

# **HISTORY 100: HISTORICAL THINKING AMERICAN CRIME, AMERICAN JUSTICE**

UW-Stevens Point at Wausau

Fall 2020

Professor Brett Barker, Ph.D.

Cohort 1: Tuesdays in-person 12:30-1:45 PM Room 180 (Sept. 8-Nov. 24)

Cohort 2: Thursdays in-person 12:30-1:45 PM Room 180 (Sept. 3-Nov. 19)

Note: All Instruction will be Online after Thanksgiving

Class Number 82235

## **Contact Information:**

E-mail: [bbarker@uwsp.edu](mailto:bbarker@uwsp.edu) Telephone: 715.261.6250

Office Hours: (Via Zoom only):

T Th 11:00 AM-12:00 noon, Th 7:00-8:00 PM and by appointment

## **Course Objectives:**

This course introduces students to historical thinking. We will study specific crimes in order to see how the justice system sometimes worked, sometimes failed, and what factors helped cause those failures. Students will also be introduced to college-level expectations and the reading and writing skills necessary for success.

Knowledge: a demonstrated understanding of the following:

- an understanding of four of the most notorious crimes in 20<sup>th</sup>-century American history
- the way these crimes were covered in the media and discussed in American society
- their implications for the American criminal justice system and its effectiveness
- the influence of celebrity, race, sexuality, power, and privilege on the legal system and the American ideal of justice
- debates about the causes of crime and appropriate punishment for criminals
- the way historians use sources to investigate and understand the past

Skills: success in this course will also require demonstration of the following:

- the ability to read and listen with critical perception
- the ability to analyze and synthesize course materials, including the use of primary sources from each of the cases
- the ability to distinguish between knowledge, values, beliefs, and opinions, including an understanding of the ways historians' interpretations of these cases have evolved over time
- the ability to use evidence to support assertions about the past
- the ability to analyze how the American legal system has changed over time and how the social and political realities of the time influenced each case

**Course Calendar:**

<b>Unit 1: Introduction to College History</b> “The Strange Death of Silas Deane” (available on Canvas)	<b>Sept. 3-22</b>
<b>Unit 2: Leopold and Loeb (1924)</b> <i>Crimes of the Century</i> , Chap. 2	<b>Sept. 24-Oct. 13</b>
<b>Unit 3: The Scottsboro Nine (1931)</b> <i>Crimes of the Century</i> , Chap. 3	<b>Oct. 15-Nov. 3</b>
<b>Unit 4: The Lindbergh Baby Kidnapping (1932)</b> <i>Crimes of the Century</i> , Chap. 4	<b>Nov. 5-24</b>
<b>Unit 5: The O.J. Simpson Trial (1994)</b> <i>Crimes of the Century</i> , Chap. 6	<b>Dec. 1-10 (ONLINE)</b>

**Grading:** Course grades will be based on the following:

**20% Class Citizenship:** Not only should you attend class, but you are also expected to participate in discussions. In evaluating your participation grade I will consider your attendance (or completion of an alternative assignment when in-class attendance is not possible), the quantity and quality of your contributions, and your willingness to listen and interact with other students while integrating your comments into the flow of discussion. Failure to meet these expectations will negatively impact your grade.

**20% Shorter Writing Assignments and Conferences:** Many classes will include short in-class writing assignments that are reflections or summaries of your thoughts over class that day. Other short assignments will be based on assigned readings. In-class writing should be written in order in your spiral notebook; out-of-class writing should be typed and submitted to Canvas. For Units 3-5, each student will have one-on-one conferences via Zoom with the professor to discuss progress on their unit assignment. These are mandatory and failure to schedule and complete them will result in your grade being lowered.

**45% Unit Essays:** At the end of each unit, you will complete an assignment related to the case we have studied. Unit 1 will be worth 5%; Unit 2 10%, Units 3 and 4 will be worth 15% each.

**15% Final Essay:** On the day of the final (Wednesday, Dec. 16), by 11:59 PM, you will turn in a final take-home essay (covering Units 2-5).

**Note:** All shorter writings assignment and unit essays will be explained in detail in weekly handouts available in class (and on Canvas) each week.

**Grading Scale:**

90-92 A-	93-100 A		
80-82 B-	83-86 B	87-89 B+	
70-72 C-	73-76 C	77-79 C+	
	60-66 D	67-69 D+	0-59 F

### **Attendance:**

**You should attend class whenever possible, although university policy this semester allows for absences, especially for medical and safety concerns, with the use of alternative assignments to make up for the lost in-class learning.** Past experience indicates that students who attend irregularly often do poorly in the course. As a courtesy to the instructor and other students, **please arrive on time and turn off your cell phone and computers. Texting or computer use in class is prohibited unless allowed by an official accommodation plan.** Repeated violation of this rule will result in a significant lowering of your class citizenship grade (see above).

### **Text and Course Materials (required):**

1. Gilbert Geis and Leigh B. Bienen, *Crimes of the Century: From Leopold and Loeb to O.J. Simpson*. ISBN: 9781555534271.
2. You will also need a dedicated spiral notebook for notes. You might want to also have a pocket folder for returned writing assignments.

### **Three Important Notes about the Course:**

- All assignments are due on the dates specified, unless you make prior arrangement with the instructor. **Missed in-class work will require you to complete an alternative assignment.** Late work will be penalized, usually by 5% for each 24-hour period accrued beginning at the due date, unless an extension is granted before the deadline.
- Students who intend to be absent for a week or more during the semester should speak to Prof. Barker immediately.
- Academic Honesty and Classroom Behavior: This course is part of the UW-Stevens Point academic community, an academic community that is bound together by the traditions and practice of scholarship. Honest intellectual work—on examinations and on written assignments—is essential to the success of this community of scholars. Using classmates' responses to answer exam questions or disguising words written by others as your own undermines the trust and respect on which our course depends. The work in this course is challenging and will demand a good deal of each of you. I have every confidence that each of you can succeed. Doing your own work will enhance your sense of accomplishment when the semester comes to a close.

Additionally, the classroom environment is a unique opportunity for students to share ideas, opinions, and discuss course content. As each student is entitled to contribute in class, specific expectations are necessary to ensure a thriving classroom environment. Expectations include: arriving to class on time, being prepared for class, no electronic devices, unless authorized to do so, any loud shouting, excessive side conversations, arriving to class under the influence of any alcohol or drugs, offensive language, verbal or physical threats, intimidation of any kind, or any other behavior that may be disruptive to the professor or other students. If any of this behavior is exhibited, you may be asked to leave the class for the day. Any continued disruptive behavior may result in a referral to the Dean of Students Office.

**Changes to the Syllabus:**

I have tried to make this syllabus as accurate, complete, and helpful as possible. Because of the uncertain nature of this semester, changes may be necessary. I will inform the class of changes with as much advance notice as possible, but paying attention to in-class announcements and their reposting on Canvas will be critical to your success.

**Proper Use of Class Materials:**

Lecture materials and recordings for HIST 100 are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

**Students with Disabilities:**

The University has a legal responsibility to provide accommodations and program access as mandated by Section 54 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The university's philosophy is to not only provide what is mandated but also convey its genuine concern for one's total well-being. If accommodations are needed, please contact the instructor as well as the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (DATC), located on the Stevens Point campus. Students can also pick up an application for accommodations packet in the Solution Center.

DATC contact information:

(715) 346-3365 (Voice)

(715) 346-3362 (TDD only)

or via email at [datctr@uwsp.edu](mailto:datctr@uwsp.edu)