

History 300
The Historian's Craft
Samford University, Fall Semester 2008
T-TH 8:00 – 9:50

"Any fool can make history, but it takes a genius to write it."

Oscar Wilde

"The past is not dead. In fact, it's not even past."

William Faulkner

"God cannot change the past, but historians can."

Samuel Butler

Contact Information

Professor: Jeff Northrup
Office Hours: T- Th 11:00 – Noon and by appointment
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Course Description and Objectives

This course is designed to provide history majors with the skills needed for academic success in upper-division courses. It will provide an introduction to historiography and historical research methods. We will work from a seminar format, with weekly projects, presentations and class discussion predominating. Students will learn to evaluate historical concepts and arguments, along with the primary and secondary sources used to support them. Projects will cover all aspects of the research and writing process, including the selection of topics, research and note-taking, developing a thesis, outlining, and the use of citations. The course will culminate in a substantial research project utilizing both primary and secondary sources to develop an original argument. Students will present their research in a public forum at the end of the semester.

Required Texts

Mark T. Gilderhus, History and Historians
Jules R. Benjamin, A Student's Guide to History
Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers
Various other readings as assigned

Assignments and Grading

I. Class and On-line Participation (10%)

Success in this class is dependent on your attendance, reading the assignments on a timely basis, and contributing productively to class discussions. This class is designed as a seminar, and although there may be some minimal lecturing, my design is to make this course as

inclusive and Socratic as possible. In addition, we will be carrying on discussions online through e-mail and Blackboard. You should participate as fully as possible in these discussions.

II. Research Assignments (40%)

Various assignments involving primary and secondary sources, close reading of primary documents, transcriptions, etc. will be assigned, generally in the first half of the semester. These may not be directly focused on the topic you choose.

- Colonial Paper 20%
- Primary and Secondary exercise 10%
- Quantitative assignment 10%

III. Research Project (50%)

The grade for the research project will include the following measuring devices

- Formal project proposal - abstract, bibliography, and outline
- First draft (minimum 10 pages) and research progress reports
- Final Research paper (minimum 15 pages)
- Research presentation

All assignments are due on the date provided. Five points will be deducted for each day of the week the assignment is late.

Grading Scale

A	92 - 100	B-	80 - 81	D+	68 - 69
A-	90 - 91	C+	78 - 79	D	62 - 67
B+	88 - 89	C	72 - 77	D-	60 - 61
B	82 - 87	C-	70 - 71	F	≥ 59

Attendance Policy

This course is conducted in a seminar format, and students are expected to attend every class session as well as participate actively in discussion and course activities. Excessive absences will act to your detriment. More than 4 total absences will result in a grade of 'F'. You are responsible for determining what you missed through absence from your classmates, ideally before the next class meets.

Disabilities

All students with disabilities seeking reasonable accommodation must register with Disability Support Services (726-4078 or 726-2105). Thereafter, please meet with the instructor to discuss reasonable accommodation requests verified by Disability Support Services.

Academic Integrity

The Samford Honor Code governs all work done in this course, written or otherwise. In all cases students are expected to present original work or to properly acknowledge the source of information gathered from other sources. Please refer to your copy of the Student Handbook for a more complete discussion of the importance of academic integrity. If in doubt about a particular issue, consult the professor.

Tentative Schedule of Classes

Tues. Aug. 26	Introduction Assignment: "On Stupidity" and "Future Reading" – both on Blackboard (due Aug. 28) Transcription exercise (due Sept. 2) Class: Discuss syllabus, course goals
Thurs. Aug. 28	Special Collection Tour Assignment: Santayana activity (due Sept. 2) Class: Discuss readings and responses Library Tour (Liz Wells, Special Collection Librarian)
Tues. Sept. 2	History as Art; as Science Assignment: Benjamin, Chapter 1 (due Sept. 4) Colonial Paper exercise (due Sept. 23) Class: Discuss Santayana activity, overview of colonial activity Submit today: Colonial Paper transcription
Thurs. Sept. 4	Electronic Resources and Ref. Dept. Tour Assignment: Gilderhus p. 1 – 51; (due Sept. 9) Class: Tour (Lori Northrup, Reference Dept. Librarian)
Tues. Sept. 9	Government Documents Tour Assignment: Gilderhus p. 117 – 147 (due Sept. 11) Class: Discuss Colonial problems Tour (Carla Waddell, Gov. Docs. Librarian)
Thurs. Sept. 11	Historiography Assignment: On Blackboard, on reserve at Library Class: Discuss Gilderhus, Colonial paper update; historiography
Tues. Sept. 16	Historians in Hell – Plagiarism and its discontents Class: Discuss readings; issues with Colonial Paper
Thurs. Sept. 18	Southern History and Archives Tour (BPL) Assignment: Colonial paper due 9/23 Class: Tour (Jim Baggett, Archivist, B'ham Public Library)
Tues. Sept. 23	Historian's Tools: Primary and Secondary Sources Assignment: Primary and secondary source exercise (due Sept. 30) Class: Discuss primary and secondary sources Due: Colonial Paper
Thurs. Sept. 25	Civil Rights Institute Tour Assignment: Submit 3 possible topics (Due Sept. 30)
Tues. Sept. 30	Writing, outlining, abstracting Assignment: Project proposal and preliminary abstract (due Thurs. Oct. 2) Class: Writing, abstracting, outlining (David Dedo) Submit today: Primary and Secondary source exercise
Thurs. Oct. 2	Project Proposals Assignment: Quantitative exercise (due Oct. 7) Class: Roundtable discussion of proposals Submit today: Project proposal and preliminary abstract

Tues. Oct. 7	Historian's Tools – Quantitative Analysis; Class: Discuss Quantitative exercise Discuss Sources Read Benjamin Chapter 4 (100 – 106) Submit today: Quantitative exercise	
Thurs. Oct. 9	Library work Collecting primary sources for research project Northrup in Library Submit today: Revised abstract	
Tues. Oct. 14	Library Work Collecting primary and secondary sources for research project Northrup in Library	
Thurs. Oct. 16	Library work Collecting secondary sources for research project Northrup in Library	
Tues. Oct. 21	Fall Break	
Thurs. Oct. 23	Review of Sources Class: Roundtable discussion of sources Read Benjamin Chapter 5	
Tues. Oct. 28	Begin writing Class: Read Benjamin Chapter 3 (57 – 66) Discussion of effective techniques Submit today: Annotated Bibliography	
Thurs. Oct. 30	Individual meetings for first draft Class: Read Benjamin Chapter 4 (115 – 118)	Consultation with Northrup
Tues. Nov. 4	Individual meetings for first draft	Consultation with Northrup
Thurs. Nov. 6	Individual meetings for first draft Submit today: Outline	Consultation with Northrup
Tues. Nov. 11	First Draft Due (minimum 8 pages) Submit today: Revised Bibliography First Draft Class: Roundtable discussion of first draft	
Thurs. Nov. 13	Individual meetings for final draft	
Tues. Nov. 18	Conducting Oral Presentations and Individual meetings for final draft Class: Read Benjamin Chapter 2 (43 – 44)	
Thurs. Nov. 20	Research Presentations and Peer Review	15- 18 minutes / presentation
Tues. Nov. 25	Research Presentations and Peer Review	
Thurs. Nov. 27	Thanksgiving Holiday	
Tues. Dec. 2	Final revisions and consults	
Thurs. Dec. 4	Final Paper Due	