

HIST2002: Fact or Fiction: Reading the Past

Online

Semester 1 - 2024



THE UNIVERSITY OF
NEWCASTLE
AUSTRALIA

The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.

OVERVIEW

Course Description

Why study history? Can we really know about the past? Is history fiction? Why is the past so frequently and bitterly contested?

This course focuses on the craft of history to explore how varied and controversial historical writing can be. We focus on landmark events in international contexts and in a range of time periods. We employ diverse methods to interpret them, from the empirical to the theoretical to the unconventional. In doing so, we will interrogate the process by which the past is recovered, constructed and debated. In this course, you will join a discussion about the nature and practice of history as a basis for understanding the contested nature of human experience.

Academic Progress Requirements

Nil

Requisites

This course replaces HIST3059. If you have successfully completed HIST3059 you cannot enrol in this course.

Assumed Knowledge

20 Units of History at the 1000 Level

Contact Hours

Online

Lecture

Online

1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) starting Week 1

Seminar

Online

1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) starting Week 1

Seminar

Face to Face On Campus

1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) starting Week 1

Unit Weighting

10

Workload

Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

COURSE OUTLINE

CONTACTS

Course Coordinator	Online Dr Sacha Davis Sacha.Davis@newcastle.edu.au (02) 4921 5217 Consultation: I am always happy to consult with students. Please email to organise a time for a face to face or Zoom consultation.
Teaching Staff	Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.
School Office	School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences Social Sciences Building Callaghan HCISS@newcastle.edu.au +61 4985 4500

SYLLABUS

Course Content	Course content includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the importance of the past;• approaches to writing the past such as 'history from below', top down history, social, cultural and gendered history;• the range and nature of sources used to construct arguments about the past, including oral evidence, documents, and visual sources;• scholarly debates about the meaning of past events; and• writing book reviews in history. Selected studies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the 'history wars' in a number of countries and across a range of periods, including in Australia;• the use of oral history in historical accounts;• historical controversies;• memory and history; and• postmodern approaches to historiography. Specific case studies may be included involving issues encountered by academic staff in their own research work.
Course Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this course, students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Evaluate a range of approaches and methods used by historians and related scholars.2. Apply a number of methodologies employed by historians and scholars in related fields, taking account of ethical and intercultural issues as they arise.3. Assess the use of a range of historical sources in scholarly argumentation.4. Use a range of sources effectively in scholarly writing about the past.
Course Materials	Required Reading: All essential course readings can be accessed from the Readings section on Canvas. Additional resources are available from the library.

SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Case Study	Assessment Due
Module 1: Interrogating Primary Sources				
1	26 Feb	Introduction: Using Documents	Case Study: Dropping the A-Bomb	
2	4 Mar	Oral History	Memory, meaning, myth & Vietnam	
3	11 Mar	Visual Evidence: Photographs	The Photograph & the Vietnam War	
Module 2: History Wars				
4	18 Mar	Dropping the Atomic Bomb	Interpreting the Decision to Drop the A Bomb	
5	25 Mar	The Australian History Wars	The Australian History Wars	
6	1 Apr	The Foundation of Israel and Al Nakba	The Israeli 'New Historians'	Photographic/oral history exercise due Friday week 6
Module 3: Approaches to History				
7	8 Apr	Marxist and Social History	Social History: Thompson, Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism."	
Mid-Semester Recess				
Mid-Semester Recess				
8	29 Apr	New Cultural history	Cultural History: Darnton, The Great Cat Massacre	
9	6 May	Gender History	Gender History: M L Roberts, Women's haircuts in Interwar France	
Module 4: Is History Fiction?				
10	13 May	Michel Foucault and Poststructuralism	Foucault, Discipline and Punish	
11	20 May	Hayden White and the Literary Turn	White and Emplotment	Book Review due Friday Week 1
12	27 May	Criticisms and Defence of The Postmodern Turn Conclusion and Test Briefing	Jenkins vs. Evans	
13	3 Jun			CLASS TEST Friday week 13
Examination Period				
Examination Period				

ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Oral/Photographic Source Evaluation	11.59pm, Friday Week 6 (5 April)	Individual	35%	2, 3, 4
2	Book Review for Public Audience	11.59pm, Friday Week 11 (24 May)	Individual	35%	1, 2, 3, 4
3	Write Test Questions	11.59pm, the Sunday following the opening of the week on FutureLearn (i.e. the week 1 question is due by the end of Sunday, week 1)	Individual	10%	1, 2, 3
4	In Term Test	10pm Friday Week 13 (7 June). (The test will open at 6pm and close at 10pm and you will have one hour to complete the test once you commence it.)	Individual	20%	1, 2, 3

Late Submissions

The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

Assessment 1 - Oral/Photographic Source Evaluation

Assessment Type

Practical Demonstration

Purpose

In this essay you are going to demonstrate your ability to analyse oral and photographic history as evidence.

Description

Firstly select an ABC Hindsight radio broadcast that you are interested in from the list in the Assessment folder on Canvas. Secondly select two historical photographs you discover on the web of ANY aspect of the Hindsight broadcast you selected. (You can choose photos that directly refer to the subject in question or something more tangential). They can come from any reliable source.

QUESTION: Briefly analyse the strengths and weakness of your sources. What is good and bad about them? Do you need more evidence? Who produced these sources and how? Are they credible etc? What other sources might you need to make a successful argument?

Your analysis should reflect the methodological concerns raised in the readings for weeks 2 and 3. You should cite at a minimum at least three of the weekly secondary readings for Weeks 2 and 3. You are required to fully reference your assignment.

Weighting

Further advice and referencing guides can be found on Canvas.

Length

35%

Due Date

1,500 words

Submission Method

11.59pm, Friday Week 6 (5 April)

Assessment Criteria

Online

Return Method

Submit online through Turnitin on Canvas.

Feedback Provided

Please see rubric on Canvas

Online via Canvas

Written feedback and a rubric.

Assessment 2 - Book Review for Public Audience

Assessment Type	Written Assignment
Purpose	Demonstrate the ability to critically evaluate the methodology and source use in a historical monograph, and to express your views for a general audience.
Description	<p>You are writing a scholarly assessment of a work of history, with an emphasis on their theoretical approach/methodology and their source use. It is recommended that you choose a prominent historian, such as those cited in works on historiography. Alternatively, a historian who is partisan in a history war would also be a good option, or a historian who has written on a topic of interest to you. If in doubt, please email to discuss.</p> <p>The goal is to produce a review that is of a scholarly standard, but that is clearly expressed for an educated general audience.</p> <p>Research: In addition to your main source, you should cite an additional 8 scholarly (peer reviewed) secondary sources.</p> <p>Further advice, referencing guides and an example review can be found on Canvas.</p>
Weighting	35%
Length	1,500 words
Due Date	11.59pm, Friday Week 11 (24 May)
Submission Method	Online Submit via Turnitin on Canvas
Assessment Criteria	See rubric on Canvas
Return Method	Online via Canvas
Feedback Provided	Written feedback and a rubric.

Assessment 3 - Write Test Questions

Assessment Type	Proposal / Plan
Purpose	To facilitate consistent reading and participation, and to encourage engagement with the key themes in the topics examined.
Description	<p>At the end of each week, you will propose a one or two sentence exam question in response to the weekly topic. The question should engage with what you consider to be the most important aspects of the week's topic, as addressed in the lecture, readings and tutorial. Each question is worth 1% of the overall course mark; your best 10 questions will be counted. The maximum mark you may receive for this part of the course is 10%. A selection of the best questions over all will be used (with some editing) to guide the writing of the class test at the end of the semester.</p> <p>Further details can be found on Canvas.</p>
Weighting	10%
Length	3-500 words (1-2 sentences or approximately 30-50 words each). You may include a short quote, image, etc.
Due Date	11.59pm, the Sunday following the opening of the week on FutureLearn (i.e. the week 1 question is due by the end of Sunday, week 1)
Submission Method	Online Questions will be submitted online via Canvas. You will not be able to see other students' responses until you have made your own. You will not be able to revise your submission once it has been made. As this assignment is designed to encourage regular participation, it will not be possible to submit your question after the due date.
Assessment Criteria	<p>Questions will be marked according to their relevance, their analytical quality, and whether they can be answered in a paragraph on the basis of the course content. Good questions will cover a broad section of the week's topic, and will be analytical rather than descriptive; that is, they ask "Why?" rather than merely "What?"</p> <p>Remember also that this is a course on historiography (the writing of history, how we know about the past), far more than it is about any period of history that we examine here. Good</p>

questions will address the historiography, rather than the particular time period. So, for example, for week 1, a good question will ask something about the use of written sources to understand the past, rather than asking some detail about the dropping of the atomic bomb. ("Why did Truman decide to drop the bomb" would not be a good question.) However, the question could use documents about the dropping of the bomb as an example of how historians use documents.

Return Method

Online via Canvas

Feedback Provided

As a rule, no feedback will be provided (other than a mark). However, brief feedback may be provided on earlier submissions.

Assessment 4 - In Term Test

Assessment Type

In Term Test

Description

The structure of the test is based on the structure of the course. The course consisted of 12 weeks of material, divided into four modules – each three weeks long. Consequently, the test is divided into 4 parts (Parts A-D), each with three questions (one for each week).

For your test, you will need to answer four questions, one from each part. (i.e. any one question from part A, any one question from part B, and so on). The questions are all weighted equally, so you should expect to spend half an hour each on each part. You are expected to write between, 200-250 words per answer.

Assessable material for the test is the material covered in the lectures, tutorials and weekly readings.

Weighting

Further details can be found on Canvas.

Length

20%

Due Date

1 hour - approx 1,000 words

10pm Friday 7 June (Week 13)

(The quiz will open at 6pm and close at 10pm. You will have one hour to complete the test once you commence it.)

Submission Method

Online

The class test will be accessible from the Class Test folder in Assessment on Canvas. The link will only be visible when the test is available for you to sit. If you are ill, or have an unavoidable commitment, please make an adverse circumstances application to apply for an alternative sitting.

Assessment Criteria

Students will be assessed according to their overall knowledge gained during the course. The test will emphasise broad skills and themes.

Return Method

Not Returned

Feedback Provided

No feedback.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:
Online – via FutureLearn and Canvas platforms
Email
Zoom and/or Teams

Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Oral Interviews (Vivas)

As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

Academic Misconduct

All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

**Adverse
Circumstances**

The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:

<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

**Important Policy
Information**

The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.

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