

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

American Public University System

The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind

School of Arts and Humanities

HIST 500

Historical Research Methods

3 Credit Hours

8 Week Course

Graduate students are encouraged to take required or core courses prior to enrolling in the seminars, concentration courses or electives.

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Instructor Information

See the initial link in the classroom for your instructor contact information.

Course Description

The course addresses the development of core research skills for advanced historical study. Through case studies analyses, the evaluation of different types of historical evidence, and the consideration of how valid research questions are formulated and applied, it is designed to refine the critical thinking, research, and writing skills that are fundamental to valid historical scholarship.

Course Scope

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By design, this course requires thoughtful reading and analysis. The class discussion forums and written assignments are designed to allow you to demonstrate a thorough comprehension of the concepts introduced in the readings and case studies. Your perception of the issues introduced in these readings and case studies will be shaped by your worldview and experience. Feel free to report your views but do so in a considerate and thoughtful manner. Since this is upper-level coursework, do not merely regurgitate information from the reading assignments. You are expected to analyze, critique, and challenge the authors, materials, each other, and me. Academic integrity is essential and my expectation is that your work is original.

Course Objectives

After the successful completion of this course, students will be able to

1. Appraise what constitutes historical scholarship, interpretation, and theory.
2. Discern that historical narratives are interpretations of primary and secondary sources that are affected by voice and perspective.
3. Locate and examine the holdings of archives and learn how to conduct historical research in the information age.
4. Demonstrate the ability to synthesize primary and secondary sources into a single narrative.
5. Appraise the needs of a specific audience in developing a research plan and interpretation.
6. Evaluate historical research conducted by scholars, peers, and students; evaluate various methods for conveying historical narratives.
7. Apply the study of the past to the interpretation of historical ideas.

Course Delivery Method

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials (Located in Resources in SAKAI) and access to the online learning management system (SAKAI) will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday evening of the week except as otherwise noted and may include discussion questions (accomplished in Forums), examinations, and individual assignments submitted for review and evaluation by the Faculty Member. Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this course.

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals we understand you must manage competing demands on your time. However, routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

No late assignment will receive an A grade unless the instructor has been contacted before the due date with a valid reason.

Course Materials

Required Textbooks: *Student Purchase*

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Howell, Martha C., and Walter Prevenier. *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

Presnell, Jenny L. *The Information-Literate Historian: A Guide to Research for History Students*. (Second Edition) New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Additional Required Readings: *In Resources Files or Provided by Instructor*

Rael, Patrick. *Reading, Writing, and Researching for History*. Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin College, 1998.

Barton, Keith C. "Primary Sources in History: Breaking Through the Myths." *Phi Delta Kappan* 86 (June 2005): 745-753.

Black, Jeremy. "Maps and History." *History Review* 28 (September 1997): 37-39.

Champion, Justin. "What are Historians For?" *Historical Research* 81 (February 2008): 167-188.

Daddow, Oliver J. "Debating History Today." *Rethinking History* 8 (March 2004): 143-147.

Gorman, Jonathan. "Historians and Their Duties." *History and Theory* 43 (December 2004):103-117.

McCullagh, C. Behan. "Bias in Historical Description, Interpretation, and Explanation." *History and Theory* 39 (February 2000): 39-66.

Perlmutter, David D. "Visual Historical Methods." *Historical Methods* 27 (Fall 1994): 167-185.

Seefeldt, Douglas and William G. Thomas. "What is Digital History? A Look at Some Exemplar Projects." *Perspectives on History* 47 (May 2009): 40-43.

Stearns, Peter N. "Why Study History?" American Historical Association. <http://www.historians.org/pubs/Free/WhyStudyHistory.htm> (accessed May 30, 2015).

Weinstein, Barbara. "Doing History in the Digital Age." American Historical Association. <http://www.historians.org/perspectives/issues/2007/0705/0705pre1.cfm> (accessed May 30, 2015).

Optional Resources (Recommended):

Fischer, David Hackett. *Historians' Fallacies: Toward the Logic of Historical Thought*. New York: HarperPerennial, 1970.

Novick, Peter. *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Storey, William Kelleher. *Writing History: A Guide for Students*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2004.

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Marius, Richard. *A Short Guide to Writing about History*. NY: Longmans, 1999.

Turabian Citation Guide Online http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

IMPORTANT NOTE: The History Program requires conformity with the traditional University of Chicago Style Manual and its Turabian offshoot. Citations will follow traditional footnote attribution. Do not use parenthetical (MLA) variation.

Copyright/Fair Use Notice: Electronic readings may be provided by way of licensed materials in the Online Library, but also in keeping with Fair Use exemptions for educational purposes under U.S. Copyright Law.

Evaluation Procedures

1. Readings, Assignments, and Participation You will be required to read about 700 pages for the course; doubtless more, depending upon your research efforts. You will also be required to thoughtfully respond to weekly forum discussion topics. While the forum items will normally be drawn from the weekly reading assignments, they may be modified at the discretion of the instructor. Your responses – also called “posts” – will involve analyzing readings, comparing and contrasting the views of authors, and critiquing arguments presented by the readings or the class responses, and discussions should abide by the University Netiquette policy. The purpose of the forum’s discussion forum activities is to expand your learning opportunities by engaging in academic and thought-provoking asynchronous conversation with your classmates and instructor. The instructor’s role is to facilitate the learning process by participating in the discussions and moving conversations by promoting an advanced level of inquiry.

Beginning in Week 1 and continuing through Week 8, there will be 40 possible grade points awarded for participation in the discussion forum items: eight weeks at five points per week. Posts will be reviewed for accuracy of interpretation, rigor of argument, and clarity of expression. Generally – although this may vary in accordance with the particular topic – initial weekly posts should be about 250 words in length (three maximum points), while a maximum of two points (at one point each) will be awarded for responses to other student’s posts, and/or to the instructor’s follow-up weekly forum comments. Secondary weekly posts should be a minimum of 100 words in length. Keep in mind that, when responding to other students, or to the secondary instructor posts, it is not enough to simply state “I agree.” Respond to their posts in a way that moves the discussion forward, and demonstrates your knowledge or unique perspective on the topic.

NOTE: While you are, of course, free to posts any number of on point comments during a particular week, recognize that, once again, you will only receive a maximum of five points for a particular week’s forum postings, be they to the initial weekly forum topic (three points); and/or to responses to other students or instructor posts (a total of two posts, at one point each).

As a rule, if, for any number of reasons, I feel that there is a problem with your postings – normally this might be insufficient or inappropriate responses – I will contact you directly, by private email, to pursue the issue, as I prefer not to discuss matters of this nature in the public forum. Further note that the weekly discussion forum will be closed at the end of a particular week – 11:55 PM, Sunday evening, EDT – and a new forum will be opened to

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facilitate the next week's discussion topic. Once the week has passed – and that week's forum has been closed – it will not be reopened to allow new posts and you will forfeit any points for that particular week if you have not responded. Accordingly, make every attempt to post responses within the appropriate weekly timeframe.

2. Examination of the Researching History Guide: In this assignment, you will be required examine the information included in the *Researching History Guide* (course resources folder). Once you have carefully examined the material write an *informal*, candid 250-500 word review of the *Guide* in which you indicate the particular topics you found to be of benefit (as well as those items you found not to be of benefit) when contrasted with your own research and writing strengths and weaknesses. Specifically respond to the following questions:

1. What were the most difficult concepts to embrace?
2. What were the easiest? and
3. How might this guide influence the writing of your own historical research findings?

This assignment shall be typed, double-spaced, and in a 12-point Times New Roman font. See the link in the assignment window for a sample of the format for this assignment. There will be 15 possible grade points awarded for submission of the *Researching History Guide*.

3. Research Proposal: Each student is required to prepare a formal research proposal of a historical research project. Keep in mind that this is the solely a proposal and you are not required to submit an actual completed research project. Before the proposal can be submitted, you must have identified an appropriate research problem and developed realistic ways of exploring it. This process generally takes several weeks, and it should begin sometime during the initial two weeks of the course. Further, you should realize that preparing the proposal is both a formal and an intellectual exercise. Therefore, all aspects of the proposal should be prepared as carefully as possible.

As an attachment to the Research Project Proposal assignment window, you will find the document *General Guidelines, The Research Paper Proposal, HIST500*. An example of a historical research project proposal is included as an appendix to this guide and you are strongly are required to examine this document in its entirety as it provides detailed instructions on completing your proposal, while the example proposal will serve as the required format. NOTE: The research proposal process consists of the following steps:

- *Week 4* - Submission of a preliminary annotated bibliography of works to be included in the proposal. At this point, a minimum of 15, properly formatted items are required. (15 points)
- *Week 8* - Submission of a final, properly formatted research proposal. (30 points)

The proposal's bibliography is, generally, a review of the literature and will include a minimum of 25 reference citations. Further, items included in the bibliography should be *annotated* – that is, accompanied by a brief description of the work's contents and value for the investigation – and formatted in the Turabian-Chicago style, specifically the footnote and bibliographic formats. For reference purposes, an abbreviated Turabian formatting guide is available at: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html Keep this close at hand as you are required to use the Turabian style format for all assignments in this course.

Regarding Internet sources to be used citation purposes, acceptable sites include scholarly websites and documents available through the APUS Online Library, or other academic and governmental holdings, libraries, archives and databases. For our purposes, *Wikipedia* (as well as the other “*Wiki*” sites) is not considered a valid

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academic source. Note that, once again, as graduate students, it is *your* responsibility to ensure the proper formatting for your working bibliography and footnote entries. There will be a total of 30 possible grade points awarded for submission of the formal research proposal.

| Evaluated Activities | | |
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| Assignment | Number of Points | Percent of Final Grade |
| <i>Week 1:</i> Examination of the <i>Researching History Guide</i> | 15 | 15% |
| <i>Week 4:</i> Preliminary <i>annotated</i> bibliography of works (a minimum of 15 items at this point) to be included in the research proposal | 15 | 15% |
| <i>Week 8:</i> Research Project Proposal | 30 | 30% |
| Class Participation (Computed at end of course) | 40 | 40% |
| TOTAL | 100 | 100% |

NOTE: Written assignments are due on Sunday – 11:55 PM (Eastern) – of a particular week. Review the syllabus for specific requirements, and see the *Student Handbook* for details on the university grading scale.

| Course Outline | | | | |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Week | Topic | Learning Objectives | Readings | Assignments |
| 1 | Introduction to the Course and the Introduction to Historical Research and Writing | Identify a general framework in which to pursue historical research and candidly evaluate your own historical research and writing skills. (Course Objectives 1,2,3) | Explore, in detail, the <i>Researching History Guide</i> . (Attached to Assignment 1 Examination of the <i>Researching History Guide</i>) Stearns Essay - “Why Study History” | Virtual Introduction (Mandatory). Responses to weekly discussion forum issues. Submit for Grade: the <i>Examination of the Researching History Guide</i> assignment (By Sunday evening, the last day of Week 1) See syllabus for specific assignment requirements. |
| 2 | The Importance of Sources and Technical Analysis in Historical Writing | Evaluate source typologies, and the impact of technology on the production of sources. (Course Objectives 1,2,7) Examine the authority, | Howell and Prevenier- <i>An Introduction to Historical Methods:</i> Preface and Chapters 1 and 2 Review <i>General Guidelines: The</i> | Required responses to weekly discussion forum issues. Research Proposal: Familiarization with the format and begin compiling information for annotated bibliography. |

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| | | competence, and trustworthiness of source material. (Course Objectives 2,5,6) | <i>Research Paper Proposal</i> | |
| 3 | Traditional and Innovative Methodologies in Historical Interpretation | Profile techniques for the comparison of sources and establishing the reliability of evidence. (Course Objectives 1,4,6) Examine the politics and interdisciplinary aspects of historical writing. (Course Objectives 6,7) | Howell and Prevenier- <i>An Introduction to Historical Methods:</i> Chapters 3 and 4. Daddow Essay - "Debating History Today" Library of Congress "Using Primary Sources" Guides | Required responses to weekly discussion forum issues. Research Proposal: Continue locating background information and begin writing the annotated bibliography. |
| 4 | The Nature of Historical Writing and Scholarly Information | Investigate concepts such as change, continuity, and causality in the pursuit of historical scholarship. (Course Objectives 1,6,7) Analyze the character of scholarly information, reference resources, and explore how historians communicate. (Course Objectives 2,4,6) | Howell and Prevenier- <i>An Introduction to Historical Methods:</i> Chapter 5. Presnell - <i>The Information-Literate Historian:</i> Chapters 1 and 2. Champion Essay - "What are Historians For?" | Required responses to weekly discussion forum issues. Submit for Grade: <i>Preliminary Annotated bibliography</i> assignment (By Sunday evening, the last day of Week 4) See syllabus for specific assignment requirements. |
| 5 | Identification and Access to Scholarly Resources and the Distortion Factor | Locate and categorize sources of historical information. (Course Objectives 1-2) Examine the concepts of perspective and bias in historical writing. (Course Objectives 1,2,6) | Presnell - <i>The Information-Literate Historian:</i> Chapter 3, 4 and 5. Weinstein Essay - "Doing History in the Digital Age." McCullagh Essay - "Bias in Historical Description, Interpretation, and Explanation" | Required responses to weekly discussion forum issues. Research Proposal: Begin writing the Research Proposal. |
| 6 | The Pursuit of Primary Sources and | Examine the nature and categories of primary sources. (Course | Presnell - <i>The Information-Literate Historian:</i> Chapters 6 | Required responses to weekly discussion forum issues. |

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| | the Internet | Objectives 2,4,7) Explore questions associated with valid historical scholarship in the digital age. (Course Objectives 3,5,6) | and 7. Barton Essay - "Primary Sources in History: Breaking Through the Myths" Seefeldt and Thomas Essay - "What is Digital History?" | Research Proposal: Continue writing the Research Proposal. |
| 7 | The Role of Media and Cartography as a Tool in Historical Scholarship | Assess the influence of maps as political and propaganda tools. (Course Objectives 1,2,7) Assess the application of images, motion pictures, and audio in historical scholarship. (Course Objectives 1,2,7) | Presnell - <i>The Information-Literate Historian</i> : Chapter 8, 9, 10, and 11 Black Essay - "Maps and History" Perlmutter Essay - "Visual Historical Methods" | Required responses to weekly discussion forum issues. Research Proposal: Continue writing the primary proposal. |
| 8 | Ethics and Historical Research Conclusion | Weigh the ethical and empirical problems associated with researcher motivation, and the influence of motivation on historical research, interpretative methodologies, and historical writing. (Course Objectives 1,6,7) Revise any earlier drafts of the research proposal using the principles, techniques and methods covered in the assigned readings and complete the final composition of a research proposal using the proper citation protocols. (Course Objectives 1,5,7) | Gorman Essay - "Historians and Their Duties" | Required responses to weekly discussion forum issues. Submit for Grade: <i>Research Proposal</i> assignment (By Sunday evening, the last day of Week 8) See syllabus for specific assignment requirements. Course Ends |

Policies

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Please see the Student Handbook to reference all University policies. Quick links to frequently asked question about policies are listed below.

Drop/Withdrawal Policy

Plagiarism Policy

Extension Process and Policy

Disability Accommodations

Writing Expectations

Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow the accepted guidelines of the American historical profession, which is the *Chicago Manual of Style*. This course will require students to use the citation and reference style established by Kate Turabian in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), which is the most readily available distillation of the Chicago manual.

The *Chicago Style Manual* for book-length works and its *Turabian* offshoot for research papers have long been the standard across all fields of study, as well as much of the publishing industry. These texts cover the layout and production gamut--including rules for chapter headings and subheadings, abbreviations, alphabetizing non-English names, and table design/designation.

1. Front matter – e.g., title page, copyright statement, dedication, table of contents, lists of illustrations or tables, acknowledgements, abstract.
2. Narrative with scholarly attributions.
3. Back matter – bibliography, appendices

Citation and Reference Style

History papers are distinguished by standardized notational schema. These display the primary and secondary sources being quoted or used in the construction. Your professors will certainly call for footnotes, but also may request a formal bibliography:

Footnotes, the primary focus in Turabian, are used to indicate the source of a quotation, paraphrase, or resources--as well as to add explanations or digressions outside the flow of the main narrative.

Bibliography is an optional device at the end of the paper, which highlights the materials cited as a separate, alphabetized list in addition to the endnotes or footnotes.

Turabian and the *Chicago Manual* use sequential Arabic numbers. The numbers are normally collective and at the end of quotations, paraphrased sentences, or paragraphs for collected references. Note numbers:

- May be in-line, but preferably set in raised superscript.¹

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- Should come at the end of the paragraph and collectively account for the resources used. Do not insert for each sentence. The exception is if a short quotation is used within a paragraph. Then cite as appropriate for the information preceding the quotation, the quotation itself (after commas, quotations marks, periods, or other final diacritics), and at the end of the paragraph if needed for subsequent information.
- Must follow one another in numerical order, beginning with 1 and running continuously throughout the paper.

Late Assignments

As previously indicated, students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

Netiquette

Online universities promote the advance of knowledge through positive and constructive debate--both inside and outside the classroom. Discussions on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and "flaming." Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper "Netiquette" must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the fun and excitement of learning that does not include descent to personal attacks, or student attempts to stifle the discussion of others.

Humor Note: Despite the best of intentions, jokes – especially satire – can easily get lost or taken seriously. Accordingly, although I would request you use them sparingly, if you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add "emoticons" to help alert your readers: ;-), :), ☺ . However, in my experience, I have found that it is generally better think about your posts in advance.

Disclaimer Statement

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

Online Library Information

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to librarian@apus.edu.

Interlibrary Loan: The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries.

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Electronic Books: You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.

Electronic Journals: The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.

Smarthinking: Students have access to ten free hours of tutoring service per year through **Smarthinking**. Tutoring is available in the following subjects: math (basic math through advanced calculus), science (biology, chemistry, and physics), accounting, statistics, economics, Spanish, writing, grammar, and more. Additional information is located in the Online Library. From the Online Library home page, click on either the “Writing Center” or “Tutoring Center” and then click “Smarthinking.” All login information is available.

Program Portals contain topical and methodological resources to help launch general research in the degree program. To locate, search by department name or navigate by school.

Course Lib-Guides narrow the focus to relevant resources for the corresponding course. To locate, search by class code (e.g., SOCI111) or class name.