

**Department of History
University of Pennsylvania**

History 700

Introduction to the Study of History

Spring 2014

Syllabus

Professor: Thomas Max Safley
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Venue: CH 315A
W, 9:00 AM – 12:00 NOON

Purpose: This semester the seminar will operate in workshop mode. During the course of the semester, the seminar will meet only occasionally to consider common challenges in historical research and writing. Please note the schedule and requirements for these meetings, as they appear below. Otherwise, students will work independently, in consultation with the instructor and a faculty advisor, to produce an original work of research based on primary sources.

Readings: There are no required readings for this semester. Students are encouraged to acquire their own copy of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition, University of Chicago Press, 2010), which remains the authoritative source for all questions of grammar, usage and format in scholarly writing.

Assignments: Students will focus their efforts on completion of the original research project they conceptualized last semester. The result, a final paper, should resemble a journal article in genre and length. It should introduce readers to a significant historical issue, offer a clear and cogent exposition combining narrative and analysis and end with a brief conclusion, all in 30 to 50 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font), including text, notes, images and bibliography.

During the semester, students will complete several smaller exercises, designed to clarify certain aspects of original research in history and to assist in the successful completion of the final paper. These include:

1. A research strategy exercise;

2. A primary source exercise;
3. An outline exercise;
4. An introduction exercise.

Grading: The grade for this semester will be calculated as follows:

Research exercises – 20 percent (5 percent each);
Oral presentation and discussion – 20 percent;
Final paper – 60 percent.

Please note well: Attendance is required. Extensions and incompletes are not possible, except upon certification of medical or personal emergency. There will be no exceptions.

- Schedule:**
1. 15 January: *Ratio studiorum*.
Assignment: Each student will present for general discussion a five-minute (no more), executive summary of their *ratio studiorum* (research strategy), by which is meant how each intends to go about completing her or his proposed research project.
[**NB:** I am aware that a “Monday schedule” will apply on Wednesday, 15 January. We will meet regardless. Those who are unable to attend because of a conflicting class schedule (the only acceptable excuse) should contact me in advance.]
 2. 5 February: Effective introductions.
Assignments: Each student will review the introductions to the monographs by Brown, Clendinnen, Hall, Humphries, Obeyesekere and Snyder that were assigned in the previous semester. In seminar, we will discuss what does and does not make an effective introduction.
 3. 26 February: Argument organizations.
Assignment: Each student will present for general discussion a five-minute, executive summary of the outline of their final paper. Each will also submit digital and hardcopies of the outline, one each to her or his advisor and to me. **Submissions must be received no later than 12:00.**
 4. 2 April: Small-group discussion.

Assignment: Each student will present the current draft of her or his paper to the small group, of which she or he were members last semester. Oral presentations are not to exceed five minutes, after which the group will discuss the draft. Groups should spend no more than twenty-five minutes in discussion, no more than thirty minutes total, on any one paper. In this way, the small group exercise will finish in two hours. In the final hour, the seminar will meet as a group to consider issues of general interest or concern. **NB:** Each student will also submit one digital and one hardcopy of her or his current draft to me and to the members of her or his small group no later than 12:00 Noon on Wednesday, 26 March.

5. 30 April:

Oral presentations.

Assignment: Each student will make a five-minute presentation of their research results, followed by a five-minute critique by an assigned respondent and a further ten minutes of general discussion.

NB: Each student will also submit one digital and one hardcopy of the rough draft of their final paper to her or his advisor and to me. **All submissions must be received no later than 12:00 Noon.**

6. 1 May:

Oral presentations.

Assignment: Each student will make a five-minute presentation of their research results, followed by a five-minute critique by an assigned respondent and a further ten minutes of general discussion.

7. 13 May:

Deadline.

Assignment: Each student will submit one digital and one hardcopy of the final draft of their final paper to her or his advisor and to me. Papers must conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. **All submissions must be received no later than 4:30 PM.**