

HISTORY SEMINAR

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Office Hours: M/W 12-1pm and T/Th 12:30pm-2:30pm

Required Books

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations Chicago Style for Students & Researchers* (University of Chicago Press, 8th Edition).

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History* (MacMillan, 2015).

Outcomes for History Seminar

Formulate a research agenda that is achievable in the allotted page length (25-30 pages). In developing this project, the student may build upon course work, and should consult with faculty who are knowledgeable about the subject matter.

Identify and use the major sources, both primary and secondary (historiography), that would be used in any reputable project on this topic.

Position his or her project within the historiography and demonstrate an awareness of the debates and different perspectives relevant to the research on this topic.



Course Description

History Seminar provides students with the opportunity to demonstrate advanced research skills. Students will construct a research agenda, research that topic using primary and secondary sources, and produce an original research paper.

Course Objectives

Students will, above all, be respectful to each other and to the instructor.

N.B.: This course syllabus is subject to revision by the instructor.

Research Paper

The goal of this seminar is for you to produce a 25 to 30 page paper presenting your historical findings from primary research you conduct this semester. The paper will be evaluated by a committee of history faculty members.

Peer Review

While the bulk of your work—research and writing—will be

(Outcomes, continued)

Demonstrate analytical and interpretive abilities appropriate to his or her primary source base.

Develop an argument systematically through length of paper. Paper has a clearly stated thesis and that thesis is supported by major points tied to that thesis. The student develops argument and interpretation without relying on extensive summary of secondary works, either interpretation or narrative. The argument and content are made comprehensible to the non-expert audience.

Respond constructively to feedback received from seminar professor, other faculty consulted, and peers.

Demonstrate competent writing ability appropriate for a senior level paper.

Demonstrate competency in footnoting and constructing bibliography using the style of the discipline (Turabian or Chicago Manual of Style). Student abides by the ethical standards for source citation.

Demonstrate ability to present work with professional appearance and demeanor.

These outcomes will be the central criteria by which the department evaluates your seminar paper.



solitary, all students will participate in collaborative peer review. Every student should read and comment critically, but respectfully, on the work of peers.

The Project

Completing this project in a single semester will be the capstone to your history major and one of the most challenging endeavors of your academic career. But don't panic! Some of the most important keys to success in this class will be **organization** and **time management**. You are responsible for keeping a schedule and sticking to it as best you can throughout the semester.

Choosing a Topic

Because of our short time frame, it is imperative that you choose a topic and begin research early. Choose a **topic that interests you**, but make sure it asks an interesting **historical question**, *and* is researchable within one semester. You must also choose a topic for which you will have access to **appropriate sources** during this semester. Ideally, you will find sources in the York College Library. If not, you may be able to request sources through Interlibrary Loan, but this can take some time, so you must do so as soon as possible. There are also many useful **primary sources** available electronically. And, you might even be able to visit external archives, if you desire. Because the internet also contains many questionable sites, **web sources** should be discussed with and approved by me, excepting those available directly through Schmidt Library.

You should only write on a topic for which you already have the relevant background (usually through coursework), and you must consult appropriate experts on your topic. Faculty members expect you to ask them for advising, and most will agree to work with you if you are organized and responsible in your interactions with them. You must find an **expert faculty member** who will agree to advise you.

The Process



While the research process will be demanding, the writing process will be equally challenging. You should begin writing early (and often!), before you have completed all of your research. You should periodically write small pieces summing up fragments of your research. The main audience for these will be yourself. Doing this will help you better understand your sources and pose new questions that will shape your continued research. Drafting small pieces early will also make it easier to assemble your draft. You cannot plan on writing this paper in a week and expect a successful result. The need to organize and analyze so much research will make this writing process particularly time-consuming. **A completed draft is required by November 19.** This will give you ample time for organizational and stylistic revisions that will make your argument more convincing and your prose more elegant.

Class Meetings

During several periods in the research and writing process, we will not meet as a class, but you will all be expected to check in with me frequently. I will be available for meetings throughout the semester, and will sometimes schedule mandatory individual meetings. I am available by email, which I check multiple times most weekdays, and at least once every weekend. Email will be our primary means of communicating out of class. **I expect each of you to check your YCP email regularly.**

Assignments (out of 500 points)

You are expected to **attend class**, complete all **assigned reading** before class meetings, and **participate** in class discussions. All assignments should be **typed, stapled**, and ready to hand in at the beginning of class. *(5% or 25 points)*

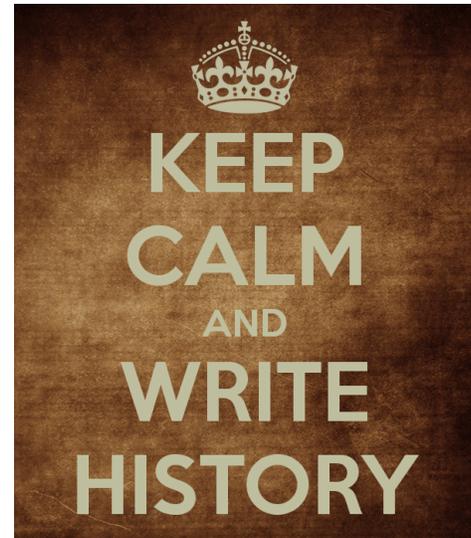
You will keep an **online, weekly journal** (via a WordPress Blog) of the work you are completing, including research, writing, and editing. This journal is meant to keep you on schedule to complete your paper and to keep me informed of where you are in the process of working on your project. This journal will be completed on the course site and will be due **every Friday by 5pm.** *(3% or 15 points)*

You will participate in regular **peer review** of student work. *(5% or 25 points)*

You will craft a **research question** that will help to frame your research and writing. *(2% or 10 points)*

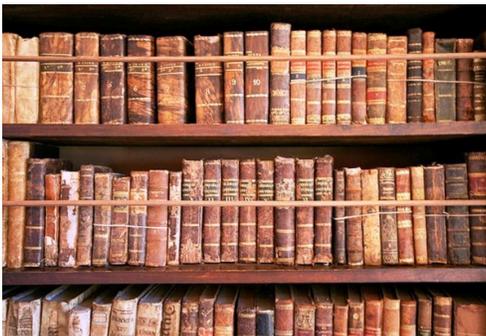
You will write up a **brief description of your topic** *(2% or 10 points)* along with your amended research question. You will also obtain written approval of your topic from the appropriate faculty advisor as well as confirmation of their willingness to advise you on this project. You will later **revise this topic** *(2% or 10 points)* and propose **key sources** *(2% or 10 points)* and **hypotheses** *(2% or 10 points)* as you begin your work in earnest.

You will **map out a sample paper** to understand the organization of the essay in preparation for writing your own. *(2% or 10 points)*



Your **annotated bibliography** will provide a list of sources you plan to use as well as a description of why these sources will be important for your project. You should list each source with a brief description (at least three sentences) explaining how you plan to use it and summarizing what you have found or hope to find in the source. This annotated bibliography will give you a chance to clarify your research plan by helping you identify the uses of your different source materials. Your bibliography should include both primary and secondary sources, which should be listed separately (primary first). All of your citations should be consistently formatted in Chicago style (see Turabian). At this point in the process your aim should be to produce an annotated bibliography of about three to four pages in length, and you must include multiple primary sources. See the online resource for formatting examples. *(4% or 20 points)*

Your **secondary source historiographical review** should evaluate at least five of the most relevant secondary sources for your thesis. The purpose of this assignment is to help you set up the relevance of your research question, and also justify that it offers you the opportunity to make original and interesting claims. You should dedicate an average of *at least* one paragraph to each source, explaining what the source argues and your views on the sources' strengths, weaknesses, and openings for future research. These sources should be chosen with a careful eye towards setting up your own argument. Consequently, you should be able to suggest a question that these sources leave for you to address, and, if possible, a potential argument that you will make to fill this hole. Additionally, think carefully about which sources you choose, and the potential perspective of the authors you are citing (when did they write?, what were the stakes for them?, what sorts of secondary works did they use to set up *their* research?). *(4% or 20 points)*



You will write an **outline** designed to give you a roadmap for writing. Producing a good outline will require creativity in ideas and organization, but you should be thinking about this in close connection with the evidence from your research that you will use to support the points on your outline. However, you need not, and in most cases should not, include specific pieces of evidence in your outline. Outline points should be organized around broad analytical claims, historical developments, or

kinds of evidence you plan to discuss in a given section. In writing out your points, think about how they might correspond to topic sentences of sections, subsections, and paragraphs in your paper. This may help you determine the appropriate level of detail for this outline. *(5% or 25 points)*

At various points during the semester, you will provide a **short writing sample** of 3-5 pages *(2% or 10 points)*, and later, a **complete draft** of your paper *(10% or 50 points)*. Your complete draft should already be a thoughtful and carefully constructed piece of writing. The better your draft is, and the more of your writing that is done, the better prepared you will be to make your revisions productive.

During the final weeks of the semester, each student will deliver an **oral presentation (with visual aid)** that will do the following: lay out his or her research question, briefly explain the relevant historiographical literature, describe his or her argument and findings, and discuss the types of evidence that were used to support the seminar paper's conclusions. *(10% or 50 points)*

Your **final paper** should be 25 to 30 pages long (double-spaced, in normal fonts and formatting) and should present a cogent historical argument supported by primary research. You must use Turabian style in your footnotes and bibliography (yes, the committee will carefully read your notes and bibliography!). This will be the culmination of your history coursework, and you should give it the attention it deserves. The quality of your organization and writing will be as important as the historical research you present. Your final paper must be submitted both in hard copy and via the course site will run the paper through anti-plagiarism software. *(40% or 200 points)*

Grade Scale

Grade	Research Paper Expectations
4	This paper demonstrates excellent historical thinking. It addresses difficult analytical questions and offers interesting and original interpretive answers. The writer demonstrates an effective and at times creative use of primary sources to construct the argument, and effectively uses secondary sources to illustrate the historiographical stakes of his or her conclusions. The writer demonstrates awareness of the implications for of the paper's historical findings. The prose is clear and elegant, and the paper is easy to read, even though it makes complicated points.
3.5	This paper is well-organized around an original historical argument, and the writing is clear. The paper includes substantial analysis that comes out of direct engagement with the sources, using good evidence to support the paper's argument, and using existing historical literature to help set up the paper's research question. The paper may occasionally fail to follow through on some of its ideas or lack robust enough evidence to prove a couple of its points. The paper should include few grammatical errors. This is a very good paper. This paper just has a few too many weaknesses to achieve A-level quality.
3	This paper begins to suggest more interesting and original thought. It has a clear sense of direction, but may have a couple of places where the focus briefly strays. The paper shows analysis of complicated issues and reaches conclusions firmly grounded in evidence from primary research. It shows some awareness of the argument's implications and uses secondary sources to help set this up. It may not develop all of its ideas, or it may fail to use enough appropriate evidence to support some of these ideas. It may have some sentence-level mistakes that weaken the effectiveness of the writing.
2-2.5	This paper has a clear structure and an identifiable thesis, but it may be perhaps a bit too simplistic. It might lean too much on summary without analysis, or argumentative statements not backed up by sufficient, appropriate evidence. It might contain a significant amount of grammatical and mechanical errors.
0-1	This paper completely lacks coherence. Ideas are haphazardly slapped together, and the paper includes little or no original analysis or engagement with primary sources. It suffers from organizational problems that seriously muddle the argument. Grammatical and mechanical errors are so numerous as make the paper difficult to read.

Grading

4	450-500
3.5	430-449
3	400-429
2.5	375-399
2	350-374
1	325-349
0	Below 325

80% of your grade will be based on your final paper (which includes the various component assignments throughout the semester) and **10%** on your end of the semester presentation and **10%** on high quality participation in class discussion and the peer review process. You will be penalized for failing to turn in assignments on time or for missing meetings without rescheduling. Final paper grades will be determined by an anonymous committee of history faculty. If this semester's committee determines that your paper is not of passing quality (C or better), you cannot pass the course.

Deadlines and Penalties

If you do not complete an assignment, you lose 5% (25 points) off of your possible final grade. If you turn an assignment in one or two days late, you lose 2% (10 points) off your possible grade. If you miss a scheduled appointment without contacting me, you lose 5% of your possible grade. The class will not meet that often. After two unexcused absences, you will be penalized 5% of your possible grade for each additional absence. You are responsible for the material or assignments you miss when absent. A student's grade will also be lowered for habitually entering class late.

Classroom Etiquette

While York College recognizes students' need for educational and emergency-related technological devices such as laptops, mobile devices, cellular phones, etc., using them unethically or recreationally during class time is never appropriate. The College recognizes and supports faculty members' authority to regulate in their classrooms student use of all electronic devices.

Students who wish to use a **laptop or tablet** for note-taking or for accessing readings in class are welcome to do so. However, the use of laptops for purposes other than the above (i.e. email, instant messaging, internet browsing unrelated to the course) is not acceptable and will adversely affect your grade. During class, **cell phone use is prohibited**, and these devices should be put away, silenced, and be out of sight.

Communication

York College recognizes the importance of effective communication in all disciplines and careers. Therefore, students are expected to competently analyze, synthesize, organize, and articulate course material in papers, examinations and presentations. In addition, students should know and use communication skills current to their field of study, recognize the need for revision as part of their writing

In accordance with the provisions of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, York College and its faculty are obliged to make reasonable classroom and physical accommodations for students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability in need of classroom accommodations and have not already registered with Linda Miller, Director of Disability Support Services, please contact her at 815-1785 or lmille18@ycp.edu to discuss policies and procedures related to disability services and to establish the accommodations for which you are eligible.

process, and employ standard conventions of English usage in both writing and speaking. Students may be asked to further revise assignments that do not demonstrate effective use of these communication skills.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity Policy: York College of Pennsylvania, as an institution of higher education, serves to promote and sustain the creation, acquisition, and dissemination of knowledge. In order to fulfill this purpose, an environment of integrity, dependability and honesty must be maintained by all members of the York College community. Without a foundation based on intellectual honesty and integrity, the very ability to uphold the academic endeavors that York College strives to pursue is inhibited.

The Spartan Oath embodies the expectation that all members of the York College community foster an environment of integrity and responsibility. Recognize that adhering to an ethical standard of honesty leads to professional, mature and responsible citizens, and enables society at large to trust our scholarship, research, and conferred degrees. Thus, each member of the York College community must be truthful, honest, personally and professionally responsible, and respect the intellectual contributions of others.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty: Engaging in academic dishonesty is a violation of the school's academic integrity policy and is not tolerated at York College. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarism (i.e. passing someone else's words or ideas off as one's own without proper attribution), improper paraphrasing, fabricating research, falsifying academic documents, handing in material completed for another course, and submitting work not done independently (unless part of an explicitly collaborative project).

Procedures for Academic Integrity Reporting and Appeals may be found in the College Catalog at: http://catalog.ycp.edu/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=760#Academic_Integrity

Plagiarism and Cheating in this Course: Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. An important component of responsible, professional behavior is ethical conduct. In the case of academic history work, this means carefully crediting all of your sources and never attempting to present someone else's work, whether through specific words or general ideas, as if it is your own. Any instance of plagiarism or use of an outside source's ideas without proper citation will be penalized with a penalty up to a 0 for the course. Additionally, students will be subject to the reporting guidelines of the official York College academic dishonesty policy, described below. To deter academic integrity violations, final papers will be run through anti-plagiarism software. If you have questions about how this works, or about proper citation and standards of historical ethics, please remember it is always best to ask for help.

Writing Center

Students are encouraged to enhance their learning by meeting with the tutors in the Writing Center. The Writing Center offers one-on-one sessions with peer and professional tutors who will provide feedback and suggestions for writing assignments in any course. **Find the Writing Center in HUM 19 or on the web at <http://writingcenter46.wixsite.com/ycpwritingcenter>.**

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Wednesday, August 29	Introduction to the Course and Expectations	Syllabus	Read syllabus carefully and come prepared to next class with any questions
Wednesday, September 5	How to Build a Good Research Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 1 (all), Ch 2 (2.1 and 2.2) • Rampolla, Ch 1, Ch 5a 	Bring 2-3 draft research questions
Monday, September 10	Lessons from a Successful Seminar Paper	Read sample paper from former 499 student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map out/outline the student paper • Write brief paragraph outlining its strengths and weaknesses
Wednesday, September 12	Individual Meetings	Rampolla, 5b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet/Discuss with Appropriate Faculty advisor • Meet with course instructor to go over topic
Monday, September 17	Topics and Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rampolla, 2a, 5c • Turabian, Ch 3 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revised research question (use format from Turabian in section 1.2) and include your original draft questions and peer feedback sheet. • Draft of topic paragraph • Confirmation of faculty advisor (print or send email to me) • Bring laptop
Wednesday, September 19	Library Visit Meet in Library Classroom L117		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarize yourself with the library's website and resources • Come prepared with questions for the archivist and librarians
Monday, September 24	Research: Note-Taking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 4 • Rampolla, 5d 	Bring Laptop for Tropy and Zotero workshops
Wednesday, September 26	Research: Evaluating Sources and Active Argument Formation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 2.3-2.4; 5.1-5.3 • Rampolla, 2b, 4c, 4d, 5e 	Revised Topics with Proposed Key Sources and Hypotheses Due by end of week (Fri, 9/28 by 5pm)
Monday, October 1	Peer Group Meetings	Peer Group Members' Topic Proposals	Read and take notes on Peer Group Members' Topic Proposals
Wednesday, October 3	Research (no class meetings)		Work on Research

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Monday, October 8	Research/Meetings with Instructor	Rampolla, 3a-3d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotated Bibliography Due in Individual Meetings and emailed to Peer Review Group • Secondary Source Review Due (Fri, 10/12 by 5pm) • Work on Research
Wednesday, October 10	Research/Meetings with Instructor	Rampolla, 3a-3d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annotated Bibliography Due in Individual Meetings and emailed to Peer Review Group • Secondary Source Review Due (Fri, 10/12 by 5pm) • Work on Research
Wednesday, October 17	Peer Group Meetings	Annotated Bibliography and Secondary Source Review of Peer Group Members	Prepare notes and questions for Peer Group Members based on Annotated Bibliography and Secondary Source Review
Monday, October 22	Individual Meetings		Individual Meetings
Wednesday, October 24	Individual Meetings		Individual Meetings
Monday, October 29	Crafting Perfect Paragraphs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 6 (all) • Rampolla, 4e, 5f • Purdue Owl on Paragraph Writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Outline Due • Bring Research Notes and Secondary Source Review
Wednesday, October 31	Write! (No Class Meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 7 • Rampolla, 3c 	3-5 Page Draft of Primary Source Analysis Due (Fri, 11/2 by 5pm)
Monday, November 5	Individual Meetings		Individual Meetings
Wednesday, November 7	Individual Meetings		Individual Meetings
Monday, November 12	Write! (No Class Meeting)		WRITE!
Wednesday, November 14	Write! (No Class Meeting)		WRITE!
Monday, November 19	Brief Meeting: Check in with Peer Group and Turn in Paper		Complete Draft due to Instructor and Peer Reviewers (requires 3 hard copies)

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Monday, November 26	Discussion of Peer Reviewed Drafts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Members' Papers • Turabian, Ch 12 	Peer Reviews Due
Wednesday, November 28	Individual Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 9-11 • Rampolla, 4f-4g, 5g 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Meetings • EDIT!
Monday, December 3	Edit and Work on Research Presentations (No Class Meeting)		EDIT!
Wednesday, December 5	Research Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 13 	Research Presentations
Monday, December 10	Research Presentations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turabian, Ch 13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Presentations • Final Papers Due

*Syllabus Borrowed and Adapted from Dr. Corey Brooks