

**Robert Cruickshank**  
[ric1@u.washington.edu](mailto:ric1@u.washington.edu)  
Smith 214, 543-8921  
Office Hours:  
Monday 1-2, Thursday 10-11, and by appointment

**HSTAA 432 Winter 2005**  
<http://staff.washington.edu/ric1>  
Sections AA and AC  
AA: Fri 10:30, Savery 142  
AC: Fri 11:30, Mech. Eng. 234

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*Note: This syllabus is supplementary to the one handed out by Michael Reese and does not supercede it.*

**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 Washington and the Northwest.

**Punctuality and attendance:** You must attend all sections, 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. 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: 20% short essay, 15% midterm, 30% long essay/packet, 25% final, 10% section participation.

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

February 2: Essay on *Mourning Dove* (4-5 pp)

March 7: Longer Essay, 8-10 pp, topics to be handed out later (teaching packets go to Reese)

Not all of you are history majors (or pre-majors) and may be unfamiliar with what makes a good history paper. Later in the quarter I will distribute a handout that explains how to write good history papers, but if you feel that you need more assistance, visit me in office hours, make an appointment with me, or visit the History Writing Center. It is open to anyone enrolled in a History course and will help you with forming a good history paper. Please make an appointment before visiting the Writing Center.

You should also consider writing a rough draft of each essay for me to read before the actual due date of the paper. If you wish to do this, you must get it to me no later than the Friday before the papers are due. See the course syllabus for actual dates.

**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. **Late work will automatically be penalized 0.3 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.**