
HIST 2302: The Historian's Craft: Methodology

Summer 2011 (Session II)

University of West Georgia

Professor: Dr. Keith S. Hébert

Office: TLC 3245

Email: khebert@westga.edu

Office Hours: T/TH TBA, or by appointment

Course Description

This course is intended to introduce students to the theory and practice of history. 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. 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;
- ❖ to find useful primary and secondary sources;
- ❖ to analyze sources critically;
- ❖ to cite sources 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;
- ❖ to seek to understand the perspective of historical actors and to view those historical actors from a critical, scholarly perspective;
- ❖ to recognize that people, events, ideas, and cultures have influenced later people, events, ideas, and cultures;

- ❖ to recognize that history involves both change and continuity over time; and
 - ❖ to draw and to explain connections between particular people, events, ideas, or texts and their historical contexts.
-

Students with Disabilities

Students with a disability that might impair their course performance must contact the course professor as soon as possible so that appropriate documentation can be attained and a proper accommodation made.

Academic Honesty

All work submitted in this course must be a student's original work. Students may not turn in assignments completed in other courses for credit in this course. Students found guilty of plagiarizing will receive a failing grade for the semester and a record of that infraction will be placed on your academic record.

History Department Assessment Exam

All students must complete the history department assessment exam. This examination is not graded, but no student will pass the class without writing the examination.

Classroom Expectations

Students are expected to attend class, show up on time, pay attention, engage in discussion, treat both their fellow students and the course professor in a respectful manner, and remain in class until the professor dismisses the class. Student comments must contribute to the discussion and relate to the assigned readings. Students are urged to be as concise as possible when presenting their ideas. The course professor will cut off students whose comments do not benefit the class discussion. Students who fail to live up to these expectations will receive a failing class participation grade.

Electronic Devices Policy

Please turn off and store all electronic devices during class. No laptops please! When students are seen using their I-phones or other electronic devices they will be dismissed from class and receive a failing participation grade for that class. I do not want to see phones and/or other electronic devices on your desk during class. Put them in your bag or do not bring them to class. No exceptions.

Required Textbooks

The following textbooks are available in the university bookstore.

1. Davis, Natalie Zemon. *The Return of Martin Guerre*.
2. Darnton, Robert. *The Great Cat Massacre*.
3. Williams, Dan. *God's Own Party*.
4. Hellstern, Mark. *The History Student Writer's Manual*.
5. Troup, Kathleen. *The Houses of History*

You will also be required to download several articles throughout the semester that will be archived on courseden.

Grading

- A—89.5-100 pts.
B—79.5-89.4 pts.
C—69.5-79.4 pts.
D—59.5-69.3 pts.
F—59.4 and below

Assessment Values

- I. Midterm Exam [Due June 30]—10 points
- II. Final Exam [July 28-5:00-7:00]—15 points
- III. Primary Source Analysis Essays
 - a. John Brown Essay—5 points
 - b. Slavery in 19th Century America—5 points
 - c. Empiricists and Postmodernists—5 points
 - d. Annales and Ethnohistory—5 points
 - e. Coal and the Industrial Revolution—5 points
 - f. Civil Rights Movement—5 points
 - g. Automobiles—5 points
- IV. Reading Quizzes
 - a. June 28—5 point
 - b. July 12—5 points
 - c. July 26—5 points
- V. Class Participation [Daily]—10 points

VI. Online Discussion [Weekly]—15 points

• **ONLINE DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS**

1. Read all assigned materials;
2. Log onto Courseden and locate each week's discussion thread;
3. Respond to all of the questions located in each week's discussion thread by Thursday at 5:30PM;
4. Read and comment on at least three other student's posts by Thursday at 8:00PM;
5. Respond to any questions posted by the course professor by Sunday at 8:00PM.

Course Schedule and Assignments

June 7—UWG Campus

Topic(s):

1. Course Description and Expectations
2. What is historical thinking?

Assignments:

1. Assessment Examination (To Be Administered During Class; No Preparation Required)

June 9—Online Session

Topic(s):

1. Primary Source Analysis
 - i. Personal Accounts
 - ii. Newspapers
 - iii. A Midwife's Tale: Martha Ballard

Instructions/ Objectives

Objectives: This assignment asks students to:

1. Explore the methods historians use to analyze specific types of primary sources;
2. locate specific types of primary sources using available digital archives;
3. analyze a primary source;
4. report your findings to the course professor;
5. participate in a discussion of your findings using courseden.

- iv. Read the following web articles:
 1. [“Primary Sources: What Are They?”](#)
 2. [“Secondary Sources: What Are They?”](#)
 3. Bookmark this [National Archives](#) website that contains document analysis worksheets for a variety of standard primary source materials. You will need to use these later in this assignment.
 4. [“Analyzing Personal Accounts”](#)
 5. [“Analyzing Newspapers”](#)
 6. Explore the following website, [Do History](#), in preparation for a film we will watch in class on June 14.
 7. Hellstern, *The History Student Writer’s Manual*, Chapter Six.
- v. Locate one or two newspaper articles in the [Milledgeville \(Georgia\) Historic Newspaper Archive](#) related to the subject of John Brown’s Raid at Harper’s Ferry. (Note: You may need to download a [DjVU plug-in](#) in order to access the newspaper articles.)
- IV. Locate one or two newspaper articles in the [New York Times database](#) located on the UWG Library database website related to the subject of John Brown’s Raid at Harper’s Ferry. (Note: you will need to library password in order to access this website off campus. The password is: roaring)
- V. Write a 300-word essay that analyzes the set of newspaper articles that you discovered. Your essay must compare and contrast the two sets of newspaper articles. You could analyze any or all of the following questions: How are the newspaper accounts similar? How are they different? Do they reflect potential bias? Audience? **Essay due by 5:30 PM June 9. Students will submit essays to the courseden assignment dropbox. All files must be doc. Extensions (MS Word). Late work will not be accepted.**
- VI. Participate in an online discussion using the courseden chat room tool. The course professor will monitor (ask and respond to questions). See directions above in the: ONLINE DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS.

June 14—UWG Campus

Topic(s):

1. The Empiricists
2. Marxists
3. Postmodernism

Assigned Readings:

1. Green and Troup, *Houses of History*, Chapters 1, 2, 12.

Assignments:

1. Write a 300-essay that analyzes the following: Compare and contrast the historical theory employed by empiricist and postmodernist historians. Be sure to clearly identify each theory (in your own words) and clearly identify the primary similarities and differences. Students must turn in the essay to the assignment drop box located on courseden by 5:30PM on June 14. All documents must be turned in using a .doc file extension (MS Word).

June 16—Online Session

Topic(s):

1. What was it like to be a slave in 19th-century America?

Directions

1. Explore the following website, [“Slavery.”](#) that includes a variety of primary and secondary source materials related to teaching the history of slavery in American schools. Be sure to explore the sections titled: “What textbooks say”; “What Historians Say?”; “What Sources Say?” Be sure to explore all of the materials included in each of these sections.
2. Write a 300-word essay that analyzes the following question: What was it like to be a slave in 19th-century America?
3. Participate in an online discussion using the courseden chat room tool. The course professor will monitor (ask and respond to questions). See directions above in the: ONLINE DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS.

June 21—UWG Campus

Topic(s):

1. Annales
2. Ethnohistory
3. Writing History Well

Assigned Readings:

1. Green and Troup, *Houses of History*, Chapters 4, 7.
2. Hellstern, *The History Student's Writer's Manual*, Chapters 2-4.

Assignments:

1. Write a 300-essay that analyzes the following: Compare and contrast the historical theory employed by Annales and ethno historians. Be sure to clearly identify each theory (in your own words) and clearly identify the primary similarities and differences. Students must turn in the essay to the assignment drop box located on courseden by 5:30PM on June 21. All documents must be turned in using a .doc file extension (MS Word).
-

June 23—Online Session

Topic(s):

1. Huey Long

Directions:

1. Explore the website: [Huey Long](#)
 2. Participate in an online discussion using the courseden chat room tool. The course professor will monitor (ask and respond to questions). See directions above in the: ONLINE DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS.
-

June 28—UWG Campus

Topic(s):

1. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*

Assigned Readings:

1. Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*

Assignment:

1. Students will complete a reading quiz covering this week's reading at the start of class. Students who are late to class will not be allowed to complete the quiz.
-

June 30—Midterm Exam—Online Examination

July 5—UWG Campus

Topic(s):

1. Oral History
2. Gender
3. Postcolonial

Assigned Readings:

1. Green and Troup, *Houses of History*, Chapters 9, 10, 11.

Assignments:

1. Students will complete a reading quiz covering this week's reading at the start of class. Students who are late to class will not be allowed to complete the quiz.

July 7—Online Session

Topic(s):

1. Did individual African American activists spark the Civil Rights Movement?

Directions:

- I. Objectives: This assignment asks students to:
 - i. identify and analyze primary source materials related to the Civil Rights Movement and;
 - ii. present those findings in written form to the course professor and;
 - iii. participate in a discussion of your findings using coursesden.
- II. Go to: [Civil Rights Movement](#) website.
- III. Explore the links included in that website. Locate primary source materials that can help you answer the following question: Did individual African American activists spark the Civil Rights Movement?
- IV. Write a 300-word essay, based on the secondary and primary sources that you have read, that analyzes the following question: did individual African American activists spark the Civil Rights Movement? Your essay must:
 - iv. Incorporate evidence from the primary source materials that you have located;
 - v. Possess a clearly defined and well-argued thesis;
 - vi. Be free of glaring mechanical, spelling, grammatical, and stylistic errors.

- vii. Essay is due at 5:30 on July 21. Students will turn in their assignment using the courseden assignment drop box tool. All essays must be turned in as a word document (.doc extension). Any other file extension will receive a failing grade.
- V. Participate in an online discussion using the courseden chat room tool. The course professor will monitor (ask and respond to questions). See directions above in the: **ONLINE DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS**.
-

July 12—UWG Campus

Topic(s):

1. Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*

Assigned Readings:

1. Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*

Assignments:

1. Students will complete a reading quiz covering this week's reading at the start of class. Students who are late to class will not be allowed to complete the quiz.
-

July 14—Online Session

Topic(s):

1. How did the rise of the automobile affect U.S. economics, culture, and society?

Instructions:

- I. Objectives: This assignment asks students to:
 - i. identify and analyze primary source materials related to the history of the automobile and;
 - ii. present those findings in written form to the course professor and;
 - iii. participate in a discussion of your findings using courseden.
- II. Go to: [Automobile](#) website.
- III. Explore the links included in that website. Locate primary source materials that can help you answer the following question: How did the automobile affect U.S. economics, culture, and society?
- IV. Write a 300-word essay, based on the secondary and primary sources that

you have read, that analyzes the following question: How did the automobile affect U.S. economics, culture, and society? Your essay must:

- i. Incorporate evidence from the primary source materials that you have located;
- ii. Possess a clearly defined and well-argued thesis;
- iii. Be free of glaring mechanical, spelling, grammatical, and stylistic errors.
- iv. Essay is due at 5:30 on July 14. Students will turn in their assignment using the courseden assignment drop box tool. All essays must be turned in as a word document (.doc extension). Any other file extension will receive a failing grade.
- v. Participate in an online discussion using the courseden chat room tool. The course professor will monitor (ask and respond to questions). See directions above in the: **ONLINE DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS**.

July 19—UWG Campus

Topic(s):

1. The Presence of the Past

Assigned Readings: TBA

Assignments: TBA

July 21—Online Session

Topic(s):

1. Who killed Mary Phagan?

Instructions:

- I. Objectives: This assignment asks students to:
 - vii. identify and analyze primary source materials related to the murder of Mary Phagan and;
 - viii. present those findings in written form to the course professor and;
 - ix. participate in a discussion of your findings using courseden.
- II. Go to: [The Leo Frank Trial](#) website.
- III. Explore the links included in that website. Locate primary source

materials that can help you answer the following question: Who killed Mary Phagan?

- IV. Go to the Digital Library of Georgia, Digital Newspaper Collection, [Atlanta Historic Newspaper](#) Collection.
- V. Locate several newspaper articles related to the Leo Frank trial. You should save the articles that you locate. You will need them later. The articles will appear as a pdf document and can be saved on your personal computer.
- VI. Write a 300-word essay, based on the primary sources that you have gathered, that analyzes the following question: who killed Mary Phagan? Your essay must:
 - x. Incorporate evidence from the primary source materials that you have located;
 - xi. Possess a clearly defined and well-argued thesis;
 - xii. Contain internal citations (footnotes-notes do not count toward final word count) All citations must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style as covered in chapter five of Hellstern, *The History Student Writer's Manual*;
 - xiii. Contain a bibliography at the end of the essay (bibliography does not count toward final word count) All citations must conform to the Chicago Manual of Style as covered in chapter five of Hellstern, *The History Student Writer's Manual*;
 - xiv. Be free of glaring mechanical, spelling, grammatical, and stylistic errors.
 - xv. Essay is due at 5:30 on July 21. Students will turn in their assignment using the courseden assignment drop box tool. All essays must be turned in as a word document (.doc extension). Any other file extension will receive a failing grade.
- VII. Participate in an online discussion using the courseden chat room tool. The course professor will monitor (ask and respond to questions). See directions above in the: ONLINE DISCUSSION REQUIREMENTS.

Topic(s):

1. Williams, *God's Own Party*

Assigned Readings:

1. Williams, *God's Own Party*

Assignments:

1. Students will complete a reading quiz covering this week's reading at the start of class. Students who are late to class will not be allowed to complete the quiz.

July 28—Final Exam—UWG Campus

Essay Grading Rubric

	Exceptional	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Lacks Understanding
Was the essay free of distracting grammatical, mechanical, and stylistic errors? (1.0 points)					
Did the essay have an identifiable thesis with supporting evidence? (2.0 points)					

Too what degree did the essay evidence the student's research abilities? (2.0 points)					
TOTALS					