

## SYLLABUS FOR HISTORY 2100: THE HISTORIAN'S CRAFT, FALL 2015

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### COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course introduces students to the goals, tools, and forms of analysis of the historical profession. Students will learn to distinguish between evidence and interpretation (primary and secondary sources), work with a variety of primary sources to become familiar with materials historians commonly use, and learn how to evaluate other historians' interpretations of the past.

### ASSIGNED READINGS

*Book for Purchase at UConn Coop:* Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

*Journal Articles and Book Chapters posted on Huskyct, listed in their assigned order:*

(You may want to print these out to have in class on the day we discuss them.)

Hijiyah, James A. "American Gravestones and Attitudes toward Death: A Brief History." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 127 (1983): 339-63.

Hagelin, Wladimir and Ralph A. Brown, ed. "Connecticut Farmers at Bunker Hill: The Diary of Colonel Experience Storrs." *The New England Quarterly* 28 (1955): 72-93.

Brown, Richard D. "The Murder of Hannah Simons and the Challenge of Equal Justice in Windham County, Connecticut, 1805." Manuscript in my possession.

Brown, Richard D. Document Packet for Simons Murder Case.

Dayton, Cornelia Hughes. "Taking the Trade: Abortion and Gender Relations in an Eighteenth-Century New England Village." *William and Mary Quarterly* 48 (1991): 19-49.

Davidson, James West and Lytle, Mark Hamilton. "The Visible and Invisible Worlds of Salem," in *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed., vol. 1. NY: McGraw Hill, 2005: 24-48.

"Salem Witchcraft Packet" (excerpts from several historical monographs on this topic)

Citino, Robert M. "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction." *The American Historical Review* 112 (2007): 1070-90.

### GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Research Project #1

Exercises 20%

Poster Board 20%

Research Project #2

Exercises 15%

Final Paper/Exam 20%

Class Participation 25%

TOTAL 100%

Research Project #1: Research in Primary Sources. The class will research the history of Mansfield from the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries. Each student will be assigned a gravestone from the Old Storrs Cemetery. Using this person as a focal point, you will discover as much as you can about Mansfield history in the 1750-1850 time period. Several exercise assignments guide you through the research process (see class schedule below). Note that one exercise requires visits to at least two archives, one of which must be the Mansfield Town Clerk's Office (4 S. Eagleville Rd., opposite Price Chopper). Other nearby archives are the Dodd Center on campus, Mansfield Historical Society (on rte. 195 a few miles in the direction of Willimantic), the Connecticut State Library and Archives in Hartford, and the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford. Another exercise requires use of a genealogical database to access manuscript U.S. censuses: HeritageQuest, available through ICONN (Connecticut public library system) or ancestry.com, a fee-subscription service with a 14-day free trial. Exercises will be graded on research diligence (amount of effort, thoroughness, carefulness). They may be typewritten or handwritten (just make sure handwriting is legible). Some require that you submit printouts, photocopies, and/or research notes.

The project culminates in a collaborative exhibit of poster boards, one produced by each student, on Mansfield history. Each student's contribution to the exhibit (i.e., poster board) will be graded on research diligence, creative and thoughtful analysis, successful elaboration of the theme(s) agreed upon by the class, and clarity and effectiveness of presentation.

Research Project #2: Historiography. The class will pick a topic currently of interest to historians and research which historians have most influenced the study of this topic and the differences in their interpretations. As with Research Project #1, exercise grades are based on research diligence.

The project culminates in a 4-6 page, word-processed, double-spaced paper. This paper counts as the final exam and is due as an email attachment by the end of our regularly scheduled final exam period. The paper will compare historians' interpretations on the topic chosen by the class. You might answer one of these questions: Have historians' views changed over time? Have historians emphasized some interpretations but missed opportunities to explore other, new questions? Is there a central debate among historians working on this topic, and are their differences due to their different questions, varying primary sources, modes of analysis or theoretical approaches, or some other cause? You should mention and cite all the major works on this topic but may choose to cover in-depth only two or three, if their work is especially important. The paper should be well-written with a clear thesis (i.e., main point) and supported by accurate, persuasive examples from your research. Sources must be properly cited as in Rampolla, ch. 7.

Class Participation. This grade is based on preparedness for class and the quantity and quality of contributions to small-group and full-class discussions. To show that you are doing the assigned readings, you must contribute substantive comments on the days we discuss these readings to earn class participation points on that day. Absences, arriving late, and leaving early will lower your class-participation grade because, if you are not in class, then you are not participating.

## **POLICIES**

- DO NOT leave the classroom when in session unless it's an emergency. Even when we are working informally in groups, it is inappropriate to leave the room since absences and interruptions interfere with other students' ability to complete the task at hand. Arriving late and leaving early similarly disrupt the class.
- DO NOT use electronic equipment in class (no telephones, no computers, etc.), unless with explicit instructor permission. Please turn off cell phones before class starts.
- DO NOT submit assignments as email attachments unless with explicit instructor permission. Unless stated otherwise, all assignments must be turned in on paper.
- C means satisfactory completion of course requirements. B is for good work (demonstrating special effort, insight, creativity, thoroughness, clarity, etc.). A rewards students for outstanding work, above and beyond course expectations.
- To be fair to students who turn work in on time, late assignments will be marked down a notch (e.g., B to B-, C+ to C) and by a full letter grade if more than one week late.
- Academic dishonesty (cheating or plagiarism) is a serious offense resulting in automatic failure of the assignment and perhaps further action depending on the situation. We will collaborate during class, but work outside of class must be done independently. See the section on "Academic Integrity" in *The Student Code*.
- If you do not want me to use your assignments (with your name removed) as a model for other students, let me know by email within the first week of class.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

NOTE: You are responsible for knowing about changes to this schedule that I announce in class and/or post on huskyct.

### **WK 1**

**T 9/1 Introduction: Evidence and Interpretation**

**Primary Sources: Maps**

**Th 9/3 Identifying Subjects for Research Project #1**

Meet at Old Storrs Cemetery behind Storrs Congregational Church (corner of N. Eagleville Rd. and Rte. 195--see map on huskyct). If you cannot see rte. 195 from the cemetery, then you are in the wrong cemetery. If a funeral is taking place (the sign will be cars parked on N. Eagleville) or if it is raining, go to our classroom and plan to meet at the cemetery on T 9/8. If it looks like the cemetery visit has to be postponed, I will post a notice on huskyct one hour before class. Bring a camera and/or sketchbook.

### **WK 2**

**T 9/8 Primary Sources: Cemeteries and Gravestones**

**Change over Time**

READ: Hijiya

BRING TO CLASS: cemetery pictures

**Th 9/10 The Research Process**

READ: Rampolla, chs. 1-2 & browse ch. 7 to become familiar with our "style sheet"

BRING TO CLASS: laptop for online and library searches

**WK 3**

**T 9/15**

**Introduction to Archival Research**

DUE: Exercise #1 (Google and Google Books search)

**Th 9/17**

**No Class Meeting: Archival Research**

(I will be in Mansfield Town Clerk's Office records vault during our class period)

**WK 4**

**T 9/22**

**No Class Meeting: Archival Research**

(I will be in Town Clerk's records vault during our class period)

**Th 9/24**

**Primary Sources: Censuses & Genealogical Tools**

DUE: Exercise #2 (two archives visits)

**WK 5**

**T 9/29**

**Quantitative Methods**

**Th 10/1**

**Primary Sources: Diaries** (film *A Midwife's Tale*)

DUE: Exercise #3 (genealogy websites, censuses)

**WK 6**

**T 10/6**

**Primary Sources: Diaries**

READ: Hagelin & Brown

**Th 10/8**

**Primary Sources: Newspapers, etc.**

**WK 7**

**T 10/13**

**Exhibit Planning I: Analyze Data**

DUE: Exercise #4 (newspapers and magazines)

BRING TO CLASS: all your research notes

**Th 10/15**

**Interpreting Evidence Case Studies**

READ: Brown; Brown Documents Packet; Dayton

**WK 8**

**T 10/20**

**Exhibit Planning II: Draft Poster Presentations**

READ: Rampolla, sections 3c, 4b through 4d

BRING TO CLASS: all your research notes

OPTIONAL/EXTRA CREDIT DUE: one of the four exercises redone

**Th 10/22**

**Exhibit Day: Mansfield History**

**WK 9**

**T 10/27**

**What is Historiography?: Salem Witchcraft Case Study**

READ: Davidson & Lytle; "Salem Witchcraft Packet"

**Th 10/29**

**What is Historiography?: Sample Historiographic Essay**

**Picking a Topic for our Historiography Project**

READ: Citino

**WK 10**

**T 11/3**

**Research in Secondary Sources**

BRING TO CLASS: laptop to access library resources

**Th 11/5**

**Good Historical Scholarship**

DUE: Exercise #1 (gathering materials)

BRING TO CLASS: a book taken out of Babbidge Library

**WK 11**

**T 11/10**

**Evaluating Arguments and their Evidence**

**Th 11/12**

**Summarizing and Assessing the Historiography on our Topic**

DUE: Exercise #2 (analysis of two journal articles, on huskyct, to be assigned)

**WK 12**

**T 11/17**

**History Writing**

**Plagiarism**

READ: Rampolla, sections 4e-4g, chs. 5-6

**Th 11/19**

**Designing a historiographic essay**

DUE: Exercise #3 (historiographic overview)

**NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**WK 13**

**T 12/1**

**NO CLASS – Individual meetings in my office (227 Wood)**

OPTIONAL/EXTRA CREDIT DUE: one Project #2 exercise redone

**Th 12/3**

**Revising and Editing**

DUE: Draft Papers (multiple copies, number of copies TBA)

**WK 15**

**T 12/8**

**Writing Workshops**

READ: Assigned Papers

**Th 12/10**

**Wrapping Up**

DUE as email attachment by the end of our regularly scheduled exam period: FINAL PAPER