-278-5850 (during business hours) WEAVE 24/7 Hotline: 916-920-2952.

Student Health and Counseling Services

Your physical and mental health are important to your success as a college student. Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) in The WELL offers medical, counseling, and wellness services to help you get and stay healthy during your time at Sac State. SHCS offers: Primary Care medical services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, transgender care, and immunizations; urgent care for acute illness, injuries, and urgent counseling needs; pharmacy for prescriptions and over-the-counter products; mental health counseling, including individual sessions, group counseling, support groups, mindfulness training, and peer counseling; athletic training for sports injury rehabilitation; wellness services, including nutrition counseling, peer-led health education and wellness workshops, and free safer sex supplies; violence and sexual assault support services. Most services are covered by the Health Services fee and available at no additional cost.

> **Important notes:** Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, may be reported to the office of student affairs. **This syllabus and course policies are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or typographical errors. In case of a conflict between the syllabus and Canvas instructions, the syllabus will take precedence unless the syllabus shows a clear error.** Any changes will be announced in class and posted on Canvas. It is the student's responsibility to check Canvas for corrections or updates to the syllabus.

All students are expected to behave according to the Hornet honor code.

Part 2: Course objectives

In this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the intellectual evolution of the discipline of history.
- Understand and recognize modern theories shaping historical research and writing.
- Analyze critically and challenge different models of historical understanding, especially historicism, Marxism, historical sociology, structuralism, feminism, and postmodernism.
- Practice written communication, critical thinking, and other skills necessary for professional development in history, teaching, and related occupations.

- Develop skills necessary for advanced study in history, especially those that involve book analysis, methodology, and historiography.

Part 3: Course assignments

Students will meet the objectives listed above through a combination of the following activities. Details on rubrics, grading criteria, and assignment information are posted on the Canvas site. All deadlines are Pacific Time.

I. Attendance. Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be graded using the standard percentage scale, e.g., two missed sessions = 13/15 or 87%, B+.

II. Reading notes. Students must submit reading notes in MS Word format for each of the individual assigned readings for each class. These are expected to be extensive and serious attempts to summarize and interrogate assigned readings. These reading notes have two aspects:

1) a summary/commentary of each individual weekly reading.
2) questions about each individual weekly reading for class discussion.

Post this assignment to the indicated Canvas assignment tool before 11:59 p.m. Wednesday before each week's Thursday class session.

Students are expected to complete reading notes for each week's reading, but only the highest six (6) satisfactory scores will be averaged into the overall participation grade (i.e., the lowest scores above 0 will be dropped). Reading notes can be submitted late but will receive a full grade penalty. Scores with 0 WILL NOT BE DROPPED at the end of the course, so students should attempt all assignments.

III. Book reviews. Four (4) professional-quality book reviews of an academic monograph, ideally in the student's areas of historical interest. Monographs for reviews 2-4 must have a methodological or theoretical approach as listed on the syllabus and **must contain a paragraph-length discussion of the strengths and/or weaknesses of that approach**. Review 1 can be on any topic as long as the book is a monograph published by a university press after 2000, while books for reviews 2-4 can be from any topic, publisher, or year as long as they represent the assigned theory (suggestions are provided on Canvas).

Book reviews should have no more than 750-1000 words (ca. 3-4 double spaced pages) and **will be submitted as a hard copy brought to class AND uploaded to Canvas in Word format**. The instructor will give a provisional grade if they are turned in on time, and rewrites will be accepted at the end of the term for re-grading without penalty. **Post this assignment to the indicated Canvas assignment tool before 11:59 p.m. Wednesday before the peer review day.** In addition, bring a hard copy to the class meeting for peer review. Late papers will not receive feedback but can be turned in with a full grade penalty.

IV. Book review analyses. For each book review, submit a pdf or photographed copy of an academic book review of **a different book on a similar topic** AND a one paragraph analysis of the strengths and/or weaknesses of the review (not the book). The book reviewed can have any methodology (i.e., it does not have to follow the assigned theory on the syllabus). **Post this assignment to the indicated Canvas assignment tool before class on the peer review day.**

Part 4: Course schedule

Note: This schedule is a general outline. **All assignments and due dates are listed on the Canvas site, not here.** Assignments must be completed **before** the class meeting. The instructor may add assignments or alter the schedule for special events. Changes will be communicated via Canvas.

Week 0 (read this material first). **Course information**.

Week 1 (August 31): **Introduction. Professional book reviews.** Read AHA History Tuning Project (2016); Hunt, "Forgetting and Remembering" (1995); "Traversable wormhole dynamics on a quantum processor" (2022).

Week 2 (September 7): **Narrative, context, objectivity.** Read Hegel, "Lectures on History" excerpt (1822-1830); Von Ranke, "Excerpts" (1824, 1854, 1881); White, "Historicism, History, and the Figurative Imagination" (1978).

Week 3 (September 14): **Marxism in theory**. Read Marx, "Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy" (1859), "Theses on Feuerbach" (1845), "German Ideology I" (1845); Engels, "Historical Materialism" (1880).

Week 4 (September 21): **Review 1 due and peer review.** Review 1 approach: narrative monograph. Bring a hard copy.

Week 5 (September 28): **Marxism in practice**. Read Marx, "The Manifesto of the Communist Party" (1848), "The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte" (1852), "The British Rule in India" (1853), "The Future Results of British Rule in India" (1853); Engels, "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State" (1884).

Week 6 (October 5): **Class meeting cancelled.** Work at home on book review 2.

Week 7 (October 12): **Weberian historical sociology.** Read Weber, "'Objectivity' in Social Science and Social Policy" (1904), *Protestant Ethic* (1904), all.

Week 8 (October 19): **Review 2 due and peer review**. Review 2 approach: Marxist. Bring a hard copy. **The Annales school and structuralism.** Read Bloch, *Historian's Craft*, selected chapters; Braudel, excerpt from the preface to "The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II"

(1949), "History and the Social Sciences: The *Longue Durée*" (1958); Le Roy Ladurie, "History That Stands Still" (1978).

Week 9 (October 26): **Postmodernism.** Read Derrida, "Force and Signification," "Structure, Sign, and Play" (1978); Foucault, "What Is Enlightenment?", "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," "What Is an Author?" (1984); Lacapra, "Rethinking Intellectual History" (1980).

Week 10 (November 2): **Feminism.** Read Lerner, "Placing Women" (1976); Kelly-Gadol, "Social Relation of the Sexes" (1976); Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" (1986); Smith, "Whose Truth?" (1995); Dayton/Levenstein, "Big Tent" (2012).

Week 11 (November 9): **Review 3 due and peer review**. Review 3 approach: Weberian, sociological, anthropological, or structuralist. Bring a hard copy.

Week 12 (November 16): **Postcolonialism.** Read Said, introduction to "Orientalism" (1978); Spivak, "The Rani of Sirmur" (1985); Chakrabarty, "Postcoloniality" (1992); Prakash, "Subaltern Studies" (1994).

Week 13: No class meeting. Work at home on book review 4.

Week 14 (November 30): **Critical theory (cultural/race/queer/disability).** Read Adorno & Horkheimer "Culture Industry" (1944); Bell, "Brown" (1980); Delgado, "Imperial Scholar" (1984); Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins" (1993); Marcus, "Queer Theory" (2005); Wickberg, "Inversions" (2005).

Week 15 (December 7): **Review 4 due and peer review.** Review 4 approach: postmodern/feminist/postcolonial/critical theory. Bring a hard copy.

Important policies: Course deadlines are enforced by Canvas and cannot be extended for any reason. Keep copies of all your work on a hard drive, flash drive, or paper in the event of a computer malfunction or other technical problem.

Part 5: Grading policy

Graded course activities

Grades for most work are given as letter grades, calculated and averaged using a 12-point system. Attendance is graded on a standard percentage scale. All are computed and rounded by Canvas or Excel. Missing work will be scored as 0.

Category	Assignment	% of course grade
I	Attendance	10

II	Reading notes (6 satisfactory scores required to pass the category, lowest 4 of 10 not 0 dropped)	10
III	Book reviews	70
IV	Book review analyses	10

Note: To pass the class, students must demonstrate passing competence (60% or above) attempted in 60% or more of assignments within categories AND in 60% or more of all categories. In this class, then, students who fail more than one category will fail the course.

Late work

To be fair to students who work hard to make deadlines, late work will receive a full letter grade penalty. Late essays will normally be graded at the end of the semester, not when submitted, except upon request by the student directly to the instructor.

These late policies will be in force also for foreseeable scheduled power outages, COVID-19 physical distancing regulations, travel, and work schedule changes. Students are expected to be aware of technical and social limits that may impact their area of residence and to plan around them by completing work in advance and notifying the instructor.

Viewing grades in Canvas

Marks received for graded activities will be posted in the Canvas grade book. The instructor will update the online grades each time a grading session has been complete (typically 7 days after the completion of an activity).

Letter grade assignment

Grades for essays are given as letter grades, averaged together in a 12-point system. Grades for all other assignments are given as letter grades based on a standard percentage scale. All are computed and rounded by Canvas or Excel. Missing work will be scored as 0.

Letter grade earned	Points used in calculation	Percentage equivalent	GPA equivalent	Standard
A	12	93-100	4.0	Excellent work
A-	11	90-92	3.7	Nearly excellent work
B+	10	87-89	3.3	Very good work

B	9	83-86	3.0	Good work
B-	8	80-82	2.7	Mostly good work
C+	7	77-79	2.3	Above average work
C	6	73-76	2.0	Average work
C-	5	70-72	1.7	Mostly average work
D+	4	67-69	1.3	Below average work
D	3	63-67	1.0	Poor work
D-	2	60-62	0.7	Very poor work
F	1	Below 60	0.0	Failing work
F	0	0	0.0	Not attempted

Part 6: Course policies

Build rapport

If you find that you have any trouble keeping up with assignments or other aspects of the course, make sure you let your instructor know as early as possible. As you will find, building rapport and effective relationships are key to becoming an effective professional. Make sure that you are proactive in informing your instructor when difficulties arise during the semester so that we can help you find a solution.

Complete assignments

All assignments for this course will be submitted electronically through Canvas. Assignments must be submitted by the given deadline. Late or missing assignments will impact the student's grade.

Understand when you may drop this course

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider disenrolling from a course. Refer to the Sac State Course Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration. After this period, a serious and compelling reason is required to drop from the course. Serious and compelling reasons include documented and significant change in work hours, leaving student unable to attend class, or documented and severe physical or mental illness or injury to the student or student's family.

Incomplete policy

Under emergency or special circumstances students may petition for an incomplete grade. Incompletes will not be given except for a documented emergency that prevents completion of the final assignments (missing online work is not eligible).

Communication policy

The instructor monitors email daily and will respond when contacted with questions. Normally a response should come immediately, but students should wait at least 24 hours before sending follow-up communications. The instructor will normally give feedback on assignments only through Canvas course rubrics but is happy to provide more personalized feedback by email, Zoom, or in person.

Part 7: Commit to integrity

By taking this class you agree to abide by the guidelines described in this syllabus and on the academic honesty page available on the Canvas site.

Students must respect the intellectual property of others in this class. Make sure to cite sources of other people's ideas; do not pass them off as your own. Copying from other students, assigned course work, or outside web sites without quotation and attribution will be treated as plagiarism and dealt with according to university policy. Students who plagiarize will be warned and receive an F for that assignment. On the second infraction, the student will receive an F for the course.

Turnitin tool

Consistent with Sacramento State's efforts to enhance student learning, foster honesty, and maintain integrity in our academic processes, instructors may use a tool called Turnitin to compare a student's work with multiple sources. The tool compares each student's work with an extensive database of prior publications and papers, providing links to possible matches and a "similarity score." The tool does not determine whether plagiarism has occurred or not. Instead, the instructor must make a complete assessment and judge the originality of the student's work.

Sac State's academic honesty policy & procedures

"The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of scholars and teachers. California State University, Sacramento expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles, and in so doing, will protect the integrity of academic work and student grades."

Definitions (from the Sacramento State University Library)

At Sac State, "**cheating** is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means." For clarity, "**plagiarism is a form of cheating,**" defined by the university as "the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgement of that person's contribution."

The use of artificial intelligence to complete assignments without instructor permission is considered by the university to be academic dishonesty. Any work determined to be AI generated in this class will be treated as the equivalent of plagiarism according to the policies in this syllabus.

Read more about Sac State's Academic Honesty Policy & Procedures.