Welcome to History 480. Intended for advanced history majors, this course will strengthen your ability to access, analyze, and synthesize primary and secondary sources. You will also gain a more complete understanding of how to employ and evaluate the analytical frameworks deployed by historians. This semester, you will research, write, and present an article-length paper (20-25 pages) grounded in evidence and linked to a historiography related to our course subject. It should display a clear methodology as well as clear prose. Successful completion of the course fulfills the Keystone requirement as well as Writing and Speaking graduation skills.

In 1915, farmers in North Dakota—with the aid of Socialist organizers—created the Nonpartisan League (NPL), a new, candidate-endorsing political organization to challenge banking, flour milling, and railroad interests based in Minneapolis and St. Paul. As an anti-colonial and transnational political movement, the League argued for a state-controlled lending bank, a state-owned flour mill, a state-owned grain elevator, and state-sponsored crop insurance. Its support of suffrage also offered farm women the opportunity to organize and engage of protest of their own. After seizing control of North Dakota’s state government in 1918, the movement quickly spread to many other midwestern and western states (including Minnesota) and Canadian provinces. It became the most successful progressive movement in America during the first half of the twentieth-century. Government repression and corporate-organized resistance undid the NPL and its programs in 1919, 1920, and 1921, and by 1922, the NPL dissipated (only to return in a modified form in the 1930s).

After digesting introductory readings, students will engage in primary source research on a variety of issues related to the Nonpartisan League—farmer’s movements, women’s rights, immigration and ethnicity, business history, progressive politics and conservative reactions in the Upper Midwest during World War I, the “Red Scare,” labor movements, and the history of the Twin Cities—located in the Minnesota Historical Society archives.

After exploring the methods, questions, and problems at the heart of studying history, we will spend three weeks reading secondary source materials on the Nonpartisan League. Wide-ranging in subject, they will establish the crucial issues. They will also introduce us to the methods utilized by historians to understand the Nonpartisan League and its related dynamics. We then turn to archives and the research process, producing a paper reflecting original ideas and investigations. Finally, we will examine a film-making collective’s understanding of the Nonpartisan League, created in the 1970s, in order to illuminate the relationship between the study of history and vocation. At every point, we will focus our attention on improving written and oral expression, learn about the issues at stake in producing histories, and delineate what the study and practice of history encompasses.

OFFICE HOURS
Please feel free to drop in during office hours and chat about any questions or concerns. Keep in mind that these hours are set aside for you—take advantage of them. If you are unable to meet during my scheduled office hours, please contact me to set up an appointment. E-mail is the best way to reach me.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

**General:** This course should strengthen your abilities to read critically, think analytically, and convey your ideas clearly, both in writing and orally. These abilities are crucial to your future — whatever your vocation. This requires your **active participation** in intensive reading, writing, and discussion **as well as regular attendance.** **Attendance is mandatory,** and **more than one absence will result in reduction of the course grade.** **More than three absences will result in a failure for the course.** You are responsible for knowing the college, departmental, and course information described herein. The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus at any time. Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the either the CLASS office at 612-330-1053 or the Access Center at 612-630-1749.
**Reading:** The following list is required of everyone to provide a community of fact for discussion and intelligent questioning. The reading for each week should be completed before our Tuesday meeting. Come prepared to initiate and sustain discussion, not merely to follow it passively. You should bring the readings to class for close analysis.


Articles, essays, and book chapters found on course Moodle site.

**Writing:** The most important aspect of history is the telling of a story with clarity, vigor, and style. Since the literary presentation of the historian's research and thought is her or his most important task, particular attention will be paid to historical writing. All essays should be computer-written on white paper, double-sided, in 12-point Times New Roman font, and double-spaced with 1" margins all around. Number all pages, the first at the bottom, the rest at the top. Do not waste paper (and trees) on cover sheets or blank back pages. Staple at an angle in the upper left-hand corner to facilitate page turning. Because style cannot be separated from content, all papers will receive a grade based on the quality of both. Grammar and writing style will be a significant component of the grade, so consult a writing guide such as Strunk & White’s *The Elements of Style* or Zinsser’s *On Writing Well* before drafting your paper.

**The Instructor:** You may receive a low grade in this course and still rank high in my estimation. Grades do not measure character, and grades only partially measure potential. You may disagree with me in class—for instructors are not only fallible but also sometimes very wrong. You may even denounce my ideas in class without fear of consequences. I want ideas to generate heat. Additionally, I want you to learn to speak up for what you believe. True education involves sifting, refining, and choosing among differing views. It is the opposite of rubber-stamping or regurgitation. You should never worry about holding a different view. If you speak up, we can discuss it as a class.

**Class Discussions:** During discussions, you should keep in mind that we must learn to challenge and to be challenged, or else no real education occurs. Moreover, any of you who fear asking "obvious" questions or making "obvious" observations may find that—when you finally muster the courage to do so—other members of the class will breathe a sigh of relief that someone had the courage to appear "dumb" and to raise the issue they themselves were reluctant to voice. Students cannot successfully complete the course without regular participation in class discussion.

**Evaluation:** Rest assured that, as suggested by Henry Rosovsky and Matthew Hartley in “Evaluation and the Academy: Are We Doing the Right Thing?” (American Academy of Arts and Sciences, 2002), all grading will be rigorous, accurate, supportive, and fair.

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<tr>
<th>Attendance and Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td>Intellectual Biography Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Leader</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Paper and Presentation (20-25 pages)</td>
<td>60%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vocation Reflection Paper (4 pages)</td>
<td>10%</td>
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**Assignments:**

1) **Intellectual Biography Presentation (10%)**: Prepare an eight-minute presentation on three things that have influenced your intellectual development (books, films, people, experiences, travels, etc.). How does your intellectual development relate to your sense of vocation? This assignment, part of the keystone reflection on vocation, asks that you reflect on your development as a thinking and engaged person and articulate your evolving intellectual commitments. The instructor will also participate in this exercise. **Due Week 2 or Week 3.**
2) **Class Discussion Leader (10%)**: You will lead one class discussion with at least one peer (we will determine who does this when during our first meeting). This involves introducing readings to the class, clarifying key concepts, summarizing arguments, and providing critical evaluations of the assigned readings. You will have 20 minutes at the start of class to sum up the main point of the readings and walk the class through their content and propositions. You should end the presentation with a question to get class discussion going. Some useful questions for getting at the appropriate issues for each week include: What was the author’s central question or concern? Did the author answer it thoroughly? What was the author’s research strategy? Are the sources used sufficient to the task? How did the work relate to other readings assigned in the course? What can this historian teach us about gender in twentieth-century America? Meantime, prepare four or five more broad questions to deploy when necessary as we move through the evening. You will be evaluated on the quality of the questions you raise for the class, as well as your ability to foster appropriate and focused discussion. The instructor will not speak during the first sixty minutes of the class discussion. **Due Week 3, Week 4, Week 5, or Week 6.**

3) **Seminar Paper and Presentation (NOTE—To receive full credit, each of the following must be completed on time):**

   A) **Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (10%)**: This must quickly and succinctly define your chosen topic, place it in a meaningful context, and describe what is necessary for completion. It should **describe** your topic and provide brief background information, **discuss** the historical context of the topic and make a claim for its significance, **delineate** the key questions you hope to answer in your research, and offer **directions** for how you plan to answer your questions. It should be one double-sided and double-spaced page long. You should also attach an annotated bibliography. This should reflect your initial forays to find appropriate secondary and primary source materials. The annotations should be no more than a paragraph and should assess the source’s relevance and quality. Prepare to take five minutes and provide an informal presentation on your proposed research to the class. See Storey, *Writing History*, pp. 14-15.

   B) **Draft (10%)**: The first draft of your paper should be 20-25 pages long, fully developed, with footnotes and proper citation style (see Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, for the appropriate footnote form). Incomplete first drafts will **not** be accepted.

   C) **Presentation (10%)**: The presentation of your paper should be 20 minutes long. This is the typical length of a paper presented by historians at a scholarly conference. You may either read a shorter version of your paper—though to do so thoughtfully requires shaping the prose for oral dissemination—or use a less rigid approach, which requires careful preparation. These two styles of presentation predominate in the field. In both cases, you may use illustrations either with PowerPoint or with an overhead projector. You will want to practice your presentation multiple times before giving it to the class. Also, ten minutes will be reserved after your presentation for questions from the class. You will be evaluated not only on the appropriate content, but also on the organization of your presentation, the language and style of delivery, and the nonverbal behaviors that accompany your presentation.

   D) **Final draft (30%)**: This draft should reflect thoughtful responses to content and style comments provided on earlier drafts of your paper by both your instructor and your peers.

4) **Vocation Reflection Paper (10%)**: Use the summary of Augsburg’s goals for the Keystone seminar (I will provide this) and articulate your own understanding of vocation. How does it relate to what you’ve learned as a history major?

   **Incompletes**: As a general rule, incompletes are not allowed in this course.

   **Policy on Late Work**: Late assignments will lose **one full letter grade for each day they are late** – weekends included. Assignments turned in on the same day that they are due but after the start of class will lose **one-half of a letter grade**. Late assignments should be brought to my office at 115B Memorial Hall and clearly marked “Left for Michael Lansing.” I will consider extensions only in exceptional circumstances. You must contact me before the assignment in question.
Cell phones: Turn them off and put them away before entering the classroom. If I see a cell phone in the classroom, I will ask you to leave. Text messaging in the classroom is not allowed.

College Policies: All aspects of this course are subject to Augsburg College policies. You are responsible for knowing and understanding these policies. If you do not understand them or have questions about any of them, it is your responsibility to discuss them with me early in the semester. This is particularly true for the policies on plagiarism and scholastic dishonesty covered in Augsburg’s Academic Honesty Policy. All assignments and other work done in this course are subject to them. Please familiarize yourself with this policy, which can be found at http://www.augsburg.edu/studentguide/. Failure to abide by the rules set forth in the policies on plagiarism and scholastic dishonesty will lead to appropriate grade action, up to and including failing the course, as well as reporting of any such incidents to the relevant College offices. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE! If you are unsure about how to cite a source, please see me.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, Introduction
Tu, Sept. 9: Introductions, Syllabus, History and Vocation, Organization

Week 2, Rural Life and Historiography
Tu, Sept 16: Presentations; Discuss Readings
Readings (on reserve):
David B. Danbom, “Rural America in the Age of Industrialization” and “Prosperity and its Discontents” in Born in the Country: A History of Rural America, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 132-184


Week 3, The Nonpartisan League
Tu, Sept. 23: Presentations; Discuss reading
Readings: Morlan, Political Prairie Fire

Week 4, New Directions for NPL History
Tu, Sept. 30: Lindell Library; Discuss Reading
Readings:


Week 5, Visits to MHS and UND
Tu, Oct 7: Meet with Debbie Miller at Minnesota Historical Society

NOTE: Conference on Nonpartisan League at UND (in Grand Forks, ND), Thurs., Oct 9- Sat., Oct 11

Week 6, Begin Research/Visit to University of Minnesota Libraries
Tu, Oct 14: Discuss topics and research proposals; visit Wilson Library

Week 7, Proposal and Bibliography
Tu, Oct 21: Proposal draft workshop  DRAFT PROPOSAL AND BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Week 8, Break
Tu, Oct 28: No class  RESEARCH PROPOSALS AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

Week 9, Presentations of Research in Progress
Tu, Nov. 4: Presentations

Week 10, Individual Meetings
Sign up for appointments on Tu, Nov 11

Week 11, Drafts Due
Tu, Nov 18: Writing Workshop  DRAFTS DUE

Week 12, Individual Meetings
Sign up for appointments on Tu, Nov 25

Week 13, Final Paper Presentations and Comments I
Tu, Dec 2: The final draft of your paper is due the day you present it. You should circulate a copy to every person in the group. Following your presentation, you will have a one-week grace period, during which you can make any final changes and revisions. Readings: Papers presented.

Week 14, Final Paper Presentations and Comments II
Tu, Dec 9: The final draft of your paper is due the day you present it. You should circulate a copy to every person in the group. Following your presentation, you will have a one-week grace period, during which you can make any final changes and revisions. Readings: Papers presented.

Week 15, Historians and Vocation
Tu, Dec 16: Discuss papers; watch “Cine Manifest” (2006) and “Northern Lights” (1978)  VOCATION REFLECTION PAPER DUE