

History 450: Growth of Metropolitan Milwaukee
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Fall 2020

Classroom: Mitchell 195
Thursdays, 9:30-10:45
Virtual Drop In hours: Thursdays, 2:45-3:45 p.m.
and by appointment

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Welcome to History 450, the Growth of Metropolitan Milwaukee, the inaugural offering of a new format for this class. All the assignments in this class are public-facing or self-reflective. You will participate in your own assessment through ungrading. If you find these ideas exciting, read on.

In History 450, you will learn about the broad history of the Milwaukee area and the deep history of one particular event. You will develop research skills and interpret one aspect of Milwaukee's history to public audiences at the Milwaukee Public Museum (MPM) and online. You will collaborate with your classmates in a live Twitter re-enactment of a historical Milwaukee event, write for a course blog about your research, curate a primary source with the option to publish it on the *Documenting Milwaukee* website, and enjoy professional development opportunities presented by staff of the MPM and the UWM Libraries.

Course Goals

This course cultivates five goals for student learning.

First, it provides a broad overview of the history of the Milwaukee metropolitan area. This information is provided through traditional lectures and readings.

Second, it provides in-depth knowledge—achieved through original student research—of one particular aspect of Milwaukee history. That single event is a theme that will change every time this course is offered. In fall 2020, the theme is the first official weather forecast in US history, issued by Milwaukee natural scientist Increase Lapham on November 8, 1870.

Third, students will develop skills in primary and secondary source research related to the course theme.

Fourth, students will develop skills communicating history to public audiences. Instead of traditional papers, students in this course will prepare tweets, write blog posts, and interact with public audiences about their research as it develops.

Fifth, students will develop collaborative skills. The live Twitter reenactment requires close coordination among the students in the course. Additional, other activities involve peer review of assignment drafts.

Readings

There are two books ordered for purchase for this course. The books are:

Bergland, Martha, and Paul Hayes. *Studying Wisconsin: The Life of Increase Lapham, Early Chronicler of Plants, Rocks, Rivers, Mounds and All Things Wisconsin*. Madison, WI: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2014.

Gurda, John. *The Making of Milwaukee*, 4th edition. Milwaukee, WI: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 2018.

All other readings will be available as PDFs or links on the course Canvas site. I expect you to do all the assigned readings and to share your reactions to and questions about the contents. In addition, you will identify and read additional sources as part of the research work for this class.

Course Theme

Every fall, History 450 is built around a different theme that provides the jumping-off point for student research and public communication. The 2020 theme for the course is the first official weather forecast in the United States, issued on November 8, 1870 by Milwaukee naturalist Increase Lapham. We will mark the 150th anniversary of this event with a live Twitter re-enactment on the morning of Thursday November 5; please reserve the whole morning for this activity. For an introduction to Increase Lapham, see the sources listed in the footnote.¹



Image source: Wikimedia Commons,
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Increase_Lapham.meteor.jpg

Save the Dates

Special activities are scheduled for the following dates and if possible and safe will occur at the Milwaukee Public Museum. Please try to clear your calendar for them:

- November 5: Live Twitter reenactment (all morning)
- November 19: MPM Professional Development (morning if at the museum)
- December 3: Primary source curation poster showcase (in shifts during the day, if permitted)

¹ “Lapham, Increase, 1811-1875,” Wisconsin Historical Society website, <https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS527>, accessed January 9, 2020; and Paul G. Hayes, “Increase Lapham,” *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*, edited by Margo Anderson and Amanda I. Seligman, <https://emke.uwm.edu/entry/increase-a-lapham/>, accessed January 9, 2020.

Undergraduate Assignments

There are three kinds of assignments in this course beyond the readings. Most of the work presents historical knowledge about the annual course theme to the public. There are also scaffolded assignments listed in the schedule that will help you prepare those public-facing assignments. Additionally, you will write private reflections on their work for the course, to be shared only with me. There are no exams.

Tabling with a single source:

Twice during the semester you will have the opportunity to share your research with a public audience. Under normal circumstances, you would staff a table at the Milwaukee Public Museum and interact with the museum visitors. However, due to the pandemic, I will arrange for a remote audience for you, and you will work with your designated audience to set up a mutually convenient appointment time. The goal is to engage your audience in thinking about and interpreting a specific primary source that you have selected for the purpose.

- At the first tabling opportunity, you will share a single primary source related to the course theme with members of the public. Before this tabling session, you should have done some significant thinking about the source and its historical implications. But you can also use your interactions with your audience as an opportunity to develop your questions and analysis further: what insights do members of the public have about the source that you are sharing with them? What do their questions make you think about that you had not thought of on your own? Later in the semester, you will curate a primary source for a research poster showcase. You might choose the source that you started with or move on to some other source.
- At the second tabling activity, you will share your curated primary source on a poster. If pandemic conditions permit, we will engage with visitors to the Milwaukee Public Museum; if not, I will arrange for a remote audience. This is an opportunity to show off the expertise you have developed about Milwaukee history, to learn about what public audiences think of your work, and consider new questions.
- In fall 2020, the dates for the tabling opportunities are the weeks that include October 1 and December 3.

Live Twitter Reenactment: Please reserve the entire morning of November 5 for this activity.

On November 5, our class will reenact the first official weather forecast in American history, issued by Increase Lapham on November 8, 1870. You will be responsible for developing one “character” based on appropriate historical research and writing at least twenty tweets in the voice of that character to be sent out during our live-tweeting event. The character of Increase Lapham may be shared by multiple students, who will each be responsible for twenty tweets; the “Increase Lapham” team must coordinate carefully in preparation and release of “his” tweets to avoid inconsistency and redundancy. Depending on pandemic conditions, this event will take place either in our regular classroom or in the Education Department of the Milwaukee Public Museum. Logistical details will be announced in late October.

You will be tweeting from the character's Twitter account, which you will make for this course, not from your personal Twitter account. You are welcome to share class tweets from your personal Twitter and other social media accounts, but you are not required to link your public online presence with your Twitter reenactment character. The hashtag for the reenactment is **#mke70**. Any time you tweet about the reenactment, either in the voice of your character or on your personal account, please use the hashtag #mke70 so that our audience can follow the complete project.

This is a multi-hour, collaborative event which we will spend much of the October preparing for. Please work with your employers and other UWM instructors early in the semester to make sure that you are available to spend the entire morning at MPM. If it will help you, I can provide a letter of explanation for you to share with your supervisor.

Blog posts

Each student will write two blog posts for distribution through the History 450 course blog. The expected length is 250-500 words. Submit the first draft of each post through Canvas; I will respond to and lightly edit your post; you will revise and resubmit to Canvas. At that point, you have the choice of either posting your writing to your own blog and sending me a link that I will share on the course blog; or asking me to post it for you in the course blog. Students will receive byline² credit for their blog posts published on the course. The topics for the two blog posts are as follows:

- Blog post #1: Introduce your Twitter reenactment character. Explain who they were, whether they are a real historical or fictional composite figure, what Twitter handle you will be using, and their relationship with the theme of the Twitter re-enactment. If you can locate, secure permission (if necessary) to use, and provide a copy of an appropriate image to accompany your post, I can post an illustration to the course blog, or you may post it to your own. Consider including an illustration that you would like to use as the profile image for your Twitter reenactment character. Since we are reenacting a 19th century event, it is likely that most images you might wish to use are out of copyright.
- Blog post #2: Explain your experience conducting primary source research for some aspect of the course: where did you go, what did you look at, what was the experience like, what did you find, what was missing?

Primary Source Curation

Students will select, research, and curate a primary source (or set of primary sources) relevant to the course theme. The curations will be shared in two distinct formats: a research poster (required) and on the *Documenting Milwaukee* website (optional course extension). It is advisable to select a primary source that helps you develop your Twitter reenactment character, but this is a convenience to you, not a required overlap.

² There may be students for whom public acknowledgment of their work is hazardous or inappropriate for personal reasons. If you have circumstances which mean that you do not want your name associated with the blog post, please let me know privately. You do not have to share *why* you need to protect your identity, only that it is necessary for you. Options for protecting your identity include posting anonymously or under a pseudonym.

- A separate module on the Canvas course page explains the structure and requirements of the Primary Source Curation in greater detail.
- In case we are able to hold an in-person poster showcase: information about printing posters, including the free printing service for UWM students, is here: <https://uwm.edu/print-copy/wide-formatposter-printing/for-students/>. Note that the UWM Print and Copy Services office requires three full business days to print a poster, so the contents of your poster need to be completely ready by the morning of Monday, November 30 for you to share at the Milwaukee Public Museum on Thursday, December 3. The effective deadline is adjusted if we cannot table in person.
- In addition to presenting your research poster at MPM, you have the option present it at the spring 2021 UWM Undergraduate Research Symposium. See under “Optional Course Extensions” for more information.
- If you would like a publication credit, you may also opt to submit your curated primary source for professional editing and sharing on *Documenting Milwaukee* website. See under “Optional Course Extensions” for more information.

Written Reflections

After each of the three presentation opportunities, you will write reflections on your experience. Considerations include how well you prepared for the presentation, what your interactions with the public were like, what challenges you faced and whether and how you overcame them, and what you could have done better. The expected length is approximately 500 words. Due dates and specific prompts are listed in the schedule section of the syllabus.

After the final class, students will also submit a narrative reflection on their performance in the class as a whole. To prepare for this assignment, we will hold individual conferences during the week of December 8. In your final reflection, you should comment on your most and least favorite course activities; what challenged you during the course and what you found easy; the extent to which you completed all assignments in a timely fashion (and why or why not); how the assigned readings helped you understand the topic; which classmates made the most contributions to your learning; and what you would do differently if you had it to do all over again. You are also invited to assign yourself a letter grade for the course as a whole and provide a rationale for your self-assessment.

Optional Course Extensions

Students have the opportunity to extend their participation in this course in three ways.

1. UWM Undergraduate Research Symposium. Every spring, UWM’s [Office of Undergraduate Research](#) hosts a symposium where hundreds of students share the results of their work with the university community. Because one of the assignments in History 450 is curating a primary source into a research poster and you will debut your poster for our second tabling event, you will have a ready-to-go offering for this event.
2. You may submit your primary source curation for inclusion on the *Documenting Milwaukee* (DMKE) website, a companion to the *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*. If you

submit your curation to DMKE, you will have the opportunity to experience professional historical editing and revision that will result in a publication you can include on your résumé, graduate school application, LinkedIn profile, or other social media. The DMKE staff must be able to secure permission to post the source itself as well as your curation. To submit your curation for consideration, send an email to Dr. Joseph Walzer (jbwalzer@uwm.edu) and copy me (seligman@uwm.edu) on the message.

3. Do you enjoy doing this kind of research? Would you like to help lay the foundation for next fall's History 450 theme? UWM's Office of Undergraduate Research has Student Undergraduate Research Fellowships. Students can work for pay or credit on background research for the next iteration of this course. If you are interested in a SURF application for next spring or summer, please contact me to discuss possibilities. More information on the SURF program can be found here: <https://uwm.edu/our/programs/support-for-undergraduate-research-fellows-surf/>.

Graduate students

Graduate students enrolled in History 450 may pick a pathway through this course that is most appropriate to their professional goals.

1. Participate in the tabling exercise and live Twitter reenactment. But instead of doing the poster showcase in December, you will write a research-based paper appropriate publication on the course blog. Details below.
2. Propose an alternative pathway. If you want an alternative pathway, please see me early in the semester to work out the details.

Public-facing research paper

During the last month of the course, your work will hone in on one aspect of Milwaukee history. It will probably be most to your advantage to focus on events or ideas that are connected to the annual course theme, although this is not an absolute requirement. As when you write other history papers, you should use a combination of primary and secondary sources, make an argument, and document your work appropriately with Chicago-style citations. However, the ultimate audience for this paper is not the professor, but members of the public who find their way to the History 450 blog. It is not required that you post your paper there, but you will have that option at the conclusion of the course. The target length of the paper is 1500 words.

Assignments and due dates:

- Thursday, November 12: turn in a proposal, a short summary of the paper you plan to write.
- Thursday November 19: turn in a bibliography of primary and secondary sources you will use in writing your paper
- Thursday December 3: turn in a complete rough draft of your paper
- Monday December 14: turn in a final draft of your paper, with an indication of whether you would like for me to post it on the course blog.

Like the undergraduates, you will be “ungraded” in this course. You may skip Reflection #4, but your Reflection #5 should assess the work you produce for the course and suggest what course grade you have earned.

Assessment

Assessment in this course occurs through “ungrading.” What does that mean? Because this class is focused on communication skills, you and I will engage together in a process of reflection about your intellectual development throughout the semester and collaborate on determining your course grade. How will this work? First, I encourage you to attend my student hours (held via virtual drop-in) or make an appointment to discuss your academic progress. Additionally, while I will provide feedback about your work, you will also submit a series of reflections about how you think you did on the course assignments. At the end of the semester, we will meet to discuss what you have learned and agree on a grade.

Our evaluation of your work in the class should consider the following elements:

- Primary source tabling
- Tweets issued for the live Twitter re-enactment
- Primary source curation poster and tabling
- Blog posts
- Your contributions to class discussion
- Reading of the assigned texts
- Drafts and revisions of all writing assignments
- The series of written reflections

In your final reflection, I will also ask you to provide feedback about who among your classmates most contributed to your intellectual development. Feedback from other students about who contributed to their learning will probably influence my perception of your course grade.

Senior Auditors

Due to the pandemic, Senior Auditors may participate in History 450 only through the online version through Canvas. You are especially welcome to serve as constructive critics of the public-facing projects that the regularly-enrolled students will be completing.

Course partners

Beyond the instructor and the students, this course has three major partners who have each contributed to its development. I am grateful to the following entities for their work in developing and sustaining this class.

- The Milwaukee Public Museum originated the Twitter re-enactment assignment and is providing professional development and communication opportunities to students.

- The UWM Libraries is providing extensive instructional support in research, analysis, and communication skills.
- UWM’s Office of Undergraduate Research is offering this class as a “Course-Based Research Project.”³ That means OUR is subsidizing the cost of the course, allowing us to keep enrollment to a lower limit and providing logistical support for our efforts.

I am also grateful to UWM History PhD student Mark Langenfeld, who did the bibliographical research to support the Twitter reenactment.

Teaching in public

In addition to asking you to do public-facing assignments, I have committed to sharing course content with the public. I will share your blog posts, my own thoughts, and components of the course on the class blog, which is called History450Milwaukee. You can find it [here](#), on Blogger: <https://history450milwaukee.blogspot.com/>. Sometimes I post on Twitter about teaching, and I do intend to publicize our class projects. You can find me at [@AmandalSeligman](#). If you have feedback or concerns about anything I post in public about teaching, I want to hear it. The course Twitter handle is [@HIS450MKE](#) and the course hashtag this year is #mke70.

Technological requirements

This class requires use of multiple apps and digital services. These include:

- UWM email account
- UWM Libraries resources
- Google Docs
- Twitter
- Canvas
- Optional: Blogging platform of your choice

Accommodations

The UWM Secretary of the University’s detailed statement about policies that apply to all students and students with special circumstances is available [here](http://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2016/12/Syllabus-Links.pdf): <http://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2016/12/Syllabus-Links.pdf>. If you need special accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible.

COVID Syllabus Statement

Please carefully read the 3-page UWM [Covid Syllabus Statement](#) that is posted in the Welcome module. Note that the university has included language about the recording of class meetings. Because recording a class may impinge on the quality of discussion, we will decide together

³ For more on Course-Based Research Projects, see the OUR website at <https://uwm.edu/our/programs/cbrp/>.

whether to record meetings using the available lecture capture technology.

Time Commitment

This course is a mixed undergraduate/graduate level course carrying 3 credit hours. Normally the class would meet twice a week for 75 minutes, for a total of 15 weeks, or 37.5 hours total. Due to the pandemic, our class will meet for one hour a week, plus field trip and other special activities, for approximately 20 hours, with other class activities shifted online. All in-class activities have online alternatives that will take approximately the same amount of time. You are expected to commit a significant portion of your out-of-class time to research and writing assignments and by completing and reflecting on the assigned reading. Of course the amount of time spent on each assignment varies by student, but I offer the following figures to estimate the time commitment necessary to succeed in this course:

- class and field trip time: 20 hours
- reading: 32 hours
- online lectures: 3 hours
- research: 40 hours
- written work: 33 hours
- other activities as listed in Canvas: 16 hours

These add to a total of 144 hours. Please let me know if you are spending significantly more or less time on the coursework.

Tentative schedule of class meetings

Note that this schedule is subject to change, especially in light of the pandemic.

Note that this schedule includes major activities only.

Please check the course Canvas page for details and updates.

Week 1:

- Class meeting Thursday September 3: for course introduction

Week 2:

- Lecture: Indigenous Milwaukee
- Read *Making of Milwaukee*, chapter 1
- Read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapter 19 (yes, this is out of order)
- Class meeting Thursday September 10: Detailed introduction of research theme
- Reflection #1 due: What would you like to learn in this course? What are you most looking forward to in this class? What do you expect to do well on and in what areas do you expect to have to stretch yourself? What causes you anxiety about the course? What challenges are obstacles to your successful completion of the course? What can I do that will help you succeed?

Week 3:

- Read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapters 1-3
- Read Brundage, pp. 17-21.
- Primary source icebreaker exercise: share on Canvas a primary source that is either made by you or about you in some way.
- Library Instruction: How to find and assess primary sources in the archives.
- Class meeting Thursday September 17: Introduction to tabling

Week 4:

- Library instruction: the basics of primary sources. You may need to complete this instruction in order to find the primary source that you need to do the homework before Thursday's class meeting.
- Read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapters 4-7
- Homework: find a primary source that you want to share at the tabling program on October 1. Bring a copy to class on September 24. The copy can be a digital copy or an analog copy, depending on your preference.
- Class meeting Thursday September 24: Milwaukee Public Museum Professional Development
- Homework due on Tuesday September 29: Fill out the Visitor Engagement Outline for your primary source

Week 5:

- Read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapters 8-10

- Read *Making of Milwaukee* chapter 2
- Lecture: Milwaukee's development as a city and metropolitan area
- Library instruction: American Geographical Society Library
- Tabling program: Share your chosen primary source with a public audience. Details of logistics will be shared through Canvas.

Week 6

- Read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapters 11-14
- Read *Making of Milwaukee* chapter 3
- Reflection #2 due: tabling experience. How did it go? What were the highlights and lowlights? What did you do well? What could have gone better? How could you have been better prepared for the experience?
- Lecture: Immigration to Milwaukee
- Class meeting Thursday October 8: Introduction to the Live Twitter reenactment

Week 7:

- Read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapters 15-18
- Read a previous historical reenactment thread. Examples are listed in the "Introduction to Twitter Reenactment" slideshow posted on Canvas.
- Library Instruction: Six Hats
- Class meeting Thursday October 15: Brainstorm, choose, and refine characters and develop ground rules for our reenactment
- Twitter Homework #1: find, acquire, and begin reading copies of the primary and secondary source materials needed for your character. Note: As you read primary and secondary source materials relevant to the development of your character, make notes of particular information that you want to convey in your tweets, including how to find that information again.

Week 8:

- Re-read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapter 19
- Read *Making of Milwaukee* chapters 4-5
- Twitter Homework #2: Write a paragraph about what historical ideas you would like for your character to convey to the public. Draft a list of things your character might tweet about (you don't have to write the tweets yet). Put the list in chronological order.
- Library Instruction: social media
- Class meeting Thursday October 22: Twitter reenactment timeline
- Blog post #1 due

Week 9

- Read *Studying Wisconsin*, chapter 20-21
- Read *Making of Milwaukee*, chapter 6
- Lecture: Socialism in Milwaukee

- Twitter homework #3, due on Tuesday October 27: draft 20 tweets from the POV of your character. Check the tweets against the paragraph about historical ideas you want to convey to our audience; revise the list of historical ideas if necessary. Research hashtags, links, and images that you might want to include in your tweets. These do not have to be attached to particular tweets yet, but you should have them handy to include in the draft tweets due on Thursday. For each tweet, keep track of where the information in the tweet came from. Our published tweets will not have citations in them, but when you turn in the finalized list of tweets to Canvas, they should have some form of reference attached to them. Citation practices are important so that you are prepared if someone challenges your information. Put them in chronological order and label them according to the timeline “bucket” they belong to.
- Twitter Homework #4: keep working on your tweets and bring them to class on Thursday October 29
- Class meeting on Thursday October 29: Workshop draft tweets

Week 10:

- Tuesday November 3, Election Day: please register and vote if you are eligible.
- Read *Making of Milwaukee* chapter 7
- Twitter Homework #5, due on Tuesday November 3: Revise all of your tweets and place them in chronological order in the appropriate timeline buckets on the class Google Doc. Also submit a Word Doc with your tweets on Canvas so I can give you individualized feedback for your consideration. The Word Doc, but not the Google Doc, should have your citations
- Revise the Twitter Narrative Arc: see Canvas for details
- Revised blog post #1: submit your revised Blog Post #1 through Canvas and either post it to your own blog or send me a link for use on the course blog.
- Thursday November 5: Please reserve the entire morning for the Live Twitter reenactment. Logistics of meeting to be announced, depending COVID-19, in late October.

Week 11

- Reflection #3 due: How did the Twitter Reenactment go? What were the highlights and lowlights? What did you do well? What could have gone better? How could you have been better prepared for the experience?
- Read *Making of Milwaukee* chapter 8
- Lecture: The Great Migration and Civil Rights Movement
- Class meeting Thursday November 12: Reflection on re-enactment and Introduction to curated primary sources and posters.

Week 12:

- Online presentation: Tamara Long on how to make a research poster
- Primary source curation homework #1: decide what primary source you want to showcase in your research poster and bring a copy to class for reference.

- Class meeting November 19: Milwaukee Public Museum Professional Development field trip (pandemic conditions permitting; details will be announced in mid-November; please reserve the whole morning in case we are able to go to the museum in person)
- Begin drafting your research poster by writing notes for each element of the assignment.

Week 13: No class meeting November 26 due to the holiday

- Read *Making of Milwaukee*, chapter 9
- Primary source curation homework #2: Submit a draft of your research poster to Canvas. We will use the peer review function to give each other feedback in class.
- Online: workshop draft research posters
- If we are tabling in person at Milwaukee Public Museum, remember to submit your poster to the UWM Print and Copy Services office by the morning of Monday November 30. Otherwise the poster is due on the day of your assigned meetings so you can share it with your audience.

Week 14:

- Read, *Making of Milwaukee*, chapter 10
- lecture: Milwaukee's changing economy
- Assignment: final research poster
- December 3: poster showcase: Logistical details to be announced through Canvas
- Assignment due: draft of Blog Post #2

Week 15:

- Individual reflective conferences: The purpose of is to consider your intellectual development, challenges, and successes over the course of the semester.
- Reflection #4 due Monday morning, December 7: How did the poster showcase go? What were the highlights and lowlights? What did you do well? What could have gone better? How could you have been better prepared for the experience?
- Blog post #2 due
- Class meeting on Thursday December 10: bring something to class that embodies or symbolizes what you learned this semester.
- Brainstorming exercise: what are the most important ideas that you learned this semester?

Monday, December 14

- Reflection #5 due: What were most and least favorite course activities? Look back on Reflection #1; which expectations were misplaced and which were correct? What challenged you during the course? What did you find easy? Did you complete all assignments in a timely fashion (and why or why not)? How (or why not) did the assigned readings help you understand the topic? Which classmates made the most contributions to your learning? What would you do differently if you had it to do all over again? You are invited to assign yourself a letter grade for the course as a whole and provide a rationale for your self-assessment.