

Australian History: Aboriginal History to Colonization – Current Issues in a Historical Perspective

Course Details

Course Designator & Number: SDNY 3014

Number of Credits: 3

Language of Instruction: English

Course Description

Using contemporary issues in Australia - race, immigration, culture, environment, politics and foreign policy - the course explains the historical origins of issues & provides critical analysis. This course begins in 2010 and looks back into Australia's past, asking and answering a series of questions to explain contemporary attitudes and events, as part of an ongoing dialogue between the present and the past. What aspects of our colonial history help explain Australia early in the twenty-first century? What aspects of twentieth-century history will guide Australia in the twenty-first century? What is black armband history? Why do Indigenous Australians remain a disadvantaged group in society? What is the history of class, race and ethnicity in Australian society? What type of immigrants should we encourage? Why have refugees become such an important issue? Why is gender parity and sexual liberation important? What is popular culture and how does it change? How do governments decide on foreign policy, overseas trade policy and foreign aid? What are our obligations and expectations in time of war? What is the place of nationalism in Australia? We ask these and other contemporary questions, and provide historical answers based on an Aboriginal history that dates back 60,000 years and a recent history beginning in 1788.

Course Objectives

This course introduces students to important aspects of Australia's past. Lectures and seminars focus on the historical precursors and context of current issues by examining current concerns in their historical perspective.

After successfully completing this course you should be able to:

- Understand better the complex nature of Australian society, its different elements, and their separate and shared pasts;
- Reflect critically on Australian history and its impacts on the present and the future;
- Conduct research independently;
- Demonstrate reasoned thought, creativity, and a high quality of written expression;
- Examine, discuss and debate the main issues regarding Australian history, how it is understood today, and its importance to the present and the future.

As such, this course aims to foster the following attributes:

- In-depth knowledge of Australian History. The course aims to develop an understanding of current issues and major forces shaping contemporary Australia and place them in their historical perspective. It also seeks to develop a deeper understanding of all Australians, their heritages, cultures, shared values and place in the world.
- Effective Communication. This course seeks to develop written and oral communication skills through tutorial discussions and essays. Students are rewarded for participation, and are assessed on their ability to mount and convey a convincing argument in their essays.
- Independence and Creativity. Students are encouraged to think, research and write independently and creatively.
- Critical Judgment. Students will be introduced to a range of different perspectives on different aspects of Australian history, including current debates. Students will be encouraged to use their critical judgment in weighing the validity, usefulness and implications of different sources and different perspectives on various aspects of Australia's past.
- Ethical and Social Understanding. The course seeks to develop a deeper understanding of all Australians, their heritages, cultures, shared values and place in the world.
- Learning Resources

Methodology

This course is a lecture course in which class participation and discussion is encouraged. The course has compulsory readings and students will be given copies of these readings at the commencement of the course. In addition to these readings students will be supplied with a bibliography of useful texts. Students are expected to make use of both the Billy Blue library and local libraries and come to class prepared to discuss the topic assigned. Students are expected to demonstrate at a reasonably sophisticated level, both orally and in written form, their visual awareness of and personal responses to a range of Australian art.

Required Reading / Materials

Students will purchase the revised edition of Stuart Macintyre's *A Concise History of Australia* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2004). Also recommended is Martin Crotty and David Andrew Robert's edited *Turning Points in Australian History* (UNSW Press, Sydney, 2009). We also highly recommend Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark's *The History Wars* (Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2003).

THE INTERNET AS HISTORY RESOURCE

The Internet offers possibilities for accessing material not available in the library, particularly material of an archival nature. If you wish to conduct such searches on the web the most useful starting point is the National Library listing of sites at: <http://www.nla.gov.au/oz/histsite.html>

However, you should be aware that surfing the internet in search of information is no substitute for spending time in the library. Trying to find material on the internet can often be frustrating, time-consuming, and unrewarding. If you do elect to use information from the internet, be sure to cite it correctly. You should provide the author's name, the title of the document or work, the URL in angled brackets, and the date accessed. Note too that no more than ten percent of your cited sources should be internet-based, and under no circumstances should students rely upon or reference Wikipedia.

Grading

PENALTIES FOR WORK SUBMITTED LATE

Assignments received after the due date will be reduced by five percent (5%) of the possible grade for the piece of work being assessed per day, up to seven (7) days after the due date. Work submitted more than seven (7) days after the due date will not be marked, unless arrangements have been made prior to the due date for an extension.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Your participation mark is based on your preparation for class and your input into group discussion in all classes (excluding the class of your presentation - for which you will get a separate mark). You will need to demonstrate that you have read and thought about the set material for each week. Participation in class discussion will be marked on the constructiveness of your input to the class discussion and debate.

Grading Rubric

| Letter Grade | Score or Percentage | Description |
|--------------|---------------------|--|
| A | 93–100 | Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements. |
| A- | 90–92 | Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements. |
| B+ | 87–89 | |
| B | 83–86 | |
| B- | 80–82 | Achievement that meets the course requirements in every respect. |
| C+ | 77–79 | |
| C | 73–76 | |
| C- | 70–72 | Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to fully meet the course requirements. |
| D+ | 67–69 | |
| D | 60–66 | |
| F | 0–59 | Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I. |

Course Content

Major Essay Questions

1. In what ways have the fears about wayward or misbehaving youths changed between the 1950s and now?
2. Why was Joh Bjelke Petersen's Queensland government so disliked by civil libertarians and the "left" in Australia? How did he survive so long in power despite such trenchant opposition?
3. In what ways did Paul Keating and John Howard share similar visions of Australia? Were the similarities or the differences between the two most significant?
4. In what ways, and why, was the World War I experience so divisive on the Australian home front?
5. What have been the major challenges to the Anzac legend from the 1920s until now? Why has the Anzac legend proved so resilient when many thought it would die out?
6. What is "heritage", how does it differ from history, and why has it become more popular in recent decades?
7. Identify three pests introduced to the Australian environment. Why and how were they introduced, what damage have they caused, and have their effects been overcome?
8. From whom, and on what grounds, has opposition to Australia's immigration program come? Discuss with reference to the period between WWII and the present.
9. What are the limits and possibilities of "middle power" status for Australia? Discuss with specific examples from the post-WWII period.
10. Discuss how the History wars have been fought since the mid-1990s with specific reference to the National Museum of Australia and to the teaching of history in schools. In your answer you should identify the issues at stake, the arguments put forward by contending parties, and any discernible results.

Tutorial Essay

The tutorial essay, 1,200 words in length, is worth 20% of your overall mark for the course.

The aims of the tutorial essay are to:

- Familiarize students with topics in contemporary Australian history;
- Encourage students to be aware of different types of sources;
- Encourage students to be critical of sources;
- Make students aware of the technical side of historical writing;
- Prepare students to write critically;
- Prepare students to write prose;
- Make students aware of historiography;
- Prepare students for their major essay in the course.

The tutorial essay will deal with material covered in the first three weeks of tutorials. For this essay, analyze any single one of the readings given for tutorials in weeks 2, 3, or 4. Do so using one of the questions provided for that week's tutorial readings. Be sure to make it clear at the head of your essay what reading and what question you are using. For example: Question: What was the purpose of child removal?

Reading: "Part 2, Tracing the History: National Overview", Bringing Them Home: Report of the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Sydney, 1997.

In your essay, consider: What answer or answers to the particular question are suggested by the reading? Is the source adequate for answering the particular question? Why or why not? What other sources might be helpful in considering the particular question? Are they easily obtainable? Note that you should use sources other than the tutorial reading, but the tutorial reading should be your primary focus.

Tutorial Participation

Attendance at tutorials and participation in the discussion constitute an important element of learning and of contributing to the learning of others.

Final Exam

There will also be a two-hour exam held. Students will be required to write four short essay answers, which they will choose from a pool of questions. These questions will be divided between material covered in tutorials and material covered in lectures.

Unit 1

Australian Pasts

Topic

Introduction – Why Australian History?

Unit 2

Australian Pasts

Topic:

Overview to 1901

Unit 3

Australian Pasts

Topic

Overview to 2010

Tutorial:

History and the Historian

Unit 4

Australian Culture and Society

Topic:

Aboriginal Australia

Tutorial:

The Stolen Generations

Tutorial Exercise Due

Unit 5

Australian Culture and Society

Topic

Australian Popular Culture, Youth Movements and Moral Panic

Tutorial:

Moral Panics and Unruly Youth

Unit 6

Australian Culture and Society

Topic

Australian Politics and Prime Ministers

Tutorial:

Joh Bjelke-Petersen and the Police State

Unit 7

Topics: Break Week

Unit 8

Australian Culture and Society

Topics:

War and Nationalism

Tutorial:

Competing Interpretations of Anzac

Unit 9

Australians and their World

Topic:

Heritage and Belonging

Tutorial:

The Meaning of Places

Unit 10

Australians and their World

Topic:

Environmental Crises Then and Now

Tutorial:

The Quest to Drought-Proof Australia

Unit 11

Australians and their World

Topic:

Immigration, Refugees and Multiculturalism

Tutorial:

White Australia to Mandatory Detention

Unit 12

Australians and their World

Topic:

Foreign Policy, Defence and our “Great and Powerful Friends”

Tutorial:

Sheriff or Diplomat? Negotiating a Foreign Policy in the Arc of Instability

Major Essay due

Unit 13

Australians and their World

Topic:

Overview and Conclusion

Tutorial:

Playgrounds of the History Wars

Policies

Attendance Policy

Students must attend all classes and gallery visits and be able to certificate genuine absences. Any absence should be justifiable in terms only of illness, religious holiday or an internship interview.

University of Minnesota Policies & Procedures

Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else’s work as your own can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty

Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty can be assigned a penalty up to and including an “F” or “N” for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, ask.

Student Conduct

The University of Minnesota has specific policies concerning student conduct. This information can be found [on the Learning Abroad Center website](#).