

## Course Syllabus

HIST 3301-001 | Historical Inquiry | Fall 2013

TR 11:30–12:45 | ESCN 2.216

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### Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions:

Prerequisite: HIST 1301, HIST 1302, HIST 2301, HIST 2330, HIST 2331, or equivalent.

### Course Description:

HIST 3301 Historical Inquiry (3 semester hours) Readings, commentary, and discussion aimed at introducing a variety of texts and sources with an emphasis on the major methods appropriate to their use. *This course should be taken prior to completing the first 12 hours of upper-division course work in the program.* It is normally offered only during the fall and spring semesters. Prerequisite: HIST 1301, HIST 1302, HIST 2301, HIST 2330, HIST 2331, or equivalent. (3-0) S

In other words, HIST 3301 serves as the gateway course to the History major.

Most of you are here as History majors or minors because you enjoy history in some fashion, whether it be reading books, watching documentaries, participating in reenactments, or consuming history in some other form. This is good, but it is not what being a historian is all about. Historians (and as History majors you should consider yourselves at least “Apprentice Historians”) make history!

The primary objective of this section of Historical Inquiry is to help you make the transition from consumers of history to producers of history. You may come to think of this class as “History Boot Camp.” The course will address issues such as the history and philosophies of the discipline, important practitioners, theorists, and critical approaches, as well as the nuts and bolts of doing historical research (library research, source analysis, bibliography, citations, style, etc.).

### Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes:

Students will acquire and demonstrate mastery of the fundamental intellectual and technical skills of the historian through a series of discussions and exercises throughout the semester, culminating with a short research paper.

**History, Writing, and this Class:**

Most of you are enrolled in this class because at some level you have developed an interest in history. To this point your interests have likely been passive; that is to say, you have enjoyed reading books, watching documentaries, or playing video games about historical topics. In this course you will shift from being consumers of history to producers of history. You will learn how to “do history.”

“Doing history” might be summed up by three interrelated acts: reading, thinking, and communicating your ideas about the past. The written word lies at the heart of the historical enterprise. Many of the surviving artifacts from the past are written documents, and most of the scholarship that attempts to make sense of these artifacts is also in written form. As such, you will be regularly engaged with writing. You will read the documents from the past. You will read ancient and modern historians’ attempts to organize the artifacts into meaningful representations of different times and places. You will think about both the primary and secondary documents at your disposal and offer your own representation of the past. You will do this through a variety of written assignments; that is how the professional historian works.

Although the creation of original ideas (or critical examinations of old ones) is the most significant act that the historian performs, for ideas to be tested and accepted they must first be shared. These ideas are shared in the form of books, articles, and short essays presented orally at conferences. Audiences will vary. At times historians write for each other. Other times they write for non-specialist or lay readers. And at other times they write for students. Depending on the audience, historians adopt a variety of voices; some formal, others informal. It is important to know how to present your ideas to each specific audience.

The format of historical writing is not simply to satisfy the whims of senior historians (or history professors). Rather, proper presentation of your ideas in writing adds credibility to your argument. Correct style, tone, format, documentation of evidence, etc. tell the reader that you have “sweated the small stuff,” and therefore your big ideas can be taken seriously. Conversely, failure to follow the conventions of the discipline signals to your reader that you have not mastered the simple matters of style, causing them to possibly doubt your ability to handle the more complex issues of content. While the viewpoint expressed above (“bad writing = unintelligence”) is most likely unfair and untrue, the perception remains. Thus it is your responsibility to demonstrate a competency in the craft of historical writing if you want your ideas to be taken seriously.

**Required Textbooks and Materials:**

MacMillan, Margaret. *Dangerous Games: The Uses and Abuses of History*. New York: Modern Library, 2009. ISBN: 9780679643586.

Presnell, Jenny L. *The Information-Literate Historian: A Guide to Research for History Students*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. ISBN: 0195176510.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 8th edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. ISBN: 0226816273.

Williams, Robert C. *The Historian's Toolbox: A Student's Guide to the Theory and Craft of History*. 2nd ed. Armonk, New York: M.E. Sharpe, 2007. ISBN: 9780765620279.

Additional materials will be made available via eLearning.

**Assignments & Academic Calendar:**

You will have frequent and varied assignments throughout the course of the semester. Instructions for each assignment will be distributed via eLearning. It is your responsibility to complete these assignments and submit them on time. Late work will not be accepted.

**Homework Assignments** [25% of final grade]

Details on specific homework assignments will be distributed via eLearning.  
Due dates are listed on the "Tentative Schedule," below.

**Short Formal Papers** [25% of final grade]

You will write several short (4–5 page) formal papers, including book reviews, over the course of the semester.

**Presentations** [10% of final grade]

In addition to regular class discussions, you will occasionally have the opportunity to make formal presentations to the class.

**Position Paper** [40% of final grade]

As the capstone of this introduction to historical methods, you will research, write, and revise a short position paper in which you formulate a thesis from a specific primary source document and support this thesis on the basis of supplemental library research. You will submit a preliminary draft and a final revised draft.

**Tentative Schedule:**

I will make every reasonable effort to follow this reading and discussion schedule, but sometimes changes must be made. Modifications to this outline will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to be aware of the schedule and prepare the assigned materials.

*Items prefaced with a + are available from eLearning.*

WK	Date	HIST 3310 Historical Inquiry
1	8/27	<b>Introduction</b>
	8/29	<b>Survey/Favorite Historian</b> (MF out of Town: TA cover)
2	9/3	<b>Why History?</b>
	9/5	<i>Dangerous Games</i> <b>* HW1: Book Capture</b>
3	9/10	<b>The Craft of History</b> <i>Toolbox</i> , Ch. 1–7
	9/12	<b>Academic Style</b> Turabian, All, esp. Ch. 15–16
4	9/17	<b>Academic (dis)Honesty</b> <i>Toolbox</i> , Ch. 10 AHA Standards: <a href="http://www.historians.org/pubs/Free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm">http://www.historians.org/pubs/Free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm</a> <b>* HW 2: Style</b>
	9/19	<b>Library Presentation:</b> Kreg Walvoord (MC2.524)
5	9/24	<b>Sources</b> <i>Toolbox</i> , Ch. 9, 20 <i>Information</i> , Ch. 1–4, 7 <b>* HW 3: Sources and Citations</b>
	9/26	<b>Sources</b> <i>Information</i> , Ch. 5–6
6	10/1	<b>Thinking Historically</b> + Wineberg, “Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts;” + Wineberg, “On the Reading of Historical Texts”
	10/3	<b>Analyzing Primary Sources</b> + Farmer, “The Three Chaste Ones of Ba” <b>* HW 4: Primary Source Analysis</b>
7	10/8	<b>Discussion of Final Paper Assignment/Guidelines</b>
	10/10	<b>Doing History</b> <i>Toolbox</i> , Ch. 8, 11–13 <b>* HW 5: Bibliography</b>
8	10/15	<b>Doing History</b> + Walkowitz “On Taking Notes”
	10/17	<b>Doing History</b> + Harlan, “Reading, Writing, and the Art of History” + Hunt, “How Writing Leads to Thinking”

9	10/22	<b>Models of Academic Writing</b> + Cutter, "The Death of Empress Zhen" <i>* Article Capture Due</i>
	10/24	<b>Hist/Phil Presentations</b> <i>* Hist/Phil Paper Due</i>
10	10/29	<b>Hist/Phil Presentations</b>
	10/31	<b>Hist/Phil Presentations</b>
11	11/05	<b>Hist/Phil Presentations</b>
	11/07	<b>Hist/Phil Presentations</b>
12	11/12	<b>Hist/Phil Presentations</b>
	11/14	<b>Statistics &amp; History</b> + <i>How to Lie With Statistics</i> , Ch. 9-10 <i>Information</i> , Ch. 10 <i>* Paper Draft Due</i>
13	11/19	<b>Book Reviews</b> + "The Art of Reviewing" <i>* HW6: Anatomy of a Book Review</i>
	11/21	TBA
14	11/26	<b>Fall Break</b>
	11/28	<b>Fall Break</b>
15	12/03	<b>Careers in History</b> <i>* Book Review Due</i>
	12/05	<b>Academic Credentials</b> <i>Information</i> , Ch. 10
16	12/10	<b>Conclusions</b> <i>* Final Paper Due</i> <i>* HW: CV</i>

**Course & Instructor Policies:****Grading Policy:**

Percentages for the course assignments have been noted above. The following gradescale will be used: 0–59 [F]; 60–62 [D-]; 63–66 [D]; 67–69 [D+]; 70–72 [C-]; 73–76 [C]; 77–79 [C+]; 80–82 [B-]; 83–86 [B]; 87–89 [B+]; 90–92 [A-]; 93–100 [A]. In narrative form, [F]=failing; [D]=below average; [C]=average; [B]=above average; [A]=exceptional.

The professor reserves the right to curve, round, or otherwise adjust grades at his sole discretion.

**Attendance, Participation, and Discussion:**

Attendance is mandatory! Please consult the university calendar before scheduling vacations, weddings, or other extra-curricular events that may keep you from your responsibilities in this class. You are responsible for the material and any assignments regardless of whether you were in a given class meeting or not. Any extended absence (two or more consecutive sessions) should be reported to me via email as soon as possible. Every student is expected to actively participate in the discussion of the assigned readings. While there may be no set percentage of the course grade dedicated to this requirement category, students who do not regularly attend and actively participate in class will not fare well in the course.

**Late work:**

Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the assigned date. Late work will not be accepted. For all work not completed by the due date, the student will receive a grade of 0 (zero) for the assignment. Exceptional circumstances may be taken into account. If you feel your circumstances merit special consideration, please notify me via email or in person as soon as possible.

**Written Assignments:**

All out-of-class written assignments must be typed, double-spaced, in a 10–12 point serif typeface (Times, Palatino, Garamond, Gentium, etc.). Pages must have one-inch margins and contain your name and page number in the upper right-hand corner of each page. Assignments must be printed on white paper in black ink. Multi-page documents must be stapled. Cover sheets are not necessary unless the specific assignment guidelines call for one. Do not submit work in a folder or other type of binder unless the specific assignment guidelines call for it.

*Assignments not meeting these basic technical specifications will not be accepted.  
Submissions via email or other electronic means will not be accepted.*

**Personal Electronics:**

The use of laptop computers, tablet computers, mp3 players, cell phones, and all other personal electronics is prohibited in this course unless a student has documentation from The Office of Student AccessAbility. Students granted exemptions from the personal electronics policy will be seated in the front row of the classroom. Any non-class related use of personal electronics in the classroom will result in a revocation of exemption, and the immediate confiscation of the device. Confiscated devices will be returned at the end of the class period. Repeat offenses will result in a failing grade in the course.

*\* In this course, some of the readings are in pdf form and posted on eLearning. You may access these articles from your electronic device during class with the instructor's permission. Electronic devices must be put away at all other times.*

**Audio and Video Recording/Intellectual Property:**

Audio or video recording of class lectures and other activities without the express written permission of the professor is strictly prohibited. Students with documented accommodations from The Office of Student AccessAbility also require written permission from the professor. Additionally, while you are encouraged to take hand-written notes during class, these notes reflect the intellectual labor and property of the professor and may only be used for the notetaker's personal academic use. Notes may be shared with enrolled members of the class, but may not be distributed outside of the classroom community without the professor's express written permission. Notes (and/or approved or illicit audio and/or video recordings) may not be posted online or distributed to free or for-profit entities outside of the classroom community. Violation of this policy may result in a failing grade in the class and expose the student to potential legal action.

**University of Texas at Dallas Policies:**

In an effort go green (by cutting back on photocopying) University Policies can now be viewed at the following URL:

<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

**Course and Instructor Amendments to the University Policies:****Email Use:**

Email is the preferred method of communication for this course. Send email directly to my UTD email address (given above) and NOT through eLearning. I generally reply to messages that require a response (and not all messages require or merit a response from the professor!) within two business days. Messages left on my office voicemail will be retrieved the next time I am on campus, which depending on when the message was left, could be several business days. For queries necessitating a response, email is the best and fastest method of communication.

**Your Responsibility:**

Students are responsible for all information contained in this syllabus and schedule, as well as any amendments or changes announced by the professor or Teaching Assistant(s) in class. Changes to the course schedule or syllabus will also be announced in class and/or by email. It is your responsibility to regularly check your UTD email account.

***Failure to abide by the policies contained in the syllabus and any amendments or changes announced by the professor may result in a failing grade in the course.***

These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.

[revised 1 July 2013]