

*Research Seminar in American History:
Culture, Society, Politics
1865 - 1915*

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Office Hours: T/Th 10:30-11:30
(and by appointment)

HIST 652
Fall 2012
Thurs 4:30-7:20
UNIV 319

The course is a research seminar with a broad focus on politics, culture, and society in the late-19th century through 1915 (though some flexibility will be allowed for students working on dissertation projects dealing with earlier periods). Its first priority will be to help students hone their skills in research and writing, so subject matter will ultimately mean less in this context than the development of method and style. Along this line, students will engage in original research in primary sources and produce a major paper (a journal article or thesis chapter of 25-30 pages) by the end of the semester. In the first weeks of the semester, we will explore the theoretical underpinnings of the historians' craft, research methods and strategies, sources available for research in the history of the United States, and consider the process of scholarly writing. After they have defined a topic, students will devote the middle part of the semester to intensive research. In the last weeks of the semester class will meet for peer reviews and presentations, then complete revisions in time for final submission at the end of the semester.

Evaluation and Grading

Attendance at each meeting of the class is crucial to success in this course. Grades will be based on:

Intermediate assignments	20%
Participation in class discussions	10%
Final Paper	70%

Assignments

●**Prospectus** – Hard copy / in-class presentation due Sept. 13

Please address the following questions in preparing your paper prospectus:

- What research problem or question do you intend to address in your paper?
- Why is this an interesting question? Why is it problematic? Why is it significant?
- How far along are you in your thinking and research? What do you expect to discover? Are you ready yet to formulate a thesis statement? If so, what is it?
- Attach or include a working bibliography of the sources you have used so far and intend to consult. Separate them into two categories (secondary sources and primary sources) and use Turabian to format the entries.

● **Progress Report-** Written statement (email attachment) and meeting with me by Thursday, Oct. 18

● **Outline** – due by Nov. 1

The outline or plan may be detailed, or merely schematic, but it ought to reflect completion (or near completion) of the research and a readiness to draw conclusions about it. (See Booth, *The Craft of Research*, especially Chapter 12.) Students may submit the outline/plan whenever you are ready but **no later than 5 p.m. on Nov. 1**

● **Rough Draft** – due in-class on Nov. 8.

This draft will be the beginning of the final project. It will be incomplete, but you must try to write across the gaps and reach your first tentative conclusions

● **Reader's Reports** – due in-class Nov. 15

Here you will take on the other side of the writing process – reaction to your peers' work. After reading the rough draft of two of your peers, you will write a two-three page reader's response to his/her draft. What suggestions do you have for the author? How might she/he improve the argument? Should the material be rearranged? What other sources might be consulted? You'll note that this portion of the assignment carries as much weight as the other preliminary assignments, i.e. it should be taken seriously.

● **Final Paper-** due in-class Dec. 6

Cheating / Plagiarism

Plagiarism refers to the reproduction of another's words or ideas without proper attribution.

University Regulations contains further information on dishonesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses and will be treated as such in this class. You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials. Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest practices will be punished as harshly as Purdue University policies allow. **Any instances of academic dishonesty will likely result in a grade of F for the course and notification of the Dean of Students Office.**

Disclaimer

In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted, once the course resumes, on the course website or can be obtained by contacting the professor via email.

Suggested Readings

- Wayne Booth, et al, *The Craft of Research*
- Turabian et. al, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7/e

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1:		
Thursday	August 23	Introductory Session
Week 2:		
Thursday	August 30	Discuss: Cindy S. Aron, “‘To Barter Their Souls for Gold’: Female Clerks in Federal Government Offices, 1862–1890,” <i>Journal of American History</i> 67 (1981): 843–44. [available on J-Store] Jaime A. Martinez, “The Slave Market in Civil War Virginia,” in Edward L. Ayers, Gary W. Gallagher, and Andrew J. Torget, eds., <i>Crucible of the Civil War</i> (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2006), 106-35. [available on Blackboard]
Week 3:		
Thursday	September 6	Discussion on where to find sources
Week 4:		
Thursday	September 13	Hard copy / in-class presentation of prospectus due
Weeks 5 - 11: No class meetings but students will be responsible for two assignments		
Thursday	October 18	Progress report and meeting due by this date
Thursday	November 1	Outline due by 5 pm
Week 12:		
Thursday	November 8	First draft due in class – discuss how to write a reader's report
Week 13:		
Thursday	November 15	Class presentations and readers' reports
Weeks 14-15: No class meetings – work on final draft		
Week 16:		
Thursday	December 6	Final paper due in hardcopy form in class