

The University of Texas at El Paso
HISTORY 6300 (20241)- Topics in Historiography
Spring 2025

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This course focuses on preparing doctoral students for either the portfolio or the comprehensive examination. We will meet every 2 weeks to discuss your progress. For the portfolio, you will submit short papers each week via Blackboard. For the comprehensive exam, we will discuss what to do for each paper and you will submit revised papers via Blackboard.

PhD Guidelines and Policies

You can find the 2020 Guidelines and Policies [here](#). Note that they do not contain any information on the comprehensive exams, only the portfolio.

Field supervisors

By now, you should have chosen the supervising professor for each of your three fields. Clearly, I am supervising your Borderlands field.

Next steps for Spring 2025 semester

1. For portfolio: Send me a list of all the borderlands papers you have written. Include the title of the paper, the type of paper (research, historiographical, book review, synthetic, etc.), the professor, and the grade.
2. For comprehensive exam: I have provided the still incomplete Borderlands book list. The Borderlands caucus still needs to add a few books. Let me know which books you have read.
3. Let me know who your other two supervisors are.
4. Let me know when you plan to defend.

Portfolio

Following is a description of what is required for the portfolio, taken from the Guidelines that are available online [here](#).

Checklist 1). Table of Contents

2). C.V. and possibly a resume

3). List of courses taken

4). Copies of all annual activities reports

5). Professional Materials •A Professional Essay (max. 15 pages) which will provide an intellectual rationale for choosing the fields s/he chose; demonstrate how his or her program of study—both fields and choice of dissertation topic—coheres; and indicate how that program of study has been shaped by being undertaken in a program that focuses on the Borderlands.

•Teaching materials, including:

--Sample syllabi for survey courses in the student's two major fields

--Statement of teaching philosophy

--Course materials and teaching evaluations for any courses the student has actually taught, and/or reflections on a student's AI experience

•Paper presented (or to be presented) at a conference.

•Scholarly publications, if any.

•Grant proposal tailored to a particular funding source. Ideally this would be an already submitted proposal, but not necessarily so.

6). Evidence of additional scholarly or creative activities, such as museum exhibits or other significant work in Public History

7). Synthetic and/or historiographical essays, organized by field

•Intended to complement and flesh out work done in courses—no more than one additional paper for the minor (third) field, and no more than two additional papers for each major field. These papers will require students to read well beyond what they have done in their course work; each should be no longer than twenty pages.

8). Historiographical papers or collections of book reviews, organized by field.

•No more than one additional historiography for each field, complimenting previously written papers drawn from course work.

9). Minimum of two research papers written in seminars, organized by field.

10). Final exams or other essays from course work, organized by field.

11). Final bibliography for each field.

- Organized thematically and succinctly annotated – a few sentences per book, or paragraphs describing linked works.

12). Dissertation prospectus

13). Any other materials the student feels demonstrate scholarly or teaching accomplishments
The entire Portfolio can approach 500 pages long. For obvious reasons, the Portfolios should be submitted to committee members in electronic format. Students should include hyperlinks in the table of contents to take readers directly to specific papers, bibliographies, etc. in the Portfolio. Students are advised to speak with the dissertation advisor as well as other students who have advanced to candidacy for advice about compiling and organizing the Portfolio. Please be aware that the compilation of the Portfolio requires some time.

Portfolio assignment for this semester

We will review the papers you have already written, and I will decide whether you need to write an additional paper assignment. I will review all your papers (preferably with the professor's comments) to see if you need to revise any. Once I have reviewed your papers, I will be able to make more specific assignments.

Comprehensive exam

For the comprehensive exam, the student will read fifty books from a list approved by each field caucus. More information will be provided by the PhD program director this semester.

Comprehensive exam assignment for each book

1. I will send you a list of fifteen books to read this semester.
2. For each book, write a 500-word paper to be turned in weekly via Blackboard. The paper should include:
 - a. The book information using *The Chicago Manual of Style* bibliographic citation.
 - b. One or two sentences explaining the thesis/ main argument.
 - c. A section on the major arguments throughout the book.
 - d. A section on the most significant sources.
 - e. A section on the significance or contribution of this book to borderlands history.
 - f. An essay question based on this book.