

Robert Cruickshank
ric1@u.washington.edu
Smith 214, 543-8921

Office Hours:

Monday 1-2, Thursday 10:30-11:30, and by appointment

HSTAA 301 Autumn 2005
<http://staff.washington.edu/ric1>
Sections AC/AE and AD
AC/AE: Fri 11:30, Savery 245
AD: Fri 12:30, Savery 241

Note: This syllabus is supplementary to the one handed out by Professor Johnson and does not supercede it. I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus, and will publicly announce any changes both in section and on the website.

Purpose: Sections are your chance to engage the topics presented in this course in a conversational setting. Though the bulk of our time in section will be spent discussing the readings assigned for that week, you are encouraged to make connections between the readings and the lectures. We will also review strategies for writing good history papers and thinking critically about the events and themes in the history of colonial North America.

Punctuality and attendance: In order to effectively engage the course reading material, you should attend every section, and arrive on time. Latecomers interrupt discussion and may miss important announcements. Turn off all cell phones. If you must miss a section, it is to your advantage to contact me as soon as you know that you'll not be there on Friday. Repeated absences will negatively affect your section grade. Contact me as soon as you know you will have a scheduling conflict with a section, and we will arrange for you to make up the section. Typically, section absences are made up by the student writing a longer, more substantial response to one of the discussion questions.

Grading: I will be grading all of your exams, papers, and section participation. Your participation grade will reflect your participation in section. I expect each of you to make an effort to listen and respond to each other's arguments. I strongly encourage you to be willing to throw an idea out there, even if you think it's only half-formed or not as good as you believe other ideas to be. Not every comment you make needs to be a pearl of perfect wisdom. Discussion sections are your chance to refine your thoughts and ideas by engaging those concepts with others. It is my goal that each student will contribute to the discussion.

The course grading percentages are as follows: 45% short papers (3 at 15% each), 15% midterm, 25% final exam, 15% section participation.

Written work: There are three written assignments you will be handing in to me in this course, and these are:

First Short Essay:	Topic due Fri. Oct. 7 , Essay Due Fri. Oct. 21
Second Short Essay:	Topic due Fri. Oct. 28 , Essay Due Thurs. Nov 10
Third Short Essay:	Topic due Fri. Nov. 18 , Essay Due Fri. Dec. 2

I am willing to read – and strongly encourage you to write – rough drafts of your essays. I will read and give comments on drafts up to 3 days before a paper is due. For example, if a paper is due Fri. Oct. 21, the last day I will accept a rough draft is Tuesday, Oct. 18. This is so that I have enough time to give it a thorough reading, and you have enough time to incorporate my comments into your final draft. Additionally, I am willing to look over rough drafts with you in person, either at office hours or by appointment, up to the day before a paper is due, although this will be a less thorough review.

You may rewrite the first essay if you are dissatisfied with it. As Professor Johnson explained in the course syllabus, such a rewrite must be a substantial revision of the draft you turned in on Oct. 21. If you choose to do this, you should make an appointment with me to discuss your essay and ways it can be improved. The rewritten paper is due, along with the first version that I graded, no later than Nov. 10. The first essay is the only one that can be rewritten.

Late papers: Please make every effort to turn in your papers on time. If a situation arises that prevents you from turning it in on time, please let me know as soon as possible, do not just show up to section empty-handed without me knowing about it first. We will then agree on a due date for your paper. In order to ensure mastery of the material in a timely and skillful fashion, **Late work will automatically be penalized 0.1 points per day late.**

How do I do well in this course? This may be the question on all of your minds, and it's a good one to be thinking about. There are 4 main elements to doing well in this course:

- 1) Be Engaged. The worst thing a student can do is treat a class like a chore. You are in a university, where a great deal is expected of you, and where hopefully you expect a great deal of yourself. The single biggest key to doing well in any college course, but especially this one, is to make an intellectual engagement with the course material. Take a serious and genuine interest in the issues we are discussing. Be curious. Ask questions. Being involved in the course will make your class experience much more rewarding. In the end, you are the person most responsible for both your grade and your intellectual development in this course. The professor and I are here to help you with that, and we will spend a lot of time in this course helping you learn how to think and write like a historian.
- 2) Learn to think 'critically'. Professors and teachers use this phrase all the time – 'think critically'. But what does it actually mean? As college students, we expect you to do more than just regurgitate what you hear or read. You have to reflect on it, think about it, ask questions about it. Who produced the piece? Are they male or female? What social class do they come from? What is their ethnic background? Why are they writing this, and who is their intended audience? Primary sources are something you are to interpret, and your success at doing this will determine your success in the course. Thinking critically will probably be the most difficult part of this or any other humanities course you take. That's OK. As long as you are making an effort to train your brain to think this way, you will be on the road to doing well.
- 3) Be Prepared. As a student you are expected to come to section with a good knowledge of that week's reading. When doing the reading, think critically about it. It is to your advantage to take notes on the readings, and write down questions you wish to present to the section for further discussion. When we send out discussion questions, write down at least few short answers to each of them, and show up to section prepared to respond to each question.
- 4) Pace yourself. Do not allow yourself to fall behind in this course. Moreover, you need to come up with a reading and writing schedule that fits your needs. Don't put off all the reading until Thursday night – you won't possibly be able to make proper sense of it, particularly with some of the tougher readings. Same with the papers – think ahead, plan ahead.

In the event that you have any problems in this course, including missing a section or late papers, it is to your advantage to get in touch with me about it as soon as possible.