

HIST 2302: Methodology
Spring 2010 T/Th 3:30 to 4:45

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Office Hours: T/TH 12:30p-1:30p, W 12p-4p
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Course Description

This course is intended to introduce students to the practice of history, and it is designed to help students succeed as history majors at the University of West Georgia. We will focus on developing the skills necessary to think and work like historians, but we will also take into consideration the skills needed to teach history as well. We will also sample the varieties of sources used in writing history and the varieties of history. This is a required course for all history majors. In order to graduate, history majors must earn a C or better in this course.

Learning Outcomes

This class is designed to help students learn what historians do and why they do it. In addition, the class is designed to help students to develop the skills necessary to succeed as history majors. Those skills include the ability:

- to recognize and to pose significant historical questions and to analyze sources critically
- to find useful primary and secondary sources, and learn how to cite them properly
- to write and to speak clearly;
- to construct a persuasive historical argument based on evidence; and
- to think historically.

Thinking historically requires one to:

- * seek to understand the people of the past and to recognize that people, events, ideas, and cultures have influenced later people, events, ideas, and cultures;
- * seek to understand the perspective of historical actors and to view those historical actors from a critical, scholarly perspective;
- * recognize that history involves both change and continuity over time; and
- * draw and explain connections between particular people, events, ideas, or texts and their historical contexts.

Textbooks:

Mark Hellstern, Gregory Scott, Stephen Garrison, *The History Student Writer's Manual* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998)

James West Davidson and Mark Hamilton Lytle, *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*, 5th ed. (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2005)

Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1997)

Assignments

1. Students must take the assessment examination on January 12. The examination is not graded, but no student will pass the class without writing the examination.

2. The three writing quizzes will test students' ability to write effectively. They will cover important matters of organization, grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling, and conformity with proper citation format.
3. The first short paper assignment calls for a two-page, typed summary of an archival primary source document found in one of the Archival Databases on the UWG Library Website.
4. The second short paper assignment calls for the student to use a novel as a primary source. Students must select a novel that they have not read before and have their choice approved by the instructor. The novel must have been published more than thirty years ago. It must be set in the same general period in which it was written. The four to five-page paper should have a thesis that answers the question: what does the novel tell us about the period in which it was written? The paper must make proper use of footnote citation in accordance with the documentary-note system described in section 5.3 of *The History Student Writer's Manual*.
5. The book review is a four to five-page review of a scholarly historical monograph published within the last thirty years by a university press, and the title must be approved by me. Students must read a new book. They may not review a book that they have read for another history course.
6. Students will also undertake several research assignments throughout the semester, with some being simple assignments of finding historical photographs or a useful website, to writing short opinion pieces on things discussed or viewed in class. Please see the course schedule for each assignment and their respective due dates.

REWRITES

The short papers and book review will be graded on the basis of the quality of the analysis and the writing, including organization, grammar, punctuation, spelling, and conformity with proper citation format. The short paper using a novel as a primary source AND the book review must be rewritten. Rewrites must take into account the comments by the instructor and represent an improvement over the first version. (Note that the versions submitted initially should *not* be a rough draft; it should be the final draft, as good as it can be, since it will be graded.) The rewrites will be graded on the basis of how far the revised version improves the initial version. The rewrite should address problems of writing as well as problems of analysis. The purpose of the rewrite is to learn from mistakes and to work on weaknesses. The original graded version must be submitted along with the rewritten version.

Grading (No extra credit will be offered)

Participation: 15 percent
Research assignments: 15 percent
Two short papers: 20 percent
Three writing quizzes: 15 percent
Book Review: 15 percent
Rewrites: 5 percent
Final Examination: 15 percent

Policies

CELL PHONES: TURN THEM OFF!!!! I'm serious. I don't want to hear it, see it, even know that it exists. If you need them on for emergency purposes, please set the ring to vibrate only. If I hear a phone ring, you will be asked to leave the class, and don't even let me catch you using it to text or check voicemail.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDINESS

I will not be taking attendance in this class. You are all adults. Please keep in mind, however, that excessive absence will affect your class participation grade. If you aren't here, then you can't participate in the class discussion. Excessive lateness is disruptive to the class, affecting your fellow students as well as me. If for any reason, you need to leave class early, please let me know ahead of time. In short, come on time and stay for the whole class. If you miss class, I suggest you borrow notes from a classmate. My notes are not available.

LATE AND MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Late assignments will be penalized by deducting one letter grade for each day the assignment is late. Students should preserve an electronic version of all work in their history courses until completion of the degree. Students pursuing secondary education certification will be required as a condition of that certification to collect their papers in an electronic folio at some point in the future. Students receive no credit for participating or on any tests or quizzes on missed class days. A student who does not take a quiz or test in class with the rest of the class receives a zero. I do not permit students to take any test, quiz, or other graded work at any time other than in class as scheduled except in rare cases of prior approval or with a physician's note.

I encourage any student who has questions or needs help with the course to come to my office hours or send me an email to set up a time to talk. In addition, students may wish to consult with the Writing Center (<http://www.westga.edu/~writing>). In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and university policy, I will make reasonable accommodation for any recognized disability. Students should contact me during the first three weeks of the course and present documentation from the University's Student Development Center.

Tentative Course Schedule

WM=Writer's Manual NH=New History AF=After the Fact

Week 1: Thursday, Jan 7: Introduction to course

Week 2: Why History?

Tuesday, Jan 12: In Class Assessment Examination

Thursday, Jan 14: Why do we do what we do? Reading: [Peter N. Stearns, "Why Study History?"](#) (on my webpage) **Research assignment: Find a reasonable quantity of useful information on one professor in the department and write a short paper on your findings--no more than 3 pages. You must write a formal paper, and assignments that are a simple "I asked/they said" format will be rejected. This is due January 26**

Week3: Beginning the Process

Tuesday, Jan 19: Intellectual honesty and plagiarism Readings: [Peter Hoffer, "Reflections on Plagiarism"](#) (on my webpage), WM pp. 121-22 & WM Chapter 3

Thursday, Jan 21 What makes a good question?

Week 4: Primary Sources

Tuesday, Jan 26: Finding primary sources (and quoting them): Readings: WM 54-56, 119-21

Research Assignment: Bring to class the address of one good website containing useful primary sources. Professor paper due.

Thursday, Jan 28: CLASS CANCELLED.

Week 5: The Archives

Tuesday, Feb 2: Reading archival sources **Research Assignment: Write a two-page, typed summary of the archival primary source document found on one of the many Archival Database Collections available on the UWG Library Website. You should include one block quotation, one shorter quotation, and one paraphrase in your summary. This is due February 16.**

Thursday, Feb 4: Using archival sources Readings: “‘To Fit You All for Freedom:’ Jamaican Planters, Afro-Jamaican Mothers, and the Struggle to Control Afro-Jamaican Children during Apprenticeship, 1833-1840.” *Citizenship Studies* 10 (2006): 55-75. (available on my webpage)

Week 6: Finding Sources

Tuesday, Feb 9: **First Writing Quiz**

Thursday, Feb 11: What in the world does our library have? Finding secondary sources and evaluating them Readings: WM Ch. 9

Week 7: Citing those Sources

Tuesday, Feb 16: How to cite your sources properly Reading: WM pp. 93-111 **Students must identify the novel that they will read for the second short paper that is due March 4. Archival Document Summary Due**

Thursday, Feb 18: **Second Writing Quiz on Citing Sources (OPEN BOOK)**

Week 8: Analyzing the sources

Tuesday, Feb 23: Unreliable sources, historical explanation and its limits Reading: AF Ch. 2 & 8

Thursday, Feb 25: CLASS CANCELLED

Week 9: Historical Fields

Tuesday, Mar 2: Theory and history Readings: AF Ch. 5 Turner thesis

Thursday, Mar 4: Gender Studies. Readings: AF, “From Rosie to Lucy,” ch. 14 and Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis” (available on my webpage) **Short paper using a novel as a primary source due**

Week 10: Historical Fields

Tuesday, Mar 9: Public History: Guest Speaker

Thursday, Mar 11: Military History: Guest Speaker

Week 11: Peer Review

Tuesday, Mar 16: What makes a good book review? **Research assignment: Bring a copy of a good scholarly historical book review to class**

Thursday, Mar 18:

Week 12: SPRING BREAK!

Week 13: A discussion of *The New History*

Tuesday, Mar 30: *The New History*, 1-169

Thursday, Apr 1: *The New History*, 170-end **Rewritten paper on novel due**

Week 14: Thinking Outside of the Box

Tuesday, Apr 6: Giving Voice to the Voiceless: Untraditional Sources and How to Use them, and Using Sources in Untraditional Ways **Research Assignment: Bring copies of two historical photographs to class and be prepared to discuss how you would use these.**

Thursday, Apr 8: History of sexuality Reading: Victoria Thompson, "Creating Boundaries: Homosexuality and the Changing Social Order in France, 1830-1870" (available on my webpage) **Identify book to be reviewed for review**

Week 15: Staying Objective

Tuesday, Apr 13: Objectivity and Bias Reading: C. Behan McCullagh "Bias in Historical Description, Interpretation, and Explanation" *History and Theory*, 39:1 (2000): 39-66 (available on my webpage and on JSTOR)

Thursday, Apr 15: **Third Writing Quiz . BOOK REVIEW DUE**

Week 16: Documentary as Source

Apr 20-22: Watch and Discuss Documentary "Paper Clips"

Research Assignment: How can documentary be used as a tool? In 2-3 pages, review the documentary that you just watched and discuss how it could be used in research or in a course. Due April 27.

Week 17: Why History?: Revisited

Tuesday, Apr 27: Those who do not learn from history . . . Reading: Steinweis, "The Auschwitz Analogy: Holocaust Memory and American Debates over Intervention in Bosnia and Kosovo in the 1990s," *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 19 (2005): 276-89 (available on my webpage)

Documentary as source paper due.

Mandatory Final Examination

Thursday May 6, 2-4p **BOOK REVIEW REWRITE DUE**