



History 300  
Eva Sheppard Wolf  
Spring 2007

## Seminar in Historical Analysis

**Office Location:** SCI 267

**Office Hours:** M/W 2:45-3:45; F 11:15-12:15

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**Course Description:** Unlike most history courses you will take, the subject of this course is not a particular historical period or place, but rather the discipline of history itself. We will discuss how historians think about the past and how they write history; and students will learn to write their own original research papers.

**Prerequisites:** English 214 or the equivalent; upper division standing or consent of instructor; Basic Information Competence Requirement (usually fulfilled by completing the OASIS tutorial at <http://oasis.sfsu.edu>), completed by Feb. 7.

### Course Objectives:

1. Learn the mechanics of writing a research paper.
  - Choose a viable research topic.
  - Identify and locate relevant secondary sources.
  - Identify and locate relevant primary sources.
  - Produce a properly formatted bibliography.
  - Take useful and accurate notes.
  - Interpret sources critically.
  - Integrate primary sources, secondary sources, and your own thoughts into a well-organized paper.
  - Use proper formatting and citation techniques in the paper.
  - Edit and rewrite drafts.
2. Learn the basic principles of history as a discipline.
  - Describe the history of history—major writers, and major changes over time in historical thought.
  - Distinguish among different kinds of history, including political, social, cultural, and intellectual history.
  - Write critical reviews of secondary literature.

**Books**, available at the campus store and on reserve at the library:

**Required:**

Mark T. Gilderhus, *History and Historians*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.

Kate L. Turabian, *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed.

William K. Storey, *Writing History: A Guide For Students*

**Optional:**

W. Strunk and E.B. White, *Elements of Style*

**Assignments and Weight of Grades:**

Assignment	Weight	Due
Class discussion and participation, <i>including all otherwise ungraded assignments</i> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Library Competency Requirement (Feb. 7)</li> <li>▪ Preliminary research topic (Feb. 7)</li> </ul>	15%	Every week
Updated research topic, historical question, and preliminary annotated bibliography	2.5%	2/21
Quiz on historiography	10%	2/28
Research proposal	2.5%	3/7
Updated annotated bibliography	2.5%	3/7
Primary source photocopy	5%	3/7
Footnote checking	5%	3/14
Review of 2 works relevant to your project	10%	3/21
Analysis of primary sources	5%	3/28
First draft	5%	4/4
Full draft	5%	4/25
10-12 page final research paper, 2 copies	25%	5/9
Notes for your paper. You will be graded on the quality and organization of your research notes and research diary.	7.5%	5/9

**Blackboard:** Links to useful websites, a discussion board, and some assignment hand-outs will be available on Blackboard <http://online.sfsu.edu/>. You can sign in using your SFSU ID and PAC. Please make sure your email is forwarded from your SFSU account (used by Blackboard) to the account you check regularly, since I communicate frequently with students through Blackboard's email function.

## Course Schedule

Note: all assigned weekly reading should be *completed* by the time of the class meeting.

Week 1	Jan. 25	<p>Introduction</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> What is a historical question? What makes a good topic for a historian to study? What does good history do?</p>
Week 2	Jan. 31	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1) Gilderhus, <i>History and Historians</i>, chaps. 1-3 2) Storey, <i>Writing History</i>, chap. 1 3) Spend 15 minutes examining each of the following websites, and take notes on what you think of each site's usefulness.</p> <p>a) "Valley of the Shadow project:" <a href="http://www.iath.virginia.edu/vshadow2/">http://www.iath.virginia.edu/vshadow2/</a> b) Library of Congress American Memory site: <a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ammemhome.html</a> c) Civil War Home Page: <a href="http://www.civil-war.net/">http://www.civil-war.net/</a></p> <p><u>Assignments due:</u> 1) Prepare to discuss your thoughts for a research project.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> What are the purposes of history? When did history begin? What have historians over the last 2500 years taken as their focus? How have the focus and approach of historians changed? Why? Must history be written down? --Students' ideas for research project. --What are appropriate uses of online sources? How should one cite online sources? How do you know when to trust online sources? --Plagiarism: what is it and how to avoid it.</p>
Week 3	Feb. 7	<p><u>Readings:</u> 1) <i>History and Historians</i>, chaps. 4-5 2) <i>Writing History</i>, chap. 2 3) Primary sources (hand-out)</p> <p><u>Assignment due</u> 2) Preliminary research topics due: Please send by e-mail to <a href="mailto:shepwolf@sfsu.edu">shepwolf@sfsu.edu</a> one short paragraph describing your proposed topic by Friday, Feb. 9. 3) <u>Library competency (OASIS or equivalent) must be completed by this week.</u></p>

		<p><u>Discussion:</u> Philosophy of history. What are the ideas that underlie and drive the study of history? How have these changed over time? How do we ascribe causation? What are the possibilities and limits of explaining why and how human events take place?</p> <p>--How do historians take notes and how can good note-taking techniques help avoid plagiarism?</p> <p>--The value of a research diary.</p> <p>--Narrowing down topics</p>
Week 4	Feb. 14	<p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Writing History</i>, chap 3.</p> <p><u>Library visit</u></p> <p><u>Hand-outs:</u> Primary sources.</p>
Week 5	Feb. 21	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1) <i>Writing History</i>, pp. 15-16 2) Sources for your project</p> <p><u>Assignments due:</u> 1) Updated research topic and question. 2) Annotated preliminary bibliography. At least 5 secondary and 3 primary sources. Use the examples in <i>Writing History</i> as a model. Additional information on how to format a bibliography is in Turabian, <i>Manual for Writers</i>, chaps. 9 and 14.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> In-class analysis of primary sources. -- Progress reports.</p>
Week 6	Feb. 28	<p><u>Readings:</u> 1) <i>History and Historians</i>, chap. 7 and Postscript. 3) Fogel and Engerman, <i>Time on the Cross</i>,. prologue and chap. 4 [electronic reserve] 4) Gutman, <i>Slavery and the Numbers Game</i>, preface, intro., pp. 14-41 [electronic reserve]</p> <p><u>QUIZ</u> on historiography.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Modern Historiography: What have been the main themes in historical study in the last 150 years, and especially in the last 50 years? How have historians' concerns reflected their own time and place? What are the main categories of contemporary historical analysis?</p> <p>--Cliometrics and historiographical debate: Fogel, Engerman, and response.</p> <p>--Forms of history: political, social, intellectual, etc.</p>

<p>Week 7</p>	<p>Mar. 7</p>	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1) Secondary sources for your project 2) Primary sources for your project 3) <i>Writing History</i>, chap. 4. 3) Turabian, <i>Manual for Writers</i>, chaps. 8, 9, and 11 (skim to see what Turabian covers)</p> <p><u>Assignments due:</u> 1) Research proposal. The research proposal should answer the questions laid out in <i>Writing History</i>, pp. 14-15, <i>except</i> instead of a hypothesis, propose a historical question. BRING 3 COPIES. 2) Updated annotated bibliography—at least 7 secondary and 5 primary sources. 3) Bring 20 (or as many people as there are in class) copies to distribute to the class of your best, most interesting, most revealing <i>primary</i> source—<i>no more</i> than one page, please. <u>Include your name and the description of your project on the hand-out.</u></p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Research proposals. Does the proposal address a significant historical question? Does it promise a paper that is explanatory? --Interpreting sources, including primary source analysis of student sources. --More discussion on note-taking if necessary</p>
<p>Week 8</p>	<p>Mar. 14</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u> 1) Secondary sources for your project. 2) Primary sources for your project. 3) <i>Writing History</i>, pp. 9-11.</p> <p><u>Assignment due:</u> Footnote checking. Check 5 individual citations (footnotes or endnotes) in one of your secondary sources and write a report discussing what you found. Were the citations accurate? Easy to decipher? To track down? For best results, choose pages based on printed sources.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> What is the function of a footnote? What is the difference between good citation and bad citation? What are the consequences of improper citation? --How to write footnotes. (Turabian) --Student progress reports. --Primary source analysis (sources from student projects)</p>
<p>Week 9</p>	<p>Mar. 21</p>	<p><u>Readings:</u> 1) Primary sources for your project. 2) Secondary sources for your project.</p>

		<p><u>Assignment due:</u> 3-4 page comparative review of 2 secondary sources relevant to your research topic. See hand-out for details.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Primary source analysis (sources from student projects) --Grammar and punctuation. How do historians incorporate quotations into their texts? --Review of note-taking.</p>
Week 10	Mar. 28	<p><u>Readings:</u> 1) Primary sources for your project 2) Turabian, <i>Manual for Writers</i>, chaps. 2-5 3) <i>Writing History</i>, chaps. 8-9</p> <p><u>Assignment due:</u> 1-2 page analysis of one or your <i>primary</i> sources. See hand-out for details.</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Student progress reports --How to convert notes to a draft paper.</p>
Week 11	Apr. 4	<p><u>Reading:</u> 1) <i>Writing History</i>, chaps. 5-7 2) Primary sources for your project 3) Secondary sources for your project 4) <i>Manual for Writers</i>, as needed</p> <p><u>Assignment due:</u> 5-6 page draft. Bring 3 copies.</p> <p><u>In-class peer review and discussion of drafts</u></p> <p><u>Sign up for individual meetings</u></p>
Week 12	Apr. 11	<p><u>Spring Break</u></p>
Week 13	Apr. 18	<p><u>Work on your paper.</u> <u>No class: individual meetings instead.</u></p>
Week 14	Apr. 25	<p><u>Assignment due:</u> Full draft, including footnotes. Bring two copies</p> <p><u>Discussion:</u> Problems and questions. --The relationship between structure and argument in a paper.</p>

Week 15	May 2	<u>Reading:</u> <i>Writing History</i> , chap. 10  <u>Drafts returned.</u>  <u>Discussion:</u> How to edit and polish a draft.
Week 16	May 9	<u>Assignment due:</u> <b>Final paper</b> , previous drafts, and notes due at 4:10. Bring <b>2 copies</b> of final paper.
Finals week	May 16	<u>Papers returned</u>  <u>Final discussion</u>

**Policies and Procedures:**

**Attendance:** Regular attendance is considered part of participation. Poor attendance will be reflected in your participation grade.

**Late work:** Deadlines are set to help you accomplish the goals of the class. To encourage timely completion of assignments, *late work will be marked down ONE letter grade for EVERY day it is late*, up to 3 days (Thursday); thereafter, late work will be accepted at *half credit*, up to one week late. Work turned in more than one week late WILL NOT be accepted, and the student will receive a “zero” on the assignment. Note that if you miss an assignment worth 5% of the grade, your final course grade goes down by ½ a letter grade.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:** Since our goal is to seek truth, academic honesty is absolutely essential. Plagiarism and cheating, which strike at the core of the university’s mission, will not be tolerated. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating, will be referred to the judicial affairs officer of the university, and be punished according to university guidelines. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or cheating, *please ask*. In addition, we will discuss these topics in class.

**Accommodation:** If you need accommodation for a documented disability, please let me know.

**Grading scale:** 93-96 A  
90-92 A-  
87-89 B+  
etc.