

HIS 3942-29861 (Fall 2024)  
History Practicum: Rivers of America  
MWF 4 (10:40 AM -11:30 AM) Keene-Flint 117

Professor Jack E. Davis

(he, him, his)

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[davisjac@ufl.edu](mailto:davisjac@ufl.edu) (best means for communicating with the prof)

Ofc. Flint 235

Ofc. Hrs.: MWF 11:30 AM-12:30 PM

352-273-3398

Grader: Mr. Weilan Ge ([weilange@ufl.edu](mailto:weilange@ufl.edu))

This course has a dual, integrated focus. On the one hand, it will give you guidance in practicing historical writing and research: how to find and handle source materials and organize and write a paper that asks critical questions. On the other hand, it will immerse you in the history of American rivers, and around this subject you will practice being a professional historian.

On the practicum side, it asks the following questions?

The History Practicum–Purpose and structure of the class

What is history?

What is the difference between popular history and professional history?

What skills and resources do historians need to do their work?

This class is intended to introduce students to the basic goals of historical study and to the fundamental skills necessary for historical research, analysis, and writing.

The objective here is to help you assemble the tools needed to succeed in the major and to prepare you for graduate school, if you choose to pursue advanced studies.

On the historical subject side, the course is a cultural and natural history of the American relationship with rivers, from the indigenous period to the present. It explores how rivers, as geographic and ecological entities, shaped exploration, settlement, commerce, politics, culture, group identities, and more in the US, and how and why the US reshaped rivers.

Students should finish this course with an expanded knowledge of the integral place of the rivers in American history. A principal ambition of the course is to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the American experience and how, as a historian, to mine it. If we incorporate the human relationship with the environment into our study of the past, we gain clearer insight into the identity, beliefs, and values of human groups and how each defined its relationship with others.

### **Course Objectives:**

- \* Expanding one's knowledge of the cultural and ecological history of rivers and their place in the larger American experience.
- \* Expanding one's knowledge of how the non-human world has sustained human life and

- influenced the course of human history.
- \* Promoting critical thinking and developing research and writing skills.

### **Course Requirements:**

(See assignment descriptions at the end of the syllabus; **each assignment--except the Grammar and Style Guide Exercise and haiku poems--is worth 20% of the course grade**)

*Every week, you will be given a theme for writing a haiku poem related to either grammar and style standards or the course subject. You will be asked to read you haiku poem in class.*

- \* Course group Project: A human and natural history of the Suwanee River
- \* Grammar and Style Guide
- \* Human History and Rivers paper
- \* Key Events, People and Places paper 1
- \* Key Events, People, and Places paper 2
- \* Who Was John Wesley Powell paper

### **Course Grading Scale (see the UF grading scale at the end of syllabus):**

A+ =97-100  
A =94-96  
A- =90-93  
B+ =87-89  
B =84-86  
B- =80-83  
C+ =77-79  
C =74-76  
C- =70-73  
D =65-69

Assignments not completed earn a 0

Plagiarized assignment (see plagiarism section below) earn a 0

Assignments not turned in before or by stated due date will not be accepted. All assignments must be **both posted on Canvas and emailed to the instructor or grader.**

### **Assigned Texts:**

Martin Doyle, *The Source: How Rivers Made America and America Remade Rivers* (W. W. Norton 2019) 0393356612

William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students* 6<sup>th</sup> edition (Oxford, 2020)  
9780190078416

**Week I (Aug 23): Introduction: Rivers and History**

**Week II (Aug 26 & 28 (no class on Aug 30)): What We Do, and a Florida River View**

Readings: Storey, 1-27

*Suwannee River class project review*

**Week III (Sept 4 & 5 (no class on Sept 2, Labor Day))**

Readings: Doyle, introduction and chapter 1

**Week IV (Sept 9, 11, 13): A Florida River View**

Readings: Storey, 40-61; American Historical Association, “Defining Plagiarism” (see link)  
<https://www.historians.org/resource/defining-plagiarism/>

**Grammar and Style Guide Exercise Due Friday (September 13)**

**Week V (Sept 16, 18, 20): Taking Control**

**Human History and Rivers paper due (discussion).**

Readings: Doyle, chapters 2-4

**Week VI (Sept 23, 25, 27): Evidence and Sources**

*Discussion of sources for Suwannee River project*

Readings: Storey, 32-39, 62-77

*Orientation of the Physical Archives in Library East*

**Week VII (Sept 30, Oct 2 & 4): Who Owns the Water?**

**Key Events, People, and Places 1 due (Oct 4) (discussion)**

Readings: Doyle, chapter 5 & 6

**Week VIII (Oct 7, 9, 11): The Narrative; and Oral History**

Reading: Storey, 78-97; Smithsonian Institution Archives, “How to Do Oral History”  
<https://siarchives.si.edu/history/how-do-oral-history>

**Week IX (Oct 14 & 16 (no class on Oct 18, Homecoming)): Waste Not**

Readings: Doyle, chapters 7 & 8

**Week X (Oct 21, 23, 25): The Practitioner; the Book Review**

Reading: Storey 98-113; The UNC Writing Center, “Book Reviews” chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/<https://writingcenter.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/346/2012/09/Book-Reviews-The-Writing-Center.pdf>

**Key Events, People, and Places 2 due (Oct 25) (discussion)**

**Week XI Oct 28 & 30, Nov 1): Engineering Nature; Harnessing Nature**

Readings: Doyle, chapters 9 & 10

Film: *Cadillac Desert: An American Nile*

**Week XII (Nov 4, 6, 8): The Practitioner cont.**

**Suwannee River Project Update**

Readings: Storey, 114-31

**Week XIII (Nov 13 & 15 (no class on Nov 11, Veterans Day)): Backpaddling**

**Book Review Due (Nov 15)**

Readings: Doyle, chapters 11 & 12.

**Week XIV (Nov 18, 20, 22): Backpaddling cont.**

Reading: Doyle, chapters 11 & 12

**Digital Humanities presentation**

**Week XV Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Week VI (Dec 2 & 4): Presentations**

Presenting your research on the Suwannee River

**Final Exam Day** (You have no in-class exams in this course.)

**Course Requirements Descriptions:**

All written work for the course must be typed or computer generated and in 12-point double-spaced print. Your work must also be presented in third-person language.

*Class participation:* Students are expected to come to class for lectures and prepared to participate in discussions.

Beyond two absences, each additional absence occurring will result in one point deducted from your class-participation percentage.

*Grammar and Style Guide* exercise can be found on my Canvas site. Download and answer the questions by highlighting that which you believe to be the correct response. You will be required to follow the rules of the guide in all writing assignments for the course. If you fail to show proof of having completed the guide before any one of the writing assignments is due, you will lose 5 points from the assignment grade. If you fail to follow the standards laid out in the guide, up to 5 points will be deducted from your assignment grade.

All assignments must draw from printed materials or digitized printed materials. Do not use Internet sources, especially Wikipedia, unless they are Internet databases (such as Proquest or Jstor) from which you can access primary sources or scholarly materials. Newspaper on-line are also fine. For hard-copy sources, use original documents or published works. **Restrict yourself to the page-length limit noted for each assignment.** All papers should be double spaced, computer generated, using default margin and header and footer setting, and 12-point font. Comply with the rules outlined in the Grammar and Style-Guide Exercise. Noncompliance will result in a lower grade for your assignment. Cite all your sources at the end of the paper.

*Suwannee River class project* involves the class working as a team to discover and examine the natural and human history of the Suwannee. The class will divide itself into subgroups, with one focusing on the natural history (including the geological history of the aquifer and its ecological significance) and the other focusing on the human history (social, cultural, and political history). Each group will gather research materials, online and archival, present it to and discuss it with the rest of the class, and write a paper using those materials and presenting a historical narrative of the river.

*Human History and Rivers* Write a one-page paper identifying key ideas one might employ in understanding the role rivers have played in the course of human history and why it is important to think of them as historical agents.

*Key Events, People, and Places 1* The prompts for this assignment will be posted on Canvas. In short, you are asked to define the individual terms writing no more than three sentences for each. Identify the larger historical significance of the event while keeping in mind the central theme of this course. Cite your sources.

*Key Events, People, Places 2* The same as the above assignment.

*Book Review* requires you to read about book about the history of a river or some history related to rivers. You will then write a 500-word review following the guidelines we've discussed in class.

*Again, following the rules of the Grammar and Style Guide exercise is imperative to completing work of full potential.*

### **Other Business:**

### **Plagiarism and Honesty Code:**

Keep in mind that your written assignments must represent original work. You cannot copy the words, phrases, arguments, ideas, and conclusions of someone else or of another source (including Internet sources) without giving proper credit to the person or source by using both **quotation marks** and a **footnote**. Do not cobble together paragraphs or passages of separate texts and then try to claim that you have done original and legitimate work. You must write with your own ideas and in your own words. If you copy the words of someone else without putting those words in quotation marks, **REGARDLESS OF CITING THE SOURCE**, you are plagiarizing. Plagiarism is theft, and it is academic dishonesty. You can be reported to the Dean of Students office for plagiarism, and the incident may then become a permanent part of your academic record. Plagiarism **will** earn you a failing grade in the course, a grade that is final and that cannot be made up. If you have any questions about how you are citing or using sources, come to me for the answers.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

Again, please consult with me if you have any questions or concerns.

### **In-Class Recording:**

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor. A "class lecture" is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest

instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session. Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student

### **Classroom Assistance:**

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click here (<https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>) to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

### **Health and Wellness**

U Matter, We Care: If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit U Matter, We Care website to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress. Counseling and Wellness Center: Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services. Student Health Care Center: Call 352-392-1161 for 24/7 information to help you find the care you need, or visit the Student Health Care Center website. University Police Department: Visit UF Police Department website or call 352-392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies). UF Health Shands Emergency Room / Trauma Center: For immediate medical care call 352-733-0111 or go to the emergency room at 1515 SW Archer Road, Gainesville, FL 32608; Visit the UF Health Emergency Room and Trauma Center website. GatorWell Health Promotion Services: For prevention services focused on optimal wellbeing, including Wellness Coaching for Academic Success, visit the GatorWell website or call 352-2734450.

### **Online Course Evaluation:**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their

Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **Academic Resources Information:**

E-learning technical support: Contact the UF Computing Help Desk at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

Career Connections Center: Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601.

Career assistance and counseling services.

Library Support: Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 352-392-2010 or to make an appointment 352- 392-6420.

General study skills and tutoring. Writing Studio: 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138.

Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process.

### **History Majors:**

If you are a history major or minor and wish to receive important announcements on courses, scholarships, awards, and the Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society, please sign on to the history department listserv. Compose a message to: [majordomo@clas.ufl.edu](mailto:majordomo@clas.ufl.edu). In the text of the message, type the following: subscribe [hist-ba@history.ufl.edu](mailto:hist-ba@history.ufl.edu)

### ***Alpata: A Journal of History***

Keep in mind that the undergraduate- and graduate-student members of Phi Alpha Theta History Honor Society at the University of Florida publish an academic journal each spring. In the fall, the journal editors will be sending out a call for submissions (articles and book reviews) to the journal. The journal is also looking for talented students who would like to serve on the editorial board. Please contact me if you're interested.

### **UF Grading Scale**

A = 4.0

A- = 3.67

B+ = 3.33

B = 3.0



B- = 2.67

C+ = 2.33

C = 2.0

C- = 1.67

D+ = 1.33

D = 1.0

D- = 0.67

E = 0.0

E1 = 0.0 Stopped attending or participating prior to end of class

I (incomplete) = 0.0