

## **The Historian's Craft: Methods and Approaches to Historical Investigation**

This course will introduce you to the methods by which professional historians investigate the past. Throughout the semester we will explore different methods of discovery using a range of primary sources. We will address strategies of analysis, argumentation, and critical thinking. We will hone your writing and presentation skills. Workshops are placed throughout the semester, to provide practice in all of these areas. The end product of this course will be an original work of historical scholarship, suitable for presentation at URCAS or a professional history conference.

### **Readings:**

*Coursepack:* Required readings (firsthand documents and scholarly articles) available online in Rhodes "Academic Departments," History, Garceau, Public Folder, History 300.

Richard Marius and Melvin Paige, *A Short Guide to Writing About History* (New York: Pearson Publishers, 2010) Eighth Edition. Use this as a reference for Chicago-style citations.

### **Academic Integrity:**

All work for this course should be pledged by the Rhodes Honor Code. Plagiarism is grounds for an 'F' in the course. Ignorance will not be treated as innocence. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's information or ideas without attribution. If you wonder whether something should be footnoted, it probably should. We will review how to do footnotes in the Chicago style, in class. If you have questions about the correct use of footnotes/endnotes, consult with me, or with a successful Senior History major, or check Marius, *A Short Guide*.

Information from the internet is extremely variable. Some sites provide access to online archives that hold primary evidence. Others read like an encyclopedia entry. Wikipedia is not an acceptable source for historical information. Please clear internet sources with me before using them in your final research paper. Any internet sources used should be cited by the author, the title of the document used, the title of the site, and a brief website address.

### **Expectations:**

This course is labor-intensive. I suggest you make it a priority. Assigned readings will be discussed on the day they are listed. In-class workshops are listed on the day we will spend class time on them. Take-home assignments are listed on the day they are assigned, and normally will be due on the next class day. If you give the readings, workshops and discussions your full participation, you will do well.

Because we hold discussions and workshops in class, what unfolds in class cannot be recreated; that is, one cannot "make up" a missed class. More than two absences will lower your average by a full letter grade. The only acceptable reasons for absence are documented illness or family emergency. Late papers will be dropped by a full letter grade.

**Requirements:**

- 1) Consistent attendance and participation. [20%]
- 2) Twelve workshop assignments. Some will be take-home, others in-class, and still others, a combination of the two. Averaged together, these workshops comprise 30% of your grade.
- 3) A research paper based on primary sources, edited, footnoted, and proofread, suitable for presentation at URCAS or a professional conference. Final draft due Monday, April 30. [25%]
- 4) An 8 to 10 minute Works-in-Progress report on your primary source research. This will be factored into your research paper grade, since the paper requires original work with primary sources. Five students will report each day, March 1, 6, and 8.
- 5) A 15-minute, formal presentation of your research to the class, followed by 5 minutes Q & A. Four students will present each day, April 17, 19, 24, and 26. [25%]

Begin the practice of questioning your sources: If it is primary evidence, who was the speaker or scribe? What was their agenda? How might their priorities have shaped what they wrote or said? If it is art, such as photographs, music, painting, or film, is there an underlying theme informing the images or story? How does it square with other forms of evidence? If it is secondary material, did the author make a convincing argument? In other words, does the evidence support the author’s conclusions?

\*\*\*\*\*

**COURSE OUTLINE**

Th Jan 12 Introduction to the Course

**Workshop 1, Assignment:** Historical Perspectives on Current Events  
Friday, Jan.13, attend Noam Chomsky lecture, 5pm, BCLC Ballroom.

T Jan 17 The Occupy Movement and Its Antecedents

Group Reports on Coxey’s Army of 1894, the Bonus Marchers of 1932, and the Missouri Sharecroppers Protest of 1939.

Th Jan 19 Public Spaces and the Construction of Memory

Reading: Dwight Pitcaithley, “Public Education and the National Park Service: Interpreting the Civil War,” *Perspectives* (Nov 2007): 1-3.

Kate Masur, “Changes in the Offing for Civil War Sites,” *Perspectives* (March 2000): 1-3.

Robert Spude, “On the Plains of Sand Creek, in the Valley of the Washita,” *Perspectives* (May 2008): 1-3.

**Workshop 2, Assignment:** History Detectives in Memphis

- T Jan 24      Public History: Who Owns the Past?  
                   Student Reports on History Detective assignments
- Th Jan 26      Census Manuscripts: Individual, Household, Neighborhood, Community  
                   **Workshop 3, in-class:** Census manuscripts, Butte, Montana, 1900, 1920.  
                   **Workshop 4, Assignment:** Census Manuscripts, Memphis Room
- T Jan 31      Group Reports on Census Manuscripts, Memphis Public Library
- Th Feb 2      Navigating Online Archives  
                   Meet in entryway, Barret Library; workshop with Bill Short.
- T Feb 7      Crafting a Thesis Statement and Using the Chicago Style  
                   What are you saying? In-class writing and citing exercises.  
                   **Research Prospectus due.**
- Th Feb 9      Critical Reading of Evidence: The Mutability of Fact  
                   **Workshop 5, in class:** E.H. Carr, “The Historian and His Facts,” 1-32.
- T Feb 14      Historiography: Challenging the Master Narrative in American Frontier History  
                   Reading: Rosemary and Joseph Agonito, “Resurrecting History’s  
                   Forgotten Women: A Case Study from Cheyenne Indians,” 8-15.  
                   Richard Bartlett, “Men, Women, and Families,” 344-63.  
                   Dan Flores, “Bison Ecology and Bison Diplomacy: The  
                   Southern Plains from 1800 to 1850,” 465-85.
- Th Feb 16      Reading Photographs: Edward S. Curtis and the American Indian  
                   Reading: Brian Dippie, “Photograph Allegories & Indian Destiny,” 41-57.  
                   E.S. Curtis, “A Plea for Haste in Making Documentary Records of  
                   The American Indian,” 163-65.  
                   **Workshop 6, in class:** Reading Photographs  
                   **Workshop 7, Assignment:** Critiquing Curtis Photographs

T Feb 21      Researching Photographs: The Rest of the Story  
                  Reading: Sally Jenkins, “The Team That Invented Football,” 60-74.  
                                  Linda Peavy & Ursula Smith, “Unlikely Champion: Emma Rose Sansaver, 1884-1925,” 179-207.  
                                  Peter Iverson, “When Indians Became Cowboys,” 16-31.  
                                  Benjamin Rader, “The Greatest Drama in Indian Life: Experiments In Indian Identity and Resistance at the Haskell Institute Homecoming of 1926,” 429-50.

**Workshop 8, Assignment:** Interpreting Firsthand Narratives

Th Feb 23      The Writer’s Craft: Proofreading for Style

**Workshop 9, in class:** Why We Do Rewrites

T Feb 28      Reading Firsthand Narratives: Letters, Diaries, Autobiographies & Memoirs

                  Reading: Letters from the California Gold Rush, 1-21.

                                  Diary of Henry Bigler, 172-80; & George Cannon, 218-40.

                                  Memoir of Bethenia Owens Adair, 173-87.

                                  Letters of Pauline Williamson, 114-21.

                                  Linda Hogan, “An Autobiographical Essay,” 435-39.

Th March 1      **Works in Progress Reports**

T March 6      **Works in Progress Reports**

Th March 8      **Works in Progress Reports**

T March 20     Using Secondary Sources Like a Pro

**Workshop 10, in-class:** Primary Research vs. Current Scholarship

Th March 22    Newspaper Reports: “Just the Facts”?

                  Reading: *Idaho Tri-Weekly Statesman*, “Indian Butchery” (1876): 1-2.

*Helena Daily Herald*, “Custer’s Disaster on the Little Bighorn,”  
                                  by James Bradley (July 15, 1876): 1-2.

*New York Herald*, “Interview with Sitting Bull” (Nov16, 1877):1-2

                                  Wooden Leg, “The Battle at Little Bighorn” (1931): 35-38.

                                  Kate Bighead, “She Watched Custer’s Last Battle,” 363-78.

- Th March 22 Newspaper Reports [*continued*]:  
**Workshop 10, Assignment:** Read accounts from several different newspapers about one event, and analyze for bias. [Memphis archives]
- T March 27 Beyond Custer's Last Stand: Investigating Bias in Newspaper Reports  
**Workshop 11:** Group Presentations on Newspaper Analysis
- Th March 29 Plagiarism: Was It Intellectual Theft?  
Reading: Peter Hoffer, "Plagiarism: The Cases of Stephen Ambrose and Doris Kearns Goodwin," 172-207.  
  
Letter, Dee Garceau to *Great Plains Quarterly* regarding review of Jacqueline Moore's book, *Cowboys and Cattlemen* (July 2011).
- T April 3 Background Information: How Much is Too Much? How Much is Too Little?  
**Workshop 12, in class:** Writing Exercise on Historical Context
- April 5-8 ***Easter Break***
- T April 10 What Can You Do With a History Degree?  
Guest Speaker: Amy Oakes, Office of Career Services
- Th April 12 Effective Use of Power Point in a Research Presentation  
Guest Speaker: Professor Tim Huebner
- T April 17 Student Presentations of Original Research
- Th April 19 Student Presentations of Original Research
- T April 24 Student Presentations of Original Research
- Th April 26 Student Presentations of Original Research
- M April 30 **Final Research Paper due.**