

Goals for HIST 431/631

These are Prof. Isern's goals for the course. We also welcome discussion of your own goals in taking this course.

Six Basic Goals

1. To acquire an understanding of the concepts and terms that constitute regional history. These concepts and terms, laid out in early lectures of the course, should be applied and reassessed throughout.
2. To master basic facts and interpretations associated with the most important themes in the history of the North American Plains.
3. To cultivate the historical perspective, that is, to practice thinking like a historian.
4. To reinforce and advance the traditional skills of discourse--reading, reflection, discussion, writing--via both conventional and electronic means of communication.
5. To foster a scholarship of engagement - engagement with the land and people of the northern plains, in line with the NDSU ideal: "Student Focused, Land Grant, Research University"
6. To foster an appreciation of, and an ongoing interest in, the diverse cultures composing our regional society.

General Education

This course is approved for the NDSU general education program. It counts toward NDSU general education requirements in two categories, as defined in the *Bulletin*.

- "Humanities systematically explore cultural and intellectual forces shaping events, individual expression and social values." This is what we do in relation to the concepts and themes mentioned in Goal #1 and Goal #2 above.
- "Cultural Diversity focuses on the social, personal, and interpersonal effects of variety and differences among cultures." The course addresses cultural diversity throughout. In relation to

Goal #1 above, it sets out a cultural model for regional history, positing that there is a regional society comprising various regional cultures. These ideas permeate the treatment of the themes mentioned in Goal #2. The appreciation of and interest in regional cultures mentioned in Goal #5 flows from the orientation and content of the course.

Under its certification for Humanities and Cultural Diversity in the general education program, HIST 431 also addresses itself to two mandated outcomes for general education, as defined by the NDSU General Education Committee.

- "Outcome 3: Comprehend the concepts and perspectives needed to function in national and international societies." This means that in the assessment of the course, we will be looking for evidence that students comprehend such concepts and perspectives as (for example) regionalism, the sense of place, cultural diversity, dependency, agency, complexity, and collective memory.
- "Outcome 6: Integrate knowledge and ideas in a coherent and meaningful manner." This means that in the assessment of the course, we will be looking for evidence that students can take knowledge from multiple and diverse sources and put it together in meaningful ways.

History Major

This course is designed to serve learning in the History major in specific respects according with the "Intended Student Outcomes" for the major. These standards require students majoring in History to demonstrate "critical thinking skills" and "historical thinking skills" and to show them through writing essays. Goals #3 and 4 above are intended to cultivate these skills.

If you're not a History major, but you might be interested, Prof. Isern is happy to visit with you about that.