

## The University of Manitoba, Faculty of Arts, Regular Session: Fall Term 2015

### General Information

**Department:** History

**Course Title:** Topics in History: Archives, Societal Memory, and the Uses of the Past

**Course Number:** HIST: 3110

**Instructor:** Tom Nesmith

**Office:** 321 St. Paul's College

**Telephone:** Office: 204 474-8559

**E mail:** [Tom\\_Nesmith@umanitoba.ca](mailto:Tom_Nesmith@umanitoba.ca)

**Web Site:** <http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/departments/history/archives/index.html>

**Office Hours:** Thursdays. 9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M. or by appointment.

### Course Information

**Objectives and Content:** This course introduces students to the relationships between archives, societal memory, and the uses of the past. It examines how (from the early nineteenth century on) the growing number, diversity, and evolving roles and holdings of archives have given them a central role in shaping the societal memory that supports the now myriad of uses of the past. The course will draw from a wide range of Canadian and international examples. It aims to show how greater understanding of how archives and records shape societal memory can improve the ability of both historical researchers and archivists to use archives more fully and effectively.

The course is intended for three audiences: students who want to understand the societal roles of archives and thereby be more effective users of archives; professional archivists who want to study the history and contemporary uses of archives in an academic setting; and those who are considering becoming archivists. (For the latter, the course is valuable preparation for the master's level Archival Studies program that is offered in the Joint Master's Program in History. Archival Studies students are preparing to enter the archival profession and receive a master's degree upon completion of the program.)

**Required Textbook(s):** There is no required text. The instructor will provide a reading list at the beginning of the course that draws on a variety of books and articles. (These sources will be available online or through the UM Library.)

**Recommended Readings:** The reading list mentioned above provides recommended as well as required readings.

**Tentative Outline and Topics to be Covered:** The course begins with examination of the variety of memory-keeping activities and institutions that have selected (or shaped) the small portion of communications available for recall by societies. We then position archives in relation to these institutions and activities as playing an often overlooked distinct and increasingly central role in these processes of memory formation. We do so by examining the history of archives to see what types of archives have been created, when, and why, and what types of records they have acquired, when and why. We examine how individuals, institutions, and societies attempt to

shape their identities, public perceptions of them, and thus memories of them through these record making and archiving actions. We then explore other uses of archives (often unanticipated by the creators of records and archives) that have expanded into an extraordinary number and variety in the past 50 years. These include: academic historical, humanities, and social science research; literary and artistic work; filmmaking; scientific, medical, and environmental research; Aboriginal rights, human rights, social justice, and public policy generally; the news media and television and radio broadcasting generally; genealogy, family, and popular history; and the Internet.

A theme throughout the course is that ongoing growth in the uses and benefits of archives depends on understanding as much as possible of the history of how and why individuals, institutions, and societies create, organize, archive, and use records. This contextualization not only assists us to understand the initial purposes of the records (or one key use we can make of them today) but also how they have been re-interpreted in the past and may be re-interpreted again to continue to open up new ways of understanding and using this evolving societal memory.

**Referencing Style Guide:** The style guide for *Archivaria* (the journal of the Association of Canadian Archivists) is used in this course. See the Association of Canadian Archivists' website: [http://www.archivists.ca/sites/default/files/Attachments/Communications\\_attachments/Archivaria/Archivaria\\_Style\\_Guide-Jan2010.pdf](http://www.archivists.ca/sites/default/files/Attachments/Communications_attachments/Archivaria/Archivaria_Style_Guide-Jan2010.pdf)

## Method of Evaluation

**Test(s):** There are no tests.

**Assignments:** The written assignments in this course are as follows:

1. An essay of 10 double-spaced typed pages is due on 2 December 2015. It is worth 20 percent of the final grade.
2. Two (2) written reviews of assigned readings (5 double-spaced typed pages each). These reviews are each worth 10 percent of the final grade. The reviews are due on 9 October and 9 November.

A written evaluation of an assignment will be given prior to the voluntary withdrawal date (18 November 2015).

Uncollected term work will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and will be subject to confidential destruction.

**Class Participation:** This aspect of the course is worth 30 percent of the final grade. This mark is based on your participation in general discussion of each class' topic and on formal oral presentations on assigned readings and your 10 page essay.

**Final Examination:** The final examination is worth 30 percent of the course mark.

**Late Assignments/Grade Appeals:** One mark will be lost for each day the assignment is overdue. Students who wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the grade for the term work has been made available to them.

The grade scale for this course is as follows:

A+85 and over; A 80-84; B+ 76-79; B 70-75; C+66-69; C 60-65; D 50-59; F less than 50.

**Academic Dishonesty:** University policy on academic integrity will be enforced. The University of Manitoba's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and impersonation is available in the Academic Calendar and Catalog, General Academic Regulations, "Academic Integrity" at <http://crscalprod1.cc.umanitoba.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&loaduserredits=False> and in the Faculty of Arts regulation at [http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student/student\\_responsibilities.html](http://umanitoba.ca/faculties/arts/student/student_responsibilities.html)

**Student resources:** You have access to several important resources to help you navigate your classes and university life more generally. There are writing tutors available to help you with your essays through the Academic Learning Centre (ALC): <http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/> The ALC page also has resources to help you with study skills, organization, as well as assistance for students using English as an Additional Language (EAL). Other issues, including accessibility services, workshops, and tips about academic integrity are addressed at the Student Advocacy Services webpage ([http://umanitoba.ca/student/resource/student\\_advocacy/](http://umanitoba.ca/student/resource/student_advocacy/)). The History department will also make a writing tutor available exclusively to History students in the department on two days of the week. More information about scheduling etc TBA.

All of the above services can also be accessed through this link:  
<http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility/student-resources.html>

History students can also take advantage of the huge range of academic materials (including primary and secondary sources, as well as pages to help with writing and referencing) made available by the History subject librarian, Kyle Feenstra, tailored just for you! They are available on the Libraries page at this link: <http://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/content.php?pid=219304>