

## **HIST 5102 QUESTIONS OF EVIDENCE: HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND WRITING Spring 2017**

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In this course, students research and write an article suitable for publication in a history journal. These articles will be based on research in primary sources, show a thorough familiarity with the relevant historiography, and provide a new and significant interpretation of the past. The course design has four intersecting components, which will provide structure and plentiful feedback to what is otherwise independent work.

First, class meetings will help students complete quality articles by creating a forum in which students learn from other historians' experiences, generate ideas, share work-in-progress, and solve research and writing problems. These class meetings will have a workshop format, meaning that we will often work directly with primary sources and writing-in-progress. During the first half of the course, the workshops will emphasize the research process, particularly the gathering and analysis of primary sources. Workshops in the second half of the course will focus on the writing process and the various formats (journal articles and conference presentations) in which historians present their research findings to larger audiences.

Second, students will receive periodic feedback from me, the formal instructor of the course.

Third, each student will have a faculty advisor knowledgeable in his/her research area. This faculty advisor may or may not be the student's regular advisor. (If the 5102 faculty advisor is different from a student's regular advisor, I recommend that the student still keep the regular advisor in the loop.) The 5102 faculty advisor's role is to give guidance to the student at various stages of the process, most importantly to recommend primary sources and historiographic works, to suggest avenues for research and analysis, to comment on the first draft, and to collaborate with me in evaluating the final draft.

Fourth, students will read and comment on a fellow student's draft paper and provide feedback in a formal peer review.

Students should complete their final essays (25-32 pages of text, doubled-spaced, plus footnotes or endnotes) by the end of the semester and then over the summer prepare a conference presentation fifteen to twenty minutes long (if it is to be read, that comes to about 8-10 double-spaced pages plus notes) for the History Department Graduate Student Research Conference to be held at the start of fall semester, 2017. Any student who by necessity ends up taking an incomplete in spring 2017 should finish their final 5102 paper by August 1, 2017, to participate in the fall conference. Participation in the fall conference is not a required, graded component of the course. It simply is an opportunity for you to share your research with the history community, and it is good practice for the future.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Journal Review Packet	10%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Document Analysis	10%
Creative Analysis	10%
Class Participation and Peer Review	20%
First Draft of Paper	0%
Final Paper	<u>40%</u>
	100%

All assignments should be submitted to me **by email** before the deadline in the class schedule. Discuss with your 5102 advisor how he/she wishes to receive materials. I recommend that you send your 5102 advisor copies of all assignments except the peer review. At a minimum, they need a copy of the first and final drafts of the paper.

Journal Review Packet. Identify three history journals that would consider publishing an article like the one you intend to write. List the three journals ranked as your first, second, and third choice. To determine your rankings, think about which journals are most compatible with your topic, have the largest and most appropriate readerships, have reputations for quality, and are most likely to accept an article like yours for publication. Write a paragraph or two on each journal explaining why it's a suitable journal for your article; include in this paragraph the titles of a few articles this journal has published recently which demonstrate some sympathy between that journal and your research topic. Include a copy of or hyperlink to the first-ranked journal's instructions for authors and style sheet.

Annotated Bibliography. Identify the five most relevant secondary sources (books and/or articles) and in one-two paragraphs describe and assess it. Be sure to address these aspects:

- (1) Author(s)'s main point/thesis
- (2) Author's framing (who, when, what, where)
- (3) Author's most important primary sources and methods
- (4) Your and/or other scholars' responses to this source: Why is it significant? (I suggest you do some research on each source—check out author's webpage, book reviews, who has cited it according to google scholar, blogs, podcasts with author, etc.)
- (5) What is the most useful takeaway for your purposes with the 5102? Is this work a building block, a model, an example, a counter example, etc.? How does it situate your own research objectives within the historiography?

Document Analysis. Select one of your strongest, most intriguing, most explanatory primary sources and analyze it closely in two-three pages (double-spaced). Who produced the document, for what readership, for what purpose, and in what context? And why is this document revelatory for your 5102 project? Attach a copy of the document or, if it's long, a 2-3 page excerpt of it.

Creative Analysis. In class, we will discuss examples of "creative analysis" before you start work on this assignment. Think outside of the box: construct a graphic, such as a chart or map, so as to consider ways to analyze information that go beyond the telling quote. Include 1-2 pages

(double-spaced) explaining how you constructed the graphic, citing the source(s) of the information deployed in it, and describing what it could illuminate if it became a feature of your final paper.

Class Participation & Peer Review: This grade is based on the quantity and quality of oral contributions to class discussion. You will also be assigned one student's first draft to read and comment on. This peer review should be in depth and result in 2-3 pages (double-spaced) of commentary and advice. Arrange with the paper writer how they will receive your commentary; send me a copy by email.

Final Paper: The page requirement of 25-32 double-spaced pages of text (not counting the end/footnotes) is what most journals will expect and accept. Do NOT exceed this page limit. You are required to produce a first draft, which will not be graded but which should be as complete and polished as possible. (That is why I call this a “first draft”; it is NOT a “rough draft.”) You should write the paper with the first journal on your list of journals as your target audience. These papers should cite sources using the style consistent with that employed by your target journal unless you have a reason for using an alternative system. If you use footnotes for citing sources, you do NOT need an additional bibliography at the end of the paper.

Grades for these papers will be based on the following criteria:

- Research: Was it original, extensive, thorough, careful, creative, and based on a variety of primary sources? How easy (or difficult) was this research?
- Historiography: Does the paper provide a historiographic context for the argument or research findings? In other words, how does what you have to say fit with what other historians have written about this issue?
- Thesis/Interpretation/Argument/Main Point: Is it clear, original, and significant?
- Use of Evidence: Is the argument supported with specific examples and solid evidence? Is it logical? Persuasive? Is evidence used carefully and transparently? Was the evidence analyzed deeply and creatively to produce interesting insights? Are all sources of information documented in the footnotes or endnotes?
- Writing: Is it easy to understand and follow? Well-organized? Error-free? Stylistically engaging? Do the footnotes conform to the style requirements of your target journal?

The final paper grade is a collaboration between the instructor and the 5102 faculty advisor. All other grades for the course are determined by me, the formal instructor of the course.

### **READINGS:**

(1) A "Creative Analysis Packet" 50-100 pages long (on huskyct). This consists of secondary-source excerpts that I consider especially innovative and insightful historical approaches. You may also contribute to this packet if you get your example (preferably no longer than three pages) to me early in the semester. If there is something a historian has done that inspired you in its originality and incisiveness, consider sharing it with the class.

(2) We will also pick one or two articles from a recent issue of *The American Historical Review* to dissect as the means to discuss common formats for research articles.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**

- WK 1: JAN 23      THE RESEARCH PROCESS  
**Bring:** Laptop to wifi into UConn Libraries databases
- WK 2: JAN 30      DOG AND PONY SHOW (Class starts at 1:30)  
**Due by 1/30, 1:00:** Journal Review
- WK 3: FEB 6        NO CLASS  
**Due by 2/6, 1:00:** Annotated Bibliography  
**Due (optional):** Example of another historian's creative analysis  
**Required:** Individual Meeting with Me (TBA), bring to this meeting any secondary sources you can easily carry

SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH YOUR 5102 ADVISOR TO DISCUSS RESEARCH QUESTION, HISTORIOGRAPHY, AND RESEARCH AGENDA AND PROGRESS

- WK 4: FEB 13      DOCUMENT ANALYSIS: SHOW AND TELL  
**Due by 2/13, 1:00:** Document Analysis  
**Bring:** ten copies of a document (no more than three pages long)
- WK 5: FEB 20      WHAT IS CREATIVE ANALYSIS?  
**Read and Bring:** Creative Analysis Packet (on huskyct)
- WK 6: FEB 27      CREATIVE ANALYSIS: SHOW AND TELL  
**Due:** Creative Analysis  
**Bring:** 10 copies of your graphic
- WK 7: MAR 6        ARTICLE DISSECTION (class starts at 1:30)  
**Read:** One or two articles from the AHR (TBA)
- MAR 13: NO CLASS - SPRING BREAK
- WK 8: MAR 20      NO CLASS – INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH ME
- WK 9: MAR 27.     WORKSHOP: INTRODUCTIONS  
**Bring:** Copies of draft introduction (no more than four double-spaced pages), which should include the framing (who, what, when, where), thesis statement, historiographic context, and full source citations in footnotes or endnotes. Bring enough copies for everyone in your working group (TBA), yourself, and me.
- WK 10: APR 3      NO CLASS

SCHEDULE A MEETING WITH YOUR 5102 ADVISOR. IF POSSIBLE, INCLUDE ME.

WK 11: APR 10 NO CLASS

**Due by Wed., Apr. 12, 1:00:** First Draft Research Paper

WK 12: APR 17 NO CLASS

**Due by Apr. 17, 1:00:** written peer review (by email to me and to author of paper you read)

**Required:** individual meeting w/me (TBA)

**Recommended:** individual meeting w/faculty advisor

WK 13: APR 24 (Class starts at 1:30)

EDITING

PLANNING THE FALL CONFERENCE

SET EVALUATIONS

**Bring:** one copy of most recent draft research paper to work on in class

**Due by Mon., May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1:00:** Final Draft Research Paper (by email to me, and by hardcopy or email to faculty advisor, whichever he/she requests)

FINALS WK: PARTY (TBA)