HISTORY OF ALASKA
HIST F461/662-F01, NORS 661-F01
UAF Summer Sessions, July 6 – August 9, 2016
MTWR 4:00 to 6:00 p.m.
Gruening 401
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Gruening 604B
E-mail: racoen@alaska.edu
Office hours: MW 3:00 – 3:50 p.m. and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course provides the student with both a broad overview and in-depth study of the history of Alaska from indigenous peoples prior to western contact to the present. Topics include Alaska Native culture and ethnography, Russian occupation, the U.S. purchase and territorial status, Progressive-era development, statehood movement, Alaska Native land claims, and contemporary environmental conflicts. Class meetings will be a mix of lecture, discussion, and the occasional DVD. The course fulfills both a writing intensive requirement and a State of Alaska Department of Education initial teaching certificate requirement in Alaska Studies. Prerequisites: English 211X or 213X, History 275, junior standing, or permission of the instructor.

OBJECTIVES:
Students will:
• think critically and write effectively about the past
• understand and evaluate the most significant developments in Alaska history
• place Alaska and its history in regional, national, and global contexts
• acquire an understanding of different interpretations of Alaska history, including the federal neglect/abuse thesis, Alaska-as-colony thesis, and the owner state thesis
• learn how national priorities, such as conservation and wilderness preservation, have affected Alaska to the present day.

ATTENDANCE POLICY:
Attendance is mandatory. Students must inform the instructor if they are going to be absent. More than two unexcused absences will negatively affect the student’s grade.

REQUIRED TEXTS:
• Articles posted on Blackboard (classes.uaf.edu)
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Exams: Students will take a mid-term exam (July 25) and final exam (August 9).

Writing assignment: Students will complete a 7-10 page paper on an Alaska history topic of their choosing. Students may ask the instructor for help in selecting a topic if they wish. The purpose of the exercise is to expand knowledge of a particular subject beyond what is covered in class lectures. The paper may utilize primary and/or secondary sources, and it must include citations and a bibliography. Selection of a topic must be made by July 16. Students may submit a rough draft no later than July 27 if they wish to receive feedback. Final papers are due August 6. In addition, each student will give a 5-to-8-minute presentation to the class the last week of the term.

Attendance and participation: Students are expected to attend class, do the assigned reading, and participate in class discussions.

Grading:  
- Mid-term exam 25%
- Paper 35%
- Final exam 35%
- Attendance / participation 5%

Extra credit (optional): Students will have the opportunity to earn five extra credit points (half a letter grade) by visiting and writing about local historic sites and museums.

COURSE OUTLINE (subject to change):

- **W 7/6**: Introduction, Alaska Native history and ethnography (*Haycox, Introduction & chapters 1-2; Piterkskaya, “Tlingit Interaction with Other Native Alaskan and Northwest Coast Ethnic Groups before and during the Russian Era”)

- **R 7/7**: Russian America and fur trade (*Haycox, chapters 3-5*)

- **M 7/11**: Russian-American Company (*Haycox, chapter 6*)

- **T 7/12**: Alaska Purchase (*Haycox, chapter 7; Richard Welch, “American Public Opinion and the Purchase of Russian America”*)

- **W 7/13**: Early American exploration, habitation, and development (*Haycox, chapters 8-9*)
R 7/14 Alaska Natives, missionaries, First Organic Act

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M 7/18 Gold Rush Alaska (Haycox, chapter 10)
Selection of paper topic due

T 7/19 Territorial Alaska, railroad (Haycox, chapter 11)

W 7/20 Progressive era, mining and fishing (Coen, “Owning the Ocean”)


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M 7/25 Mid-term exam

T 7/26 World War II (Haycox, chapter 12; Whitehead, Completing the Union, pp. 98-129)
Rough draft of paper due (optional)

W 7/27 Statehood Movement (Whitehead, Completing the Union, pp. 201-236)

R 7/28 Constitutional Convention (Ferber, Ice Palace, pp. 9-33)

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M 8/1 “We’re In”

T 8/2 Early statehood and Prudhoe Bay (Coates, The Trans-Alaska Pipeline Controversy, pp. 162-216)

W 8/3 ANCSA

R 8/4 ANILCA (Haycox, chapter 13)

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M 8/8 Permanent Fund and Exxon Valdez (Haycox, Epilogue)
Paper due

T 8/9 Final exam
Extra credit (optional): Since most (if not all) students in the course are education majors, this extra credit assignment is designed to help you plan a field trip with middle or high school students. The student must visit *at least two* of the sites listed below and write an essay of no fewer than 700 words describing how the field trip would help middle or high school students understand Alaska history. What would you direct the students to look at? What questions would you ask them? How would you explain the ways this site fits into the larger theme of Alaska history? This optional assignment must be turned in no later than August 4.

- University of Alaska Museum of the North (admission for UAF students is free)
- Trans-Alaska Pipeline viewpoint on Steese Highway
- Pioneer Park (e.g., aviation museum, Nenana riverboat, historic cabins)
- Morris Thompson Visitor Center
- Alaska Mining Hall of Fame Museum (there may be an admission charge)
- Fairbanks Community Museum (there may be an admission charge)
- another site of your choosing (please clear it with instructor in advance)