Spatial History of the Windsor-Detroit Borderlands
Winter 2018 / Tues 4:00-6:50 pm / CHN 1137

Course description
This graduate level seminar course examines the historical development of the border region containing and defined by the Canada-US international boundary, the cities of Windsor and Detroit, and the surrounding area. We approach the Windsor-Detroit borderlands through an interdisciplinary and comparative perspective, and with the understanding that the border region is dynamic, shaped by and shaping of multiple forms of historical continuity and change and geographical connection and division. The course builds on readings from across history, geography, political science, and the emerging field of border studies, and on students’ active participation, research papers, and small group projects. It is also part of a larger research project at our university on the borderlands, and aims to develop the university’s position as a center for the study of borders, and the US-Canada border in particular.

Required readings
There are several readings for this course, all available through the course Blackboard site or the Leddy Library reserve desk. The readings span multiple academic disciplines, so some of them may be challenging and outside the norm for what you’ve done in previous classes in your home department. It is essential, however, that you read them for a full understanding of the concepts, cases, and themes of the course, to make a useful contribution in class discussion, and to do well on the assigned work for the course.

Assignments and grades
Your grade in this course will be based on several components: seminar participation, including one week in which you will start class discussion in the seminar meeting (15%); a midterm paper (35%); and a small group project (40%) and presentation (10%). Details on these will be provided in class and on Blackboard. Both Dr. Nelson and Dr. Essex will be involved in grading all assignments and participation.

- Midterm paper (35%) – due Tuesday, February 13
- Small group presentation (10%) – in class on Tuesday, March 27, and Tuesday, April 3
- Final small group project (40%) – due by April 17
- Seminar participation (15%) – throughout the semester
Course Schedule

Jan 9: Outlining the class / group projects / guest speakers

• **READING:**

Jan 16: Border studies 1 – Concepts

• **READING:**

Jan 23: Border studies 2 – Cases

• **GUEST SPEAKER:** Matthew Bias, Department of History, George Washington University

• **READING:**


Jan 30: Border studies 3 – Greater Windsor-Detroit

• GUEST SPEAKER: Dr. Lee Rodney, School of Creative Arts and Borderlands Research Group, University of Windsor

• IN CLASS: Discussion of initial research topics from each group

• READING:


Feb 6: Key moment 1 – Indigenous histories and settler colonialism in the borderlands

• GUEST SPEAKER: Dr. Guillaume Teasdale, Department of History, University of Windsor

• READING:

Feb 13: Active research 1 – Getting started, finding sources, organizing your work

- **IN CLASS:** We will discuss methods for getting started on identifying, locating, and getting useful sources of empirical information for the final projects, and you will work in class on establishing the next phase of a research plan, narrowing your topical focus and questions, and building a framework and timeline for completing the project.

- **DUE:** Midterm paper on comparative case study examination of border regions

Feb 20: Reading week

- No class

Feb 27: Key moment 2 – (De)Industrialization and (Sub)urbanization

- **READING:**


Mar 6: Active research 2 – Preparing and presenting your research / Digital history

- **GUEST SPEAKER:** Dr. Miriam Wright, Department of History, University of Windsor
**IN CLASS:** Discussion of preparation and presentation of historical research to a wider public and via the internet, time to discuss and work on presentation formatting and preparation for the final projects. Look at the online projects *Breaking the Colour Barrier* ([http://cdigs.uwindsor.ca/BreakingColourBarrier/](http://cdigs.uwindsor.ca/BreakingColourBarrier/)) and the *Southwestern Ontario Digital History* database ([http://cdigs.uwindsor.ca/omeka/](http://cdigs.uwindsor.ca/omeka/)) before class this week.

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**Mar 13: Key moment 3 – boundary infrastructures**

- **GUEST SPEAKER:** Dr. Bill Anderson, Department of Political Science and the Cross-Border Institute, University of Windsor

- **READING:**

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**Mar 20: Active research 3 – Reading the borderland landscape**

- **FIELD TRIP:** A walk along the Windsor riverfront to engage the border landscape

- **READING:**

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**Mar 27: Presentations of research projects**

- **IN CLASS/DUE:** Each student pair/small group gives a 20 minute presentation on their work

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**Apr 3: Presentations of research projects**

- **IN CLASS/DUE:** Each student pair/small group gives a 20 minute presentation on their work