

HIST*3480 (02)- WORKPLACE LEARNING: Rural Diary Archive

Department of History, Summer 2019

Instructor & Workplace Supervisor: Dr Catharine Wilson

Interested students should contact: Dr Wilson, cawilson@uoguelph.ca

Course Synopsis:

Would you like to immerse yourself in daily life in the past? The Rural Diary Archive website showcases over 180 diarists and is a crowdsourcing site. Your experiential learning opportunity will involve transcribing diaries online. You will also help develop content for the website by selecting tweets for posting and contributing to a glossary of 19th century terms. Your volunteer work will make these hard-to-use but highly useful documents more accessible for researchers now and in the future. In connecting this work experience to your academic discipline you will write a series of short critical reflections and a research paper which includes an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of diaries as primary sources.

Course Format:

Independent work with scheduled meetings

Learning Outcomes:

By the successful completion of this course, an assiduous student will have learned to:

1. identify and critically assess diary writing and keeping practices;
2. read and understand 19th-century handwriting & vocabulary;
3. transcribe;
4. research;
5. assess the strengths and weaknesses of diaries as sources
5. communicate compelling history for use in a social media platform;
6. identify and explain daily life in 19th-century rural Ontario;
7. know the value of public engagement;
8. reflect upon their own work in a critical manner.

Methods of Evaluation and Weights:

Transcriptions	30%
Weekly Critical Reflections	15%
Contributions to the glossary & Tweets	20%
Final Essay/Document Analysis	35%

Texts and/or Resources Required:

No Required Textbook

Project Timeline

Week 1: Pre-arranged group meeting with Professor Wilson to view the diaries. Instructions will be established and training started for reading cursive, transcribing, researching the diarist, and selecting tweets and glossary items. You will also learn about the questions/tools with which to mine diaries of meaning. You will start with a moderately easy diary for the first five weeks.

Week 3: Meeting. Dr. Wilson will review your transcription work

Week 5 or 6: Meeting. First collection of weekly Reflections is due covering weeks 1-5, and you will raise your transcribing skills by advancing to a more difficult diary

Week 10: Meeting to submit your second collection of weekly Reflections covering weeks 6-10, and discuss the final essay/document analysis

Week 13: Document Analysis, Tweets and glossary items due

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.