



**HST 560-800**  
**THE HISTORIAN'S CRAFT: ISSUES & APPROACHES**  
Fall 2016

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Course Description:

This online course will introduce students to the graduate level study of history. It will explore just what professional historians do in their work and what they produce. It will examine the ways historians discuss their work and move the field forward. In doing this, it will require students to grapple with the differences between popular and academic history, the evolving nature of historical inquiry and the ways that it has been accepted or rejected by different publics. It will require students to think about the complex dynamic between history and memory and between received knowledge and revisionist accounts. It will also delve into the world of historical ethics and how the events of the past can be fairly and responsibly presented to the public.

Course Readings:

Students will be required to read the following books this semester:

Raab, Nigel A. *Who is the Historian?* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016.

Hoffer, Peter Charles. *Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud, and American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin.* New York: Public Affairs, 2007.

**NOTE:** In addition, a number of other articles and book chapters will be posted on the course Blackboard site. They are marked on your syllabus with an asterisk (\*).

Course Requirements/How the Course Works:

This seven-week course is comprised of seven weekly units. During each unit you will:

- 1) Read a book or a series of articles.
- 2) You will participate in a discussion on the work that we are considering.
- 3) At the end of each unit you will submit a reading and response paper (500 words) which is due Sunday by 11:59 p.m.

\***NOTE:** ALL discussions start Thursday at 11:59 p.m. and end Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

At the conclusion of the seven-week course, you will submit a final paper (3,000 words, guidelines to follow).

### Online Discussions:

Each week you will participate in an online discussion that stretches over four days—starting Thursday at 11:59 p.m. and ending on Sunday at 11:59 p.m. Your participation in the entire discussion is graded on a 10-point scale. You must complete the following:

1. **INITIAL PARAGRAPH.** By 11:59 p.m. each THURSDAY, write an initial paragraph (300-400 words) in response to the prompt (found on the course Blackboard site). Write a coherent, well-organized, and analytical paragraph based on specific evidence. Point to specific passages, information, themes from the readings AND cite that material using parenthetical citations, for example (Raab, p. 69) or (Hoffer, p. 10).
2. **RESPOND TWICE.** Next, read your classmates' posts and by 11:59 p.m. each Saturday respond to at least two of your classmates' postings. (See discussion guidelines in Blackboard for detailed directions).
3. **REFLECTION ESSAYS.** By 11:59 p.m. each SUNDAY, write a 500-word essay in which you reflect upon the online discussion. In these papers, respond to the unit's readings, raise questions, and/or analyze themes. For example, what did you learn from your classmates? How did your thinking evolve? Was there a specific posting that you found to be particularly thoughtful, intelligent, thought-provoking? What topics need further discussion? Identify the themes and topics you want to continue discussing in next week's online discussion. As we progress through the course, good response papers will refer draw upon our earlier readings and discussion. For example, what connections and common themes do you identify among the readings? How is one scholar's approach different from another?

### Final Course Paper:

At the conclusion of the course you will submit a 3,000 word final paper in response to a prompt I will supply you as the class progresses. The essay will be summative and ask you to assess themes that we have explored over the previous eight weeks. In order to be successful your essay must:

- 1) be critical and analytical, not merely a summary of the books we have read
- 2) articulate a thesis which serves as the organizing principle of the paper
- 3) cite specific evidence from the authors we read in support of your arguments
- 4) contain a clearly defined introduction, body and conclusion. The introduction should spell out your thesis, the body should develop your argument(s), and the conclusion should recapitulate your main point
- 5) avoid vagueness and generalization in its arguments (Be clear and precise in your writing)
- 6) pay close attention to paragraphing and contain succinct topic sentences
- 7) use active verbs and avoid the passive voice
- 8) be consistent in the use of verb tenses
- 9) contain no mistakes in spelling or grammar
- 10) avoid personal expressions such as "In my opinion..." or "I believe that..."

**\*\*Your paper must use formal footnotes which adhere to *Chicago Manual of Style* format.**

Grade Breakdown:

Discussions: 35% of final course grade  
Reflection Essays: 35% of final course grade  
Final Essay: 30% of final course grade

Academic Honor Code & Plagiarism:

Students in this course are expected to abide by UNCW's Academic Honor Code. Please read the Student Handbook and the Code of Student Life for more information:

<http://uncw.edu/stuaff/doso/documents/CodeofStudentLife.pdf>

All work is to be done individually. Do not consult others' work without citation; do not pass off others' work as your own. Instances of plagiarism will be referred to the Graduate School and will presumably be cause for dismissal from the program.

Technical support:

If you are having technical problems, please contact the Technology Assistance Center (TAC) at [tac@uncw.edu](mailto:tac@uncw.edu) or 910-962-4357

Late work policy:

In order to get full credit for any work, you must turn it in by the time it is due. Plan ahead if you anticipate technological or other difficulties.

Disability Services:

If you have a disability and need reasonable accommodations in this course, you should inform the professor of this fact in writing within the first week of class. If you have not done so already, you must register with the UNCW Office of Disability Services. UNCW Disability Services supplies information about disability law, documentation procedures and accommodations. This information can be found at <http://www.uncw.edu/stuaff/disability/>

Student Learning Outcomes for the online M.A.:

1. Evaluate new and classic scholarship covering familiar areas of history.
2. Cultivate learning through a professional approach to scholarship and sharing ideas
3. Demonstrate understanding of and control over covered materials.
4. Integrate new historical perspectives into practical history education and the student's professional life
5. Evaluate and analyze sources.
6. Demonstrate the ability to work with others in coming to terms with historical ideas and materials

Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

**Unit 1, What do Historians Do and Why?: August 18-21, 2016**

--Reading:

Raab, *Who is the Historian?* (in its entirety)

--Online Discussion

Thursday, August 18-Saturday, August 20

--Reflection Essay

Sunday, August 21 by 11:59 p.m.

**Unit 2, Elements of Historiography: How do Historians Discuss the Past?: August 25-28, 2016**

--Reading:

\* Kim Phillips-Fein, "Conservatism: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History*.  
Vol. 98, No. 3 (2011), pp. 723-743.

\*Athena Syriatou, "National, Imperial, Colonial, and the Political: British Imperial  
Histories and Their Descendants," *Historein*, Vol. 12 (2012).

\*Steven F. Lawson, "Freedom Then, Freedom Now: The Historiography of the Civil  
Rights Movement," *American Historical Review* 96, no. 2 (April 1991), 456-471.

--Online Discussion:

Thursday, August 25-Saturday, August 20

--Reflection Essay

Sunday, August 28 by 11:59 p.m.

**Unit 3, Historians and the People for Whom They Write: September 1-4, 2016**

--Reading:

\*Carl L. Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian," Annual Address of the President of the  
American Historical Association, December 29, 1931, *American Historical  
Review*, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 221-236.

\*Eric Foner, "My Life as an Historian," (Parts 1 & 2) from *Who Owns History*, Chapter 1.

\*Margaret Macmillan, "Who Owns the Past?", Chapter 3 in *Dangerous Games: The Uses  
and Abuses of History* (New York: Modern Library, 2008), pp. 33-49.

\*Alan Brinkley, "Historians and Their Publics," *Journal of American History*, Vol. 81,  
No. 3 (1994), pp. 1027-1030.

\*David Greenberg, "What's Wrong with David McCullough's Kind of History?" History  
News Network, May 22, 2005.

--Online Discussion:

Thursday, September 1-Saturday, September 3

--Reflection Essay:

Sunday, September 4 by 11:59 p.m.

**Unit 4, Historians and Their Sources; Working in Archives Physical and Virtual:  
September 8-September 11, 2016**

--Readings:

\*Sheila Fitzpatrick, "A Spy in the Archives," *London Review of Books*, Vol. 32, No. 23 (2010), pp. 3-8.

\*Arlette Farge, "Traces by the Thousands," Chapter 1 of *The Allure of the Archives* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), pp. 1-22.

\*Lydia Lucas, "The Historian in the Archives: Limitations of Primary Source Materials" *Minnesota History*, Summer 1981

Roy Rosenzweig, "Digital Archives Are a Gift of Wisdom to be Used Wisely," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 24, 2005, vol.51, Issue 42, p. B20-B24 (**Accessible on line**).

--Online Discussion:

Thursday, September 8-Saturday, September 10

--Reflection Essay:

Sunday, September 11 by 11:59 p.m.

**Unit 5, History and Memory: a Fraught Relationship: September 15-September 18, 2016**

--Readings:

\*Robert G. Moeller, "Germans as Victims?: Thoughts on a Post-Cold War History of World War II's Legacies," *History and Memory*, Vol. 17, No. 1-2 (Spring-Winter 2005), pp. 145-194.

\*Richard H. Kohn, "History and the Culture Wars: The Case of the Smithsonian Institution's Enola Gay Exhibition," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (Dec., 1995), 1036-1063.

\*Rana Mitter, "Behind the Scenes at the Museum: Nationalism, History and Memory in the Beijing War of Resistance Museum, 1987-1997," *The China Quarterly*, No. 161 (Mar., 2000), 279-293.

\*Monica Hesse, "The South's Confederate Monument Problem is Not Going Away," *Washington Post*, May 8, 2016

\*Bryan McKenzie, "Starting a Conversation," Charlottesville (VA) *Daily Progress*, April 10, 2016

--Online Discussion:

Thursday, September 15-Saturday, September 17

--Reflection Essay:

Sunday, September 18 by 11:59 p.m.

**Unit 6, Historical Ethics: Being a Principled Historian; September 22 – September 25, 2016**

--Readings:

Hoffer, *Past Imperfect* (in its entirety)

--Online Discussion:

Thursday, September 22-Saturday, September 24

--Reflection Essay:

Sunday, September 25 by 11:59 p.m.

**Unit 7, The Debate over the New Advanced Placement U.S. History Framework and the Internationalization of American History: September 29-October 2, 2016**

--Readings:

- \*Stanley Kurtz, "How the College Board Politicized U.S. History," *National Review Online*, August 24, 2014.
- \*Andrew Hartman, "The Internationalization of the U.S. History Curriculum," *The American Historian*, February 2015
- \*Jacoba Urist, "Who Should Decide how Students Learn about America's Past?," *The Atlantic*, February 24, 2015.
- \*Adam B. Lerner, "History Class Becomes a Debate on America," *Politico*, February 21, 2015.
- \*Larry Krieger and Jane Robbins, "Five Reasons the College Board's U.S. History Talking Points are Wrong," *The Federalist*, September 17, 2014
- \*Rick Perlstein, "The Powerlessness of Positive Thinking," *In These Times*, November 3, 2014
- \*Michael Hiltzik, "The Right Wing Steps Up Its Attack on the Teaching of U.S. History," *Los Angeles Times*, August 27, 2014.

**\*\*Final Course Essay: Due on Wednesday, October 5 by 12:59 p.m.**