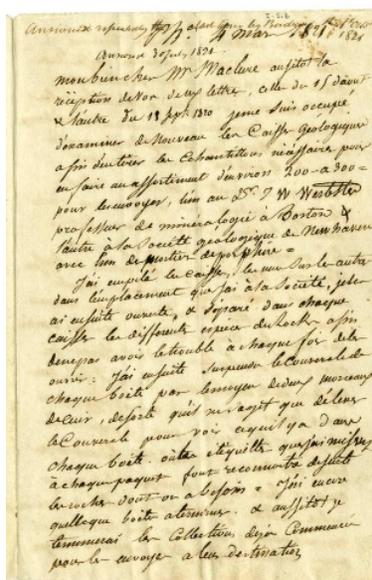


HIST 421 Honors Historical Methods

Fall 2020 MWF 9:30-10:20 AM

Zoom or WebEx



Letter from Charles Alexandre Lesueur to William Maclure, 4 March 1821
from Working Men's Institute, New Harmony, Indiana

Professor Walton UNIV 323 Virtual Office hours: MWF 10:30-11:30; students can contact me via email at any time and we can arrange a WebEx or Zoom session
awhitney@purdue.edu

Course description

This course is the prequel to History 422 (Honors Thesis in Historical Research) and is designed to introduce history honors students to the methods of historical research and writing in preparation for writing an honors thesis. The course is divided roughly into two halves. In the first part of the semester students will explore together a variety of approaches, methods, genres, and problematics in historical practice. Students will read and discuss works by different historians, examining the sources they use, the construction of arguments, and the habits of good writing. This half of the semester is also devoted to talking about the sources available at Purdue and nearby. Students are required to identify a topic for their Honors Thesis and a faculty mentor who agrees to guide them during the spring semester (History 422). In the second half of the semester students will devote their time to locating primary and secondary sources for their individual projects, building a bibliography, and writing a prospectus; students will present this work to the class at the end of the semester. Other assignments include writing a short proposal requesting funding for travel to archives for research (during the pandemic this must be imagined rather than actual), and the option of writing a piece suitable for submission to Made by History, an online component of the *Washington Post* that provides historical analysis to headline news.
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/06/26/welcome-to-made-by-history/>

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, students will:

1. Be able to critically analyze historical scholarship and write review essays that articulate the author's thesis, argument, and evidence, and the work's strengths and weaknesses.
2. Develop research skills through using Purdue library resources and other relevant online databases, demonstrated in a lengthy bibliography in correct Chicago Style.
3. Secure the mentorship of a history faculty member to guide the student's thesis work.
4. Demonstrate the capability for independent thinking and historical scholarship by devising an original thesis project.
5. Construct and revise, on the recommendation of a review committee, a short research funding proposal for travel to archives (in an imagined, non-COVID situation).
6. Demonstrate oral communication skills in engaged and respectful discussion, and in the formal, professional presentation of a thesis prospectus conveying a thesis, argument, evidence, and research plan.
7. Be fully prepared to research and write a thesis of original scholarship that adheres to professional standards of methodology and writing.

Required texts

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 9th ed.

Linda Colley, *The Ordeal of Elizabeth Marsh: A Woman in World History*

Tara Zahra, *The Great Departure: Mass Migration from Eastern Europe and the Making of the Free World*

Kathryn Cramer Brownell, *Showbiz Politics: Hollywood in American Political Life*

Additional readings posted on Brightspace or available online

The 1619 project

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/1619-america-slavery.html>

Saidiya Hartman, "Venus in Two Acts," *Small Axe* 12, 2 (June 2008): 1-14. Or Wendy Anne Warren, "'The Cause of Her Grief': the Rape of a Slave in Early New England," *Journal of American History* 93, 4 (March 2007): 2031-49.

Sarah Maza, "Chapter 4: How is History Produced?" in *Thinking About History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), pp. 118-156.

Benjamin Madley, "From Terror to Genocide: Britain's Tasmanian Penal Colony and Australia's History Wars," *Journal of British Studies* 47 (January 2008): 77-106.

Course requirements

1. In the first part of the semester students will write short (2-3 pages) essays almost every week.
2. Participation in class discussion is mandatory; logging into class WebEx or Zoom sessions is ideal, but accommodations for sickness, quarantine, or other issues are possible.
3. Students will submit a short one-page grant proposal for funding to travel to archives relevant to the thesis research, even if actual travel to archives is not possible.
4. By the end of the semester students will have chosen a topic for their thesis, a faculty mentor, and a second reader; they will have completed a prospectus (7-8 pages) detailing what they intend to investigate and how they will proceed during the spring semester, with an extensive bibliography of at least 25 primary and secondary sources.

- During the final weeks of the semester students will present their work-in-progress to the class via WebEx or some other virtual format.

Course policies

Try to sign into all designated WebEx or Zoom sessions, and please let me know if this is not possible.

Use proper email etiquette; an email should begin with a salutation such as “Dear Professor X” and end with a proper closing such as “Sincerely” or “Yours.”

Slight modifications to the syllabus are possible (for example, a rearrangement of the order of articles assigned, the introduction of a different article deemed helpful to the class, or additional class meetings in the second part of the semester), and such modifications will be communicated in a timely fashion to students. Any modifications are intended to benefit students. Modifications may also be necessary to adhere to adjusted safe practices during the pandemic. In the event of a campus-wide emergency, course requirements, policies, deadlines, and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor’s control. Students may contact the professor at the email address above, or check the course on Brightspace. See also: http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness.

Students who plagiarize any portion of their written assignments will be reported to the Dean of Students, removed from the honors program, and fail the course. Helpful information is available on this link: <https://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academic-integrity/index.html>

Final Grades calculated as follows:

Prospectus and bibliography	40%
Discussion and oral presentation	20%
<u>Short papers (3 reviews, 2 others)</u>	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

Schedule of class content and readings

M Aug 24	Introduction to history honors	
W Aug 26	What is “our” history? The 1619 project, controversies, and current crises	
F Aug 28	How might historians write COVID-19 and US race relations in 2020? https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/06/08/black-lives-matter-is-now-americas-best-ambassador/	
M Aug 31	Public, popular, and academic histories; Historical controversies; archives and interpretations	Maza, ch. 4
W Sep 2	Sex, slavery, sources *short reflection piece on the past, the present, and historians’ role	Hartman or Warren, Brightspace or online
F Sep 4	Sources and historical practice	Rampolla, ch. 2, pp. 22-39, ch. 5
M Sep 7	Biography or microhistory?	<i>Ordeal of E. Marsh</i> , Intro., ch. 1, notes, sources

W Sep 9	A woman at sea	<i>Ordeal of E. Marsh</i> , ch. 2-3
F Sep 11	Early modern empire	<i>Ordeal of E. Marsh</i> , ch. 4-5
M Sep 14	Self-fashioning, survival, and world history	<i>Ordeal of E. Marsh</i> , ch. 6, ending
W Sep 16	Lab session; researching and writing history *submit review of <i>Ordeal</i>	Rampolla, chs. 4-5
F Sep 18	In lieu of history honors homecoming and reception, perhaps a WebEx or Zoom session with history honors alumni	
M Sep 21	Migration myths, controlling mobility	<i>Great Departure</i> , intro., ch. 1, bibliog
W Sep 23	Evaluating migration in empire and successor states	<i>Great Departure</i> , chs. 2-3
F Sep 25	Eugenics and refugees before and after World War II	<i>Great Departure</i> , chs. 4-5
M Sep 28	Mobility and immobility during the Cold War	<i>Great Departure</i> , ch. 6
W Sep 30	Meaning of freedom in Cold War and after	<i>Great Departure</i> , ch. 7, post
F Oct 2	Writing and revising – a professional process *submit review of <i>Great Departure</i>	Walton, on Brightspace
M Oct 5	World War I as an imperial war – Ottoman Empire	Aksakal, on Brightspace
W Oct 7	Constructing an argument, challenging orthodoxy *submit short review of Aksakal or Madley	Madley, online
F Oct 9	How the business of Hollywood entered US politics	<i>Showbiz</i> , intro-ch. 2, bibliog
M Oct 12	Hollywood and the Cold War	<i>Showbiz</i> , ch. 3-5
W Oct 14	Kennedy, Nixon, and mediatization of politics	<i>Showbiz</i> , ch. 6-conclusion
F Oct 16	Maybe meet with the author of <i>Showbiz Politics</i>	
M Oct 19	Thesis ideas, professional objectives and opportunities *submit review of <i>Showbiz Politics</i>	

W Oct 21 – Nov. 23 With several exceptions we will not meet as a class during this time. Students will research their projects and prepare a prospectus and bibliography. I will be emailing students regularly and setting up individual meetings to discuss each project. It is possible that I will request the class to meet at the regular class time, in addition to the scheduled meetings below.

F Oct 23 *Submit via email an initial statement of your topic, at least one paragraph in length; Include a bibliography of several potential primary and secondary sources. Submit signed mentor form

M Oct 26

W Oct 28	
F Oct 30	Meet to discuss the writing and requirements of funding proposals
M Nov 2	
W Nov 4	*Submit research funding proposals
F Nov 6	Meet to discuss prizes, publications, schedule presentations
M Nov 9	
W Nov 11	
F Nov 13	
M Nov 16	Meet to discuss progress, requirements for prospectus
W Nov 18	
F Nov 20	*Submit draft prospectus and bibliography
M Nov 23	
Th Nov 26	Thanksgiving!!!
M Nov 30	Student presentations (all presentations will be via WebEx or some similar platform)
W Dec 2	Student presentations
F Dec 4	Student presentations
M Dec 7	Student presentations
W Dec 9	Student presentations
F Dec 11	Student presentations
M Dec 14-18	*Submit final version of prospectus and bibliography if you have not already done so

Information on prospectus, presentations, spring thesis writing, etc.

Individual presentations will begin immediately after Thanksgiving. Plan to speak around 15-20 minutes (you may use power point); students and visiting faculty will spend the rest of class time discussing the project being presented. The oral presentation can be based on the prospectus. Please invite your mentor and second reader to your presentation.

Prospectus

This should be around 6-7 pages, discussing the project in detail, using footnotes to reference the sources. The prospectus should address the following questions:

- What is the project about, and what is the thesis so far?
- What kind of history is the project (political, social, cultural, a combination, etc.)?
- What questions will the project address?
- How does this project differ from previous scholarship on the same or related topics?
- What primary sources are the basis for the thesis?
- What, specifically, will you do during winter break and the spring to complete the project (include a schedule)?
- What new knowledge will this project contribute to the existing history of the topic?

Bibliography

The bibliography should include 25-30 sources at a minimum, in correct Chicago Style (see Rampolla), and divided into primary and secondary source categories.

The prospectus and bibliography must address the questions above and fulfill the above requirements in order to earn a passing grade. A grade of B or better is necessary in order to proceed to HIST 422.

Students should feel free to submit drafts and ask questions about the prospectus and bibliography at any time; I will gladly review drafts and bibliographies, and answer questions.

Below are guidelines for the thesis, defense, and honors forum in spring 2021 (hopefully). I will also send this information to all mentors.

Honors History Thesis: Paper Guidelines

- Papers must be printed, double-spaced, approximately 45-50 pages, including the bibliography.
- Use Times New Roman 12 font for the text and Times New Roman 10 font for the notes.
- The pages (text and bibliography) must be numbered, bottom, center.
- The footnotes (or endnotes) and bibliography *must* follow the format in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. No other citation method is acceptable. See Rampolla.
- Papers must include a title sheet and be held together by a clip.
- The bibliography must include two sections: one, a list of all primary sources cited, and second, a list of all secondary sources cited.

Honor Thesis Defense Guidelines

All History Honors students are required to defend their Honors Theses. Students must submit the final version of the thesis by **April 1** to the mentor and to the second reader.

Students must schedule a 30-minute oral defense of the thesis with the two faculty members (additional readers are possible, but check with me first). This is a formal occasion. UNIV 323 is a good location for the defense. The defense must occur by **April 15**.

Honors Forum

The forum will occur after April 15 and before the end of the semester in University Hall. Students will give a short presentation, and they may use powerpoint. We will meet occasionally in the spring to track progress on the thesis, share information and discuss challenges, and prepare for the forum. Faculty will attend the forum, and students are encouraged to invite family members, friends, and significant others. There will be refreshments and a photo opportunity. This will be a celebration of all your hard work.