

Department: History

Course No.: HIST 230

Credits: 3

Title: American Environmental History

Contact: Daniel Caner

WQ: W

Catalog Copy: 230W. American Environmental History

Prerequisite: ENGL 105 or 110 or 111 or 250.

W Criteria: The thematic content of the course is well suited to the teaching of writing through the discipline of history. Course readings will be considered and analyzed as examples of historical writing.

Twice early during the term, students will write a 3-page essay on assigned readings for class. The purpose of these essays is to give them practice writing in the discipline of history using materials assigned for and discussed in class. They will revise each essay, providing them with the opportunity to work on developing and clearly expressing arguments and deploying evidence as historians do.

Discussion of student essay topics will focus on the role of writing to the historian's formation of an argument. The final research project builds on the skills developed through writing and revising the essays. For the final research project and paper, students will pick a specific instance an event, lawsuit, or controversy such as the damming of a river, the formation of a national park, the taking of land of Native Americans, the use of a natural resource like forests or fish, etc. Both primary source documents and secondary sources will be required.

Students will be guided through the process of research through stepwise assignments, including the submission of three topic ideas, followed by a two-page proposal and annotated bibliography, followed by a draft of the paper, followed finally by a revision of the paper. Revisions will be based on both faculty comments and also on peer partner evaluations. For the final, 10-page paper, in addition to writing about the event/controversy, students will be analyzing the historical context of the environmental issues at stake, going as far back in time as is relevant for the topic. The final research project and paper is designed to teach students to interpret primary historical documents in the context of developing an argument or thesis.

Role of Grad Students: none

Supplementary Information: It is an advantage for regional campuses to be able to offer upper-level courses for degree programs that also fulfill general education requirements for two-year students who will start at regional campuses and move to Storrs.

Please note that this course is being proposed in order to offer another version of, and not to replace, the pre-existing course Hist 230.