

HISTORY 8100
Research Graduate Seminar in Latin American History
Spring Semester 2013 Tues.-Thurs. 2:20-5:15 Lazenby Hall 0018

Instructor: Professor Stephanie Smith **Phone:** 292-6216
 Associate Professor, History **Email:** smith.4858@osu.edu

Office: Dulles Hall, Room 340

Office Hours: 12:30-1:30 Tuesday, Thursday,
 or by appointment

Course Description:

This research seminar is designed to give graduate students experience in the research and writing of scholarly papers, as well as the techniques of scholarly review/assessment. The goal of the seminar will be to provide the opportunity to produce a major research paper; for example, a M.A. thesis, article, or dissertation chapter. The beginning of the course will be devoted to defining a research topic, identifying sources (including primary documents and secondary material within the appropriate historiographical framework), discussing the tools of historical research, and developing methodological approaches to both research and writing. The remaining weeks of the course will offer time for research, writing, and revision.

Additionally, the seminar will provide students with the space to discuss scholarly matters and share valuable advice on academic and practical issues, such as researching in archives, submitting an article, the revising process – including the process of turning a dissertation into a book – applying for grants, among others. Students also will receive constructive feedback from their peers that will help them improve their work in a productive and positive manner.

All students must be officially enrolled in the course by the end of the second full week of the semester. No requests to add the course will be approved by the Chair of the Department after that time. Enrolling officially and on time is solely the responsibility of each student.

Suggested Readings

1. Joan Bolker, *Writing Your Dissertation in Fifteen Minutes a Day: A Guide to Starting, Revising, and Finishing Your Doctoral Thesis* (Owl Books, 1998)
2. Wendy Laura Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success* (Sage, 2009)
3. William Germano, *From Dissertation to Book* (The University of Chicago Press, 2005).

Grading:

Attendance/Participation/Work in Recitations: 10%

Prospectus/Research Proposal: 20%

Three Papers: 30% (10% Each)

Four Critiques: 20% (5% Each)

Final Paper: 20%

Grade breakdowns:

A: 92.6 and above; A-: 89.6-92.5; B+: 87.6-89.5; B: 82.6-87.5; B-: 79.6-82.5; C+: 77.6-79.5; C: 72.6-77.5; C-: 69.6-72.5; D+: 67.6-69.5; D: 62-67.5; E: below 62.

Since the University does not record D- grades, a student earning a course average below 62 will receive an E in this course.

Make-up examinations and late work: Make-up work will be allowed only in the case of a real emergency, and only if this can be documented with an official written excuse. Do not ask for exceptional treatment.

The "Explanatory Statement for Absence from Class" that can be found on the Wilce Health Center website does not constitute an official statement.

Late work will be downgraded by one letter grade for each day it is late. Work that is four or more days late will not be accepted.

I only will assign an incomplete grade if you have suffered a debilitating injury or a life altering loss, which **must** be documented, and you have completed a significant portion of the course work. If this is not the case, you will be assigned the grade earned.

Academic Misconduct

Be forewarned that I will pursue cases of academic misconduct to the appropriate University committee. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487).

For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: <http://sja.osu.edu/page.asp?id=1>.

Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own: it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. All cases of suspected plagiarism, in accordance with university rules, will be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. See this web site for information on plagiarism and writing handouts:

http://cstw.osu.edu/writingCenter/handouts/research_plagiarism.cfm

Warning: Do not attempt to copy a paper off the Web and present it as your own work! This is plagiarism, and will result in an academic misconduct hearing.

The Office for Disability Services

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>. All information and documentation of disabilities will be kept confidential.

OSU Writing Center:

<http://cstw.osu.edu>.

Study and Paper Tips:

- ☺ Do the assigned readings **before** you come to class. Overall, keep up with the readings.
- ☺ When writing your paper, keep several things in mind.
 1. Strive for good overall paper organization:
 - a. Begin with an introduction, where you state your thesis/argument and briefly tell the reader what your paper will cover. Here you will include the title and author of the book(s) you will discuss.
 - b. Your introduction is followed by the body of the paper, where you will present the body of your evidence through the development of supporting arguments. Remember that your paragraphs should begin with topic sentences.
 - c. Finally, your paper should have a conclusion, in which you once again explain the significance of your question and argument.
 2. Strive for good paragraph organization. Begin with a clear topic sentence, which is usually short. Follow with material that either supports or elaborates upon the idea of the topic sentence.
 3. Make sure that your paper has a clear progression of ideas from one paragraph to the next.
 4. Avoid lengthy quotes. These take up valuable space that is better spent on your own analysis.
 5. Avoid contractions, such as don't and isn't, in your paper.
 6. Minimize use of the passive voice. For example: "The war was begun by peasants" should be "Peasants began the war." Passive voice makes your writing weak.
 7. Once again, avoid plagiarism of any kind.
 8. Double-check to make sure that your paper is free of spelling errors, improper grammar, or incorrect punctuation.
 9. Make sure that you use footnotes properly.



Class Assignments

Attendance/Participation:

Attendance (10%) is required for every class, and will be taken at the beginning of class. You are responsible for attending each and every class since your grade will be adversely affected by any absences.

This graduate course requires active class participation and discussion by every student. Part of your evaluation will be based upon engagement with the other students over the readings and other assigned materials during each class period. To participate well in class, you will need to keep up with the reading material.

*** Please feel free to express your opinion in a constructive manner. Part of the objective of the class is for you to analyze complex issues and express your positions on a number of topics. While you may not agree with everything said in class, you must show respect to fellow classmates.

Seminar Papers:

Please distribute the papers by email by noon on Sunday (or earlier) for our Tuesday class. The papers should have 1-inch margins and 12-point type.

1. A 5-7 page prospectus/research proposal (20%). This paper could provide the basis for the introduction of your project and/or a grant proposal. Your paper should answer the following questions:
 - a. What is the argument?
 - b. Identify and explain the topic/subject of your study, the questions that you plan to ask, and the parameters of your topic.
 - c. Why is your study important? What is the significance? Identify and explain how your study will make a contribution to academic scholarship. How do you situate your study in relationship to the existing literature? Which intellectual conversations do you plan to engage with?
 - d. How do you plan to do your research and to write your study? What primary sources do you plan to analyze? What methodologies do you intend to employ? What is your work plan schedule? How do you plan to structure your thesis/chapter/article?
 - e. Also attach a working bibliography (which will not be counted towards your page limit) that could be arranged thematically and by types of sources (primary vs. secondary, newspapers vs. archival materials, etc.)
2. Three 6- to 10-page papers (10% each). Each paper constitutes roughly one third of your proposed thesis/chapter/article.
OR, instead of a thesis/chapter/article, you can choose to write one conference talk and two major grant applications (with budgets and other materials).

3. Constructive critiques of your fellow scholars' works (20%).

A lead commentator/writing partner will be assigned for each of the four papers. After the author of a paper introduces their work to the seminar, the commentator will present the critique, invite the author to respond, and lead discussion involving the entire class.

Each commentator/writing partner also will write a one-page, double-spaced critique of the paper they are evaluating. The commentator/writing partner also will bring copies of their critique to class--one for Professor Smith and one for each student.

The comments should address the following topics:

- a. Briefly explain the subject matter of the paper and identify the central argument(s) that the author is making.
- b. Identify strengths in terms of the quality of research and analysis, the persuasiveness of the argument, the significance of the contribution, the logic of the organization, the use of sources, and the clarity and fluency of the prose.
- c. Offer constructive advice to improve the quality of research and analysis, the persuasiveness of the argument, the significance of the contribution, the logic of the organization, and the clarity and fluency of the prose.

****Of course, all students still are required to read each paper, and to participate actively in the class discussions of all papers.**

4. Your final papers/work for the quarter that brings together the various components of your thesis/chapter/article/presentation/grants. (20%) When you turn in your final paper(s), you should incorporate the suggestions from your previous writings.

Course Schedule

Week 1

Tues., Jan. 8 **Introduction and discussion of the syllabus**

Week 2

Tues. Jan. 15 **Guest Speakers:** Cameron Jones and Spencer Tyce. Writing a successful grant; Finding appropriate grants for Latin American Historians; Defining a dissertation topic; The job market.

You will turn in a 1-page paper that outlines your course goals, outcomes, and what you will accomplish during this course. In your paper you will discuss specific details of your three papers. For example, will you write a thesis, chapter, presentation/grant applications, or article?

Please bring copies to share with the other students (8), and be prepared to present and discuss your course plan during class.

Week 3

Tues. Jan. 22 **Research/Writing Week**

Week 4

Tues. Jan. 29 **Presentation of Proposal/Prospectus – Group A**

Week 5

Tues. Feb. 5 **Research/Writing Week**

Week 6

Tues. Feb 12 **Presentation of Proposal/Prospectus – Group B**

Week 7

Tues. Feb. 19

Workshop of Paper #1 – Group A
Guest Speakers: James Genova

Week 8

Tues. Feb. 26

Workshop of Paper #1 – Group B
Guest Speaker: Susan Gauss, SUNY Albany
Optional REN Event, 12:00-2:00, Room 235 Dulles Hall

Week 9

Tues. March 5

Research/Writing Week

Week 10

Tues. March 12

Spring Break

Week 11

Tues. March 19

Workshop of Paper #2 – Group A
Guest Speaker: Judy Wu (4:00)

Week 12

Tues. March 26

Workshop of Paper #2 – Group B
Guest Speaker: Peter Hahn

Week 13

Tues. Apr. 2

Research/Writing Week

Week 14

Tues. Apr. 9

Workshop of Paper #3 – Group A
Guest Speaker: Tina Sessa

Week 15**Tues. Apr. 16****Workshop of Paper #3 – Group B****Guest Speaker: Keith Speers (4:00) – alternative career paths**

FINAL PAPER DUE: Friday, April 26, 2:00 in my office

REN Graduate Conference:

1. The conference will be held on Friday, 19 April, in 168 Dulles, which is reserved for the day.
 2. Students will submit paper titles and 250-word abstracts by Monday, 1 April – a selections committee will place the panels together in a thematic rather than a geographical manner.
 3. We plan on 4 panels with 4 students each; 4 or more students will serve as discussants.
 4. The panels will run for 1.5 hours – 4x15min=60 min for presentations and 30 min Q&A.
8:30-10:00; 15 min break; 10:15-11:45; lunch; 1-2:30; 15 min break; 2:45-4:15pm.
 5. We will start with breakfast at 8am and opening remarks at 8:15am.
 6. We will finish at 4:15pm so that the Early US seminar can use the room at 4:30
 7. We will cater breakfast, lunch, and refreshments.
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Class Schedule for Speakers:**Speaker: 2:20 to 3:15****Presentations: 3:15 to 3:45****3:45 to 4:15****4:15 to 4:45****4:45 to 5:15****Speaker: 4:20 to 5:15****Presentations: 2:20 to 2:50****2:50 to 3:20****3:20 to 3:50****3:50 to 4:20**