Nebraska Wesleyan University

HIST 4450 Interrogate American History Through Artifacts

Catalog

2025-2026

Course Description

This course uses a single historical artifact as a means to allow students to critically examine and participate in the construction of historical narratives. In short, we will ask "how do historians make sense of cultural artifacts? What questions do we ask? And how does the 'lens' we use affect our claims of knowledge?" The particular object of this class will vary each time the course is offered. During the course of the semester, we will examine the origins, meaning(s), and legacies of a single aspect of material culture. Students will have the opportunity to apply various methodological tools to make meaning of the past. Students will necessarily be asked to examine the artifact from diverse perspectives and build narratives that recognize differing experiences and disparities in how stories about the object have been told. HIST 4450 meets with HIST 3450 Interrogate American History Through Artifacts. The requirements of the course are the same EXCEPT that a research paper is required for students in the 4000-level course.

Archway Curriculum: Essential Connections: Writing Instructive
Archway Curriculum: Foundational Literacies: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion – U.S.

Course Hours

4 hours

Departments

1. History