

## **HISTORY 3800 (The Historian's Craft), Spring 2008. 9:00 MWF, Haley 2196**

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**Office Hours:** 10:00-10:50 MWF, and by appointment.

**Description and Goals:** Historian's Craft is one of two required courses for History majors. It is designed to introduce junior-level history majors to the basics of research and writing, and to the history of the discipline. Through a variety of readings, assignments, and activities, students will learn better ways of researching and writing papers, and also will gain insight into how professional historians accomplish their work.

**Texts:** Davidson and Lytle, *After the Fact*, 5th ed.  
Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*, 5th ed.  
Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed.  
Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed.

<b>Grading:</b> Research Proposal (due Feb. 29)	20%
Book Review (Mar. 28)	20%
Paper (due Apr. 21)	20%
Reading Quizzes (Jan. 23, Feb. 8)	10%
Documentation Quiz (Mar. 28)	10%
Historiography Quiz (Apr. 28)	10%
Class Participation	10%

### **Description of Assignments:**

Research Proposal: Research proposals typically are used to clarify one's thoughts on a topic at an early point in the process, and to present those thoughts to peers and instructors. Feedback from others will expose flaws as well as strengths, improving the final effort immeasurably. Since there is no specific paper assignment in this course, you're welcome (even encouraged) to use an assignment from another history course in completing this and other requirements.

Research proposals exist in various forms, from simple outlines to elaborate narratives. In this course, the research proposal will consist of a narrative discussion containing five elements: (a) the working title. The title should make it clear to the reader what that paper will be about; (b) the main thesis of your argument, stated concisely in no more than two or three sentences. In other words, what's the main point you're trying to get across? (c) a brief outline of your proposed paper as you expect it to look. Completed papers almost always turn out differently than planned, but it's helpful to provide yourself and others with a road map of where you think you're going; (d) a brief discussion of the sources you have used so far, noting which have been particularly useful or important; (e) your plans for completing the project, including other sources you intend to use and questions that have to be answered. The assigned Marius readings as well as class activities should help make this clearer. First drafts, due February 22, will be peer reviewed in class. The final version will be due on February 29. A good final essay

should run perhaps three pages, but I will be looking for substance, not length. **START EARLY!**

Book Review: The scholarly book review is a form every student of history should master. Working scholars during the course of a career will write many more book reviews than articles or books. A book review is not a high school book report. The latter essentially summarizes a book. A review, in contrast, typically consists of five elements, (a) the book's scholarly citation; (b) an introduction that briefly supplies context, sets the book within the larger field, or states a question to be answered; (c), the author's thesis; (d) a summary of the book's contents; and (e) your evaluation of the book, noting its strengths and/or weaknesses as well as its usefulness without getting emotional or unduly negative. Readers of reviews essentially want to know what the author says, how the author says it, and whether it's worth reading. We will work on these together as a class. Your review should be about 750 words long (not including the book's citation). Since you don't have many words to use, a review should be as succinct as possible.

Paper: You are to write a ten-page paper on your chosen topic (that means ten pages of text, not including documentation). At least five sources must be used, and at least one must be a journal article. Errors in fact, logic, and composition, as well as general messiness, will lower your grade. The paper is due at the beginning of class on April 21; you will lose five points for papers turned in later that day, and ten points for every weekday the paper is late. In addition to the hard copy of the paper, you must submit the paper as an e-mail attachment. **DO NOT INCLUDE ANY PERSONAL INFORMATION, INCLUDING YOUR NAME, WITH THE E-MAIL VERSION.** If you do so, I must assume that I have your permission to submit the paper with your name attached to Turnitin.com.

Reading Quizzes: There are two short, ten-minute multiple choice quizzes on the assigned Davidson and Lytle readings.

Documentation Quiz: There is a quiz on Turabian and correct documentation, scheduled for March 28. It will require the entire period.

Historiography Quiz: A multiple-choice quiz in the historiography lectures will occur on the last day of class.

Class Participation: Ten percent of your grade will be based on class participation. Each student will be expected to have read the day's assignment and participate in all class activities. You must purchase a composition book (not a spiral notebook but rather one with a black-and-white cover and solid spine) and bring it with you to each class. During the semester you will carry out various assignments using your journal, during class as well as outside class. I will take these up periodically for examination and grade them on a plus-minus basis. Students who do not participate actively in class will see this portion of their grade suffer. This is not primarily a lecture course; you cannot slide by passively and still receive an "A."

Rules for Written Assignments: Assignments turned in late on the due date day will have

five points deducted. One letter grade will be deducted for every weekday the paper is late. Everything must be turned in typed, double-spaced, and with margins no larger than one inch. Assignments also should be stapled in the upper left-hand corner--please no fancy binders. The typeface should be roughly that of this syllabus. Numerous mechanical errors or general messiness will lower your grade as much as anything else. You must print and keep a copy for your files! Plagiarism (claiming someone else's work as your own) will result in your failing the course.

**Please note:**

- \*I do NOT give “extra credit” assignments in this course.
- \*I do NOT “round up” close grades to the next highest letter grade. An 88.9 or 89.4 rounds off to 89, and that is a “B,” not an “A.”
- \*I do NOT discuss grades on the day I returned a graded test, quiz, or paper.
- \*I do NOT give out or debate grades, including final grades, via e-mail. Giving out grades over telephone lines is a violation of Federal law. If you have a problem with a grade, come and see me in person.

**Makeup Policy:** Make-up quizzes will be allowed *only* with a University-approved excuse. You

will not receive the same test as that given to the rest of the class, but the format will be the same. No make-ups will occur before a scheduled test or exam.

**Students With Disabilities:** Students needing accommodations should arrange a meeting with me during the first week of class. Come during office hours or email for an alternate time. Bring the Accommodation Memo and Instructor Verification Form to the meeting. Discuss items needed in this class. If you do not have an Accommodation Memo but need special accommodations, make an appointment with The Program for Students with Disabilities, 1244 Haley Center, 844-2096 (V/TT) or email: [haynemd@auburn.edu](mailto:haynemd@auburn.edu)

**Attendance and Classroom Behavior:** Students are expected to attend class every day, to be on time, to have read all assigned readings, and to participate in class discussions. Students who end the semester with two or fewer unexcused absences will receive two extra points on their final grade. Students with four or more unexcused absences will lose 10 points on their final grade. Two unexcused tardies equal once unexcused absence. Students exhibiting class behavior I deem inappropriate also will be counted “absent” that day. Turn off your cell phones and other handheld technologies when you’re in class, and keep them out of sight. The Auburn Classroom Behavior Policy is in effect; please review it at: [www.auburn.edu/administartion/governance/senate/behavior\\_policy.htm](http://www.auburn.edu/administartion/governance/senate/behavior_policy.htm).

**Withdrawal:** Student may drop the course without penalty up to mid-semester, but after that time, withdrawal will be permitted only in exceptional cases, and only with permission from the dean’s office.

**Use of E-mail:** Feel free to e-mail me in regard to anything related to the course, history in general, or something in the nature of letters of recommendations. Please do not e-mail me in regard to your personal life unless it pertains directly to the course, as in the case of an absence. I will not respond to anything I deem inappropriate, and I retain the right to forward any e-mails to university authorities.

**Department of History Academic Honesty Policy:** The Department of History does not tolerate violations of the university's academic honesty policy and all instructors will report and pursue all such cases according to the procedures outlined in the *Tiger Cub*. Students are required to know what these policies and procedures are and to know what constitutes academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to **plagiarism, falsified citations, cheating on exams, unauthorized collaboration** with other students, **multiple submissions**, and **fraudulent medical excuses**.

**Plagiarism** is using someone else's work without credit. It includes ideas, phrases, papers, reports, charts, diagrams, and computer and other data copied directly or paraphrased that are not your own. More specifically, plagiarism is:

- submitting a paper or other work that was wholly or partially written by someone else, regardless of the relationship;
- submitting a paper or other work that the student did not write but that was obtained from files or other sources on or off campus;
- submitting a paper or other work that was wholly or partially obtained from the Internet or the World Wide Web or from other sources that supply papers of this sort;
- submitting as their own work a paper or parts of a paper copied or paraphrased from other sources; and simply rearranging passages and making slight changes or additions in wording.

Note that intent is not an issue with plagiarism. Accidentally submitting written material as your own that comes from someone or somewhere else is not an excuse. Sources for written material, whether paraphrased or quoted, must be cited.

**Falsified citations** are those where the cited material cannot be found in the book, article, or other source. Claims that this was done accidentally do not constitute an excuse.

**Cheating on an exam** includes copying from others' exams, otherwise giving or receiving aid during an exam, obtaining copies of exams, using such copies in the exam, using electronic or other aids during an exam, taking an exam for another student, or any other means of deception.

**Unauthorized collaboration** includes working with or receiving assistance from others on graded or other assignments without the specific permission of the instructor. Study groups and collaborative work are generally encouraged, but the end results must reflect

the work of the individual student. When in doubt about collaboration, ask the instructor.

**Multiple submissions** are when a student completes a paper or other assignment for a course and submits it without permission to fulfill the requirements for another course.

**Fraudulent medical excuses** include but are not limited to forged signatures, times, diagnoses, and prescriptions.

***Violating this policy will result in your automatically failing the course, AND I will charge you with plagiarism before the university Academic Honesty Committee!***

**A syllabus is a legal contract:** Your remaining in the course indicates that you have read the syllabus and understand all course requirements.

### **Tentative Schedule:**

Jan. 9--Introduction.

Jan. 11--What is history?

Jan. 14--What do historians do? Davidson & Lytle, Introduction and Prologue, Marius, ch. 1..

Jan. 16--Documents, part 1. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 1.

Jan. 18--Documents, part 2. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 3.

Jan. 21—Holiday, no class.

Jan. 23--Documents, part 3. **Reading Quiz 1.**

Jan. 25--Scholarly articles, part 1. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 2.

Jan. 28--Articles, part 2.

Jan. 30—Library tour.

Feb. 1--Library tour, part 2.

Feb. 4—Archives tour

Feb. 6--Reference sources, history on the internet. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 11, Marius, chs. 4 **Reading Quiz 2.**

Feb. 8--Choosing a topic. Marius, chs. 2, 3.

Feb. 11--Getting started, taking notes. Marius, ch. 5.

Feb. 13--Creating a research proposal.

Feb. 15--Critiquing proposals.

Feb. 18--Critiquing oral proposals.

Feb. 20--Critiquing oral proposals.

Feb. 22--Critiquing oral proposals. **Draft Research Proposal Due.**

Feb. 25-- Critiquing oral proposals.

Feb. 27--Using book reviews.

Feb. 29-- Writing book reviews. **FINAL Research Proposal Due.**

Mar. 3--.Writing book reviews. Marius, Appendix C.

Mar. 5-- Basics of historical writing. Marius, chs. 6-7, Appendix A.

Mar. 7--Basics of historical writing. Bring Strunk and White to class.

Mar. 10-- Basics of historical writing. Bring Strunk and White to class  
 Mar. 12--Documentation, part 1. Marius, ch. 8. Bring Turabian.  
 Mar. 14-- Documentation, part 2. Bring Turabian  
 Mar. 17-21—Spring Break.  
 Mar. 24--Documentation, part 3. Bring Turabian.  
 Mar. 26--Documentation, part 4. Bring Turabian.  
 Mar. 28- **Book Review Due. Documentation quiz.**  
 Mar. 31—Plagiarism  
 Apr. 2—Plagiarism, part 2  
 Apr. 4—No Class  
 Apr. 7--Historiography: The History of History, part 1. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 4.  
 Apr. 9--Historiography, part 2. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 5.  
 Apr. 11--Historiography, part 3. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 6.  
 Apr. 14--Historiography, part 4. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 7.  
 Apr. 16--History in fiction and on film. Davidson & Lytle, chs. 13, 15.  
 Apr. 18—No Class  
 Apr. 21--History and Heritage. Davidson & Lytle, ch. 8. **Papers Due.**  
 Apr. 23--Becoming a historian.  
 Apr. 25--Conclusion.  
 Apr. 28--**Historiography Quiz.** Last Day of Class.



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