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History 392  
Fall 2009  
Class time: MWF 2-2:50  
Office hours: MWF 12:30-1:30, 3:00-4:00

## **Historical Research and Writing: U.S. History**

### ***Course Description:***

History 392 introduces you to the tools and methods which historians use to research and write history. Since this is a seminar, you will take a more active role in this course than in many of your other courses. Come to class ready to discuss assigned readings and critique the written and oral work of your fellow students.

The course is divided into three segments. First, we begin by discussing practical methods of historical research and writing: selecting a topic, using the library, evaluating evidence, and writing a research paper. Second, you will spend several weeks engaged in independent research and writing. Finally, you will make an oral and written presentation of your research findings. Your final paper will incorporate the revisions suggested by your colleagues and instructor.

**Note:** After completing History 392, many students postpone taking History 499 for several semesters. Others take History 499 the subsequent semester and perform very well because what they learned in 392 is still fresh in their minds. To encourage you to take 392-499 in a two-semester sequence, I suggest you choose a topic that may contribute to one of the course offerings of 499 in the coming Spring semester.

### ***Required readings***

Furay and Salevouris, The Methods and Skills of History: A Practical Guide, 2d ed. (2000)  
Brown and Shannon, Going to the Sources, vol. 2 (2d edition, 2008)

**Reference Works on Reserve** (Morris Library, 1<sup>st</sup> floor):

Prucha, Handbook for Research in American History, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (1987)

-----, Handbook for Research in American History, 2d ed. (1994)

AHA, Guide to Historical Literature 3d ed. (1995)

See also <http://historymatters.gmu.edu> ("History Matters") and

<http://www.siu.edu/~histsiu/paperresources.html> AND

<http://write.siu.edu/History/index.html>

**WRITING FELLOWS:** Sara Ivetic, David Schafroth, John Stewart,

To provide you with additional tutoring, I am assisted by talented assistants who will meet with you weekly. These Writing Fellows are available to answer all of your questions concerning library research, documenting sources, writing mechanics, etc. They will also monitor your progress and report to me on a weekly basis. You are always free to see me during my office hours. The Fellows will be checking your weekly text assignments. I will be grading your major assignments and assigning you a course grade.

## ASSIGNMENTS

- Weekly assignments** (30%) weekly assignments include exercises from the two texts, meeting with your instructor, and contributing to class discussions of assigned readings.
- Book Review** (10%) You will write a short review of any book on your bibliography.
- Peer Review** (5%) Historians focus their research and hone their writing by submitting it to peer review. You too should benefit from the constructive criticisms of your fellow students. In turn, you will be called upon to act as primary reviewer of another student's paper.  
**Be constructive:** Note the strengths and weaknesses of the student's paper. How could the paper be improved? Avoid the temptation to uncritically praise the paper you are reviewing; the author deserves to benefit from your helpful advice.
- Oral Presentations** (5%) This assignment will help you develop the ability to speak in front of an audience. After completing your research, you will make an oral presentation of your findings. Your classmates and I will provide you with written feedback on your performance. This assignment is graded on a P/F basis (P = 100%, F = 0%).  
  
**Note:** You are responsible for attending all scheduled presentations, both as a matter of courtesy to your classmates and as a learning experience. I will deduct points for those not attending these events.
- Research Journal** (10%) From the beginning of the course, you will keep a journal tracking your research progress. Date each entry. Your first entries will include “brainstorming” about topics, later entries will inform me about your research steps and any problems you are encountering. **BRING YOUR JOURNAL TO EACH MEETING** with your instructor or Fellow. Along with your journal, you must keep a file with your notes and other research material (photocopied documents, etc.). You will turn this in with your final paper.
- Final Paper** (40%) You must hand in a detailed outline and a rough draft before submitting the final paper. Your paper must be 10-12 pp. long, draw upon ten or more sources (including a minimum of three primary sources). Keep in mind that this is a floor, not a ceiling! A superior paper will draw upon more primary source material.
- Late Assignments** You lose one letter grade (ten points on a 100 scale) for each day late.
- Warning!** Failure to meet minimum course requirements will result in course failure. These requirements are marked with an asterisk (\*) on the “Checklist of Course Assignments” below (p. 6). On the other hand, if you meet with us on a regular basis and complete the assignments in a timely manner, you should do very well. We are here to help those who help themselves.

## ***COURSE GUIDELINES***

**Topic selection:** You may choose any topic in American history, 1492-present. The skills you learn in this seminar—researching, writing, synthesizing—are transferable to other areas of history, though the sources may vary. Early in the semester, I will meet with each of you individually to discuss your topic, taking into account the resources of Morris Library.

**Primary sources:** Your topic should be based largely on original historical material. A word of warning: Do not select a topic that requires a great deal of material from other libraries. You should meet with me in the first few weeks of the semester to discuss possible primary sources. Prucha's Handbook is especially useful in this regard.

**Documentation:** In this course, attention to detail is important. You are responsible for taking complete and accurate research notes, which you will turn in with your final paper. You must cite all the material used in your paper by inserting footnotes or endnotes. The Chicago Manual of Style is the standard citation guide for History. The examples in Going to the Sources are based on the Chicago Manual and should suffice for most of your sources.

**Warning!** I will not tolerate academic misconduct in this class. I will report suspected cases of misconduct. The Student Conduct Code sets forth penalties for academic misconduct. Possible sanctions include failure of an assignment, course failure, disciplinary probation, or suspension from the university.

You must research and write your papers yourself. You may not have a friend write your paper. You may not hire someone to write your paper (this includes Internet paper mills, which I *can* and *do* check). You may not turn in a paper previously used in a different class.

Avoid **plagiarism**. Plagiarism consists of using someone else's ideas as your own without properly acknowledging them. Changing a few words is not enough; it is still plagiarism. If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, consult me.

**Emergency Procedures**. Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT's website at [www.bert.siu.edu](http://www.bert.siu.edu), Department of Safety's website [www.dps.siu.edu](http://www.dps.siu.edu) (disaster drop down), and in Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

- August 24 **Introduction**
- 26 **The Uses and Nature of History**  
Read: Furay, chap. 1-2
- Exercise 1: Chapter 2, Set B, Exercise 1
- 28 **Topic Selection and Journal Writing**
- Read: Brown, chap. 3 (Newspapers),
- Exercise 2: Turn in 3-5 possible research topics to your Fellow/Instructor
- Exercise 3: Brown, chap. 3:  
 \* For each pair of documents, list facts that are the same and those that differ in these newspaper accounts.
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- 31 **Reading History, Note Taking, and Writing Book Reviews**
- Read: Furay, chap. 7; Brown, Appendix 1 (plagiarism, note taking)
- Exercise 6: 1. Chapter 7, Set A, Exercise 2 ("Puritans and Sex")
- September 2 **Library Research: Search Basics (Meet in Library Classroom 261)**
- Read: Furay, chap. 6; Brown, chaps. 6, 12 (Diaries, Personal Letters)
- Exercise 4: Brown, chap. 6:  
 \*Questions 4-5  
 \*List facts corroborated by comparing accounts (e.g., comments on the work of each of the three diarists: roads, medical care, artillery).  
 \*Is it possible that the three men might have passed each other in the course of the war? Why?  
 \*Did anything surprise you in these accounts?
- Exercise 5: Brown, chap. 12, Questions 2-5
- Reference: *Southern Illinois Resources Guide*: <http://tinyurl.com/3dvfb7>  
*Guide to Primary Sources in Morris Library*. <http://tinyurl.com/2vq9fj>
- 4 **Library Research: Government Documents**
- Read: Brown, chaps. 1 (Congressional Hearings/Reports), chap. 9 (Supreme Court Records)
- Exercise 7: Brown, chap. 1: Questions 1-3, 5  
Exercise 8: Brown, chap. 9: Questions 1-3, 5, 7

Reference: Prucha, Handbook, 103-127  
*Guide to Government Documents at Morris Library* (2009)

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7 **NO CLASS** (Labor Day)

9 **Continuity, Change, and Complexity**

Read: Furay, chaps. 3-4; Brown, chaps. 10 (Presidential Recordings), 11 (Senate Debate)

Exercise 9: Brown, chap. 10:  
\*Questions 1-4.

Exercise 10: \*Create a bullet list of factors from Furay, chap. 4 (Ideas, Groups, Contingency, etc.) that you find in this Brown chapter, with a specific example next to each factor.

Exercise 11: Brown, chap. 11: Questions 1-4

Exercise 12: List factors from Furay, chap. 4 (Ideas, Groups, Contingency, etc.)

11 **Context and Moral Judgments in History**

Read: Furay, chap. 5

Exercise 13: Furay, Set A, Exercise 1

Exercise 14: Short bibliography due. Find two reviews in *America: History and Life*

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14 **Evaluating Evidence and Interpreting Events**

Read: Furay, chaps. 9 and 11; Brown, chap. 5 (Magazine Ads)

Exercise 15: Brown, chap. 5: Questions 1-5

16 **Evaluating Evidence and Interpreting Events**

Read: Brown, chap. 4 (Autobiographies)

Exercise 14: Brown, chap. 4: Questions 1-2, 4-5

18 **The Mechanics of Writing**

Read: Furay, chap. 12

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21 **Documentation**

Read: Brown, Appendix 2

23 **Digital History and the Internet**

Read: See <http://i-history.blogspot.com/>

25 **PROPOSAL DUE** (topic, thesis, annotated bibliography)

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28 **Book Review Due**

**Exercise 17: Footnote Exercise Due: \*Poor performance will require “re-dos” until you get it right!**

Oct. 30 Independent Research and Writing  
2 Independent Research and Writing

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5 Independent Research and Writing  
7 Independent Research and Writing  
9 Independent Research and Writing

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12 INFORMAL UPDATES (CLASS MEETING)  
14 INFORMAL UPDATES (CLASS MEETING)  
16 INFORMAL UPDATES (CLASS MEETING)

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19 INFORMAL UPDATES (CLASS MEETING)  
21 Independent Research and Writing  
23 **CLASS MEETING AT CAREER CENTER**  
**\*DETAILED OUTLINE DUE\***

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26 Independent Research and Writing  
28 Independent Research and Writing  
30 Independent Research and Writing

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Nov. 2 Independent Research and Writing  
4 Independent Research and Writing  
6 Independent Research and Writing

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9 Senior Seminars (HIST 499): Upcoming Offerings, 392-499 transition  
11 **NO CLASS: VETERAN’S DAY**  
13 Oral Presentations  
**ROUGH DRAFT #1 DUE**

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16 Oral Presentations  
18 Oral Presentations  
20 Oral Presentations

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23 **NO CLASS** (Thanksgiving Break)  
25 **NO CLASS** (Thanksgiving Break)  
27 **NO CLASS** (Thanksgiving Break)

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December 30 Oral Presentations **ROUGH DRAFT #2 DUE**  
2 Oral Presentations  
4 Oral Presentations

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7 Oral Presentations **PEER REVIEW DUE**  
9 Oral Presentations  
11 Oral Presentations

**FINAL PAPER DUE: Paper copy, dossier to instructor, upload file to Turnitin.com.**

**History 392**  
**Checklist of Course Assignments**

**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Assignments with points add up to your class participation grade, which is 30% of your final course grade. Other assignments (e.g., final paper) receive separate grades.

\* Constitutes a minimum course requirement. Failure to complete will result in a “F” grade.

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Maximum Points</u>
Exercise 1	_____ 2
Exercise 2	_____ 2
Exercise 3	_____ 8
Exercise 4	_____ 8
Exercise 5	_____ 8
Exercise 6	_____ 3
Exercise 7	_____ 8
Exercise 8	_____ 8
Exercise 9	_____ 8
Exercise 10	_____ 4
Exercise 11	_____ 8
Exercise 12	_____ 4
Exercise 13	_____ 3
Exercise 14	_____ 4
Exercise 15	_____ 8
Exercise 16	_____ 8
Exercise 17	_____ 6
*Meetings with Instructor /Fellow	_____
*Topic proposal	_____
*Outline	_____
*Rough Drafts	_____
*Peer Reviews	_____
*Research file	_____
*Final Paper	_____
<b>Total points:</b>	_____ 100 maximum points

NOTE: The penalty for each unexcused absence starts at 10 points and increases by 10 points for each subsequent absence.

## PAPER GRADING

- A** A joy to read! Correct in all aspects of grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and English usage. Paper is well-organized. Original and insightful interpretation of the subject. Strong and well-supported thesis statement.
- B** Very readable. Minimum mistakes in grammar, spelling, sentence structure, English usage, text format and style. Weak thesis statement: more descriptive than analytical.
- C** Average paper. Generally needs work on some aspect noted for the A and B papers.
- D** Frustrating to read. Requires a lot of work to bring up to average level. Generally poor overall or exceptionally poor in one or more aspects of A and B papers.
- F** A paper of even lower caliber than "D".

For more detail on how your paper will be graded, see the "Primary Trait Scale" below. The History Department uses this scale to evaluate Senior Papers but it applies equally well to all research papers, including 392 essays. Your goal is to meet or exceed expectations (let us hope you exceed them!).

## PRIMARY TRAIT SCALE

### *Writing*

<u>Exceeds Expectations:</u>	Correct in all aspects of grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and English usage. Uses connective sentences and is well organized. Engaging writing style makes the paper a pleasure to read.
<u>Meets Expectations:</u>	Correct in most aspects of grammar, spelling, sentence structure, and English usage. Uses connective sentences and is well organized.
<u>Does Not Meet Expectations:</u>	Not well organized and contains numerous errors in writing mechanics.

### *Research Skills*

<u>Exceeds Expectations:</u>	References exceptional in both quantity and quality (primary and secondary sources, scholarly journals rather than magazines).
<u>Meets Expectations:</u>	Adequate use of primary and secondary sources.
<u>Does Not Meet Expectations:</u>	Made no attempt to use primary sources, apart from those quoted in secondary works.

### *Analysis*

<u>Exceeds Expectations:</u>	Original and insightful interpretation of historical developments.
<u>Meets Expectations:</u>	Able to compare differing interpretations of past events, and demonstrate independent judgment.
<u>Does Not Meet Expectations:</u>	Simply relates what secondary sources say with little or no independent judgment.

### *Documentation*

<u>Exceeds Expectations:</u>	Impeccable citations both in text and references.
<u>Meets Expectations:</u>	Correct use of style in most citations.
<u>Does Not Meet Expectations:</u>	Inconsistent or unacceptable style in many citations.

### *Historical Awareness*

<u>Exceeds Expectations:</u>	Places topic/thesis in broader historical perspective; demonstrates both breadth and depth of historical understanding.
<u>Meets Expectations:</u>	Links issues of paper to larger historical context. Shows knowledge of major historical trends.
<u>Does Not Meet Expectations:</u>	Does not link issues of paper to a larger historical context. Knowledge of historical milestones lacking.