

Department of History, University of Manitoba, Fall & Winter 2012-2013  
HIST 4400/7700

## Historiography & Historical Methodology

**SEMINARS:** Mondays, 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.

**LOCATION:** 300 Tier

### **INSTRUCTOR**

Prof. Jarvis Brownlie

Phone: 474-9101

Office hours: Tues. and Thurs. 1-2 p.m., or by appointment.

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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES**

This is a joint graduate/undergraduate course for advanced undergraduate history majors and graduate students. It concerns some of the philosophical and methodological issues that bear on the research and writing of history by professional historians. The course will introduce students to some of the past and current debates in the historical profession about what history is, and what it can and should do. Students will be given the opportunity to examine some of the many methods and approaches to historical research and writing. They will also be asked to engage with a number of questions about historical methodology and the discovery, assessment and interpretation of primary and secondary sources in historical research and writing. Students will come away from the class with a better understanding of at least some of the dominant approaches to history, and should also be able to read historical writing with a more selective and critical eye. Even a full-year course cannot cover the full range of issues that have emerged in the discipline, so this course should be seen as a selective rather than comprehensive introduction to the field of historiography.

### **PREREQUISITE (UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY):**

Written consent of department head.

### **ORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINAR, READINGS AND PRESENTATION SCHEDULE**

The class will meet weekly in seminar format. In the first week, we will outline the aims of the course and discuss the presentation schedule. Since we are losing two sessions in first term to statutory holidays, we will hit the ground running and use the first session for some reading and thinking as well as introductions. In week two, we will visit the University of Manitoba Archives and enjoy the archival experience, a core element of the historical enterprise. In weeks three and four, we will explore the history of historical writing and thinking in Europe and the US. In week five, we will start to explore some approaches to historical writing, issues in historical methodology, and fields of contemporary historiography.

The course instructor will oversee the course, but the seminars will be largely team-taught by a number of faculty members, each being responsible for selected sessions of the course. Students are expected to play an active part in the class by sustaining and perhaps leading class discussions.

Since this course is directed at senior undergraduates and graduate students, it is a reading-intensive class. You are expected to read 150-200 pages each week for this course and to come to class a) having read your material, and b) armed with questions, queries, points of interest, or points of disagreement to offer up for discussion. Besides the required readings found in the assigned texts and the course reader, students will be expected to visit the library or the Internet to find additional readings. Note that many of the required readings are available on-line.

### **WEEKLY THINK PIECES**

After the first few weeks, students will be asked to prepare 'think pieces' about the weekly readings, which they will present and defend in class to get the discussion going. Since all students will be on email, these short papers should be sent to the course supervisor for distribution to all members of the class by the **Thursday** preceding the class on Monday. Think pieces should be very brief—about 500 words or one single-spaced page maximum. They should get to the point very rapidly and raise a number of questions, concerns, problems or debates within the readings. As a guide to feedback, think pieces will be graded on a P-, P, P+ basis and a final grade will be assigned for their cumulative value plus the student's ability to defend them orally and stimulate discussion in class. Think pieces should be analytical rather than descriptive. Try to answer the following questions:

- What is the author's purpose in each piece?
- What is the author's thesis or theses in each reading and how does s/he develop it/them?
- What are two major points of contrast or comparison between the readings?
- What insights do the articles reveal about the practice of this genre of historical research and writing?
- Can we derive any broader insights into the field of history in general from these articles?
- How have historians used these approaches in their historical writing?

**Graduate students:** You **must** prepare a think piece for the class discussion in week three, four, or five which includes the extra readings for graduate students. You will read a number of selections from Peter Seixas, ed., *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* in addition to what is assigned to all (these will be listed in the corresponding week's readings).

Finally, students are encouraged to join an on-line History discussion group on H-Net. There are now several such networks established, one for nearly every sub-field of the discipline. Some of you will be interested in the H-Canada discussion group, but there are many others to select from. Visit <http://www.h-net.org/lists/> and select a group that fits your interests. At the end of the course we will discuss your impressions of these networks and their role in the historical profession.

### **ATTENDANCE , PARTICIPATION, MISSED CLASSES**

Regular, active, audible, constructive participation forms a significant portion of the final grade (20%). Attendance alone will count for only a small fraction of the final grade for this

component of the course, so expect to come to class prepared to pose and respond to questions, to discuss ideas, and to engage with the opinions raised by the discussion leader. If you are unable to attend class, please let me know in advance as soon as possible. If your absence is unavoidable, please provide me with a two-page (500-word) written summary of the week's required readings.

#### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Caroline Hoeffler, *The Essential Historiography Reader* (Prentice Hall, 2011).  
(Available at the U of M Bookstore)

Robert F. Berkhofer, *Fashioning History : Current Practices and Principles* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2008).

- available online via Bison

Lenin, *Imperialism*.

- available online at <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1916lenin-imperialism.html>

#### **GRADUATE STUDENTS WILL ALSO NEED:**

Peter Seixas, ed., *Theorizing Historical Consciousness* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

- available online via Bison

#### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students will be expected to attend and participate in each weekly seminar and must complete all of the written assignments.

#### **EVALUATION**

For **Undergraduate** Students (those enrolled in HIST 4400):

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|---|---------------------|
| 1. Seminar participation                          | 20%                 |
| 2. Think Pieces (2 each term, <b>4 in total</b> ) | 20%                 |
| 3. Grant Proposal (8-11 pages)                    | 10% Due October 29  |
| 4. Essay #1 (1500-2000 words, or 6-8 pages)       | 15% Due December 3  |
| 5. Essay #2 (1000-1500) words, or 4-6 pages)      | 15% Due February 11 |
| 6. Essay #3 (3500-4000 words, or 15-16 pages)     | 20% Due April 8     |

For **Graduate** Students (those enrolled in HIST 7700):

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|--|---------------------|
| 1. Seminar participation   | 20%                 |
| 2. Think Pieces ( <b>5 in total</b> , incl. 1 on <i>Seixas</i> ) | 20%                 |
| 3. Grant Proposal (8-11 pages)                                   | 10% Due October 29  |
| 4. Essay #1 (1500-2000 words, or 6-8 pages)                      | 15% Due December 3  |
| 5. Essay #2 (1250-1750 words, or 5-7 pages)                      | 15% Due February 11 |
| 6. Essay #3 (4500-5000 words, or 18-20 pages)                    | 20% Due April 8     |

All written assignments should be typed and should conform to a formal academic style, free of contractions, colloquialism, slang, etc. Sentences should be clear and to the point. Please proof read your work carefully before submitting it for grading. Papers should be free of technical errors of citation. For the formal essays, citations should follow the 'Chicago style' found in

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Chicago, 1996) or the *Chicago Manual of Style* (14<sup>th</sup> edition or later). Further details regarding written assignments will be handed out in class. Evaluative feedback will be provided prior to the voluntary withdrawal (VW) date of **March 20, 2013**.

**Written work** will be evaluated for both content and style, but mainly for the quality of the argument. Students at this stage of their academic careers should realize that style to a large extent determines the content, and should therefore pay careful attention to the quality and tone of their writing. I am looking for clear, logical, well-supported arguments in your papers and it is your job as the author to be as clear and cogent as possible. Plan on writing and revising at least two drafts of your papers before submitting them.

**Participation** will be graded on the basis of the quality and consistency of the student's role in the class. Perfect attendance alone will constitute only a small portion of the participation grade. Students will be expected to discuss, debate, challenge and defend the ideas and opinions raised both in the required and supplementary readings, and by their fellow classmates during the discussions. It is impossible for your colleagues to engage with—and for me to evaluate—ideas that appear only in your mind. You must share them with the group.

The numerical grade weighting for evaluating performance in this course is as follows:

A+	88 - 100%	C+	65 - 69 %
A	80 - 87 %	C	60 - 64 %
B+	75 - 79 %	D	50 - 59 %
B	70 - 74 %	F	0 - 49 %

Students who wish to appeal a grade given for term work must do so within 10 working days after the grade for the term work has been made available to them. Uncollected term work will become the property of the Faculty of Arts and will be subject to confidential destruction.

#### **LATE ASSIGNMENTS**

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Late assignments will be penalized by the instructor at the rate of **two marks** (or percentage points) **per business day** of tardiness. Late or missed discussion papers ('think pieces') will receive a grade of zero.

#### **PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING**

The work you submit for grading must be your own original work, written *by you* specifically for this course. Students should familiarize themselves with Section 8 of the General Academic Regulations in the online University Calendar and Catalog. University regulations provide severe penalties for academic dishonesty, in the form of plagiarism, cheating, or impersonation at exams. The common penalty in Arts for plagiarism on a written assignment is a grade of **F** on the paper and a final grade of **F (DISC)** (for disciplinary action)) for the course. For the most serious acts of plagiarism, such as purchase of an essay and repeat violations, this penalty can also include suspension for a period of up to five (5) years from registration in courses taught in a particular department/program in Arts or from all courses taught in this Faculty. I make use of Google checks and internet sites designed to detect plagiarism.

In this course it is expected that all submitted work will be done independently.

### **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND SEMINAR LEADERS**

**NOTE: this schedule is preliminary – sessions marked with “-?” have not yet been confirmed with the planned guest seminar leader.**

#### **FIRST TERM**

- Week 1 (Sept 10) Introduction (Jarvis Brownlie)
- Week 2 (Sept 17) Session at University of Manitoba Archives (Dafoe Library 3<sup>rd</sup> floor).
- Week 3 (Sept. 24) Text: Hoefflerle, *The Essential Historiography Reader* (Jarvis Brownlie)
- Week 4 (Oct. 1) Text: Berkhofer, *Fashioning History* (Jarvis Brownlie)
- Week 5 (Oct 8) THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS
- Week 6 (Oct 15) Archives and Archival Methodology (Tom Nesmith) -?
- Week 7 (Oct 22) Marx (Henry Heller)
- Week 8 (Oct 29) Economic History (Erik Thomson) -?
- Week 9 (Nov 5) Women’s History (Esyllt Jones) -?
- Week 10 (Nov. 12) REMEMBRANCE DAY – NO CLASS
- Week 11 (Nov 19) History and Anthropology (David Churchill) -?
- Week 12 (Nov 26) Foucault and Post-Structuralism (Jarvis Brownlie)
- Week 13 (Dec 3) The “Medieval” (Roisin Cossar) -?

## **Assignments**

### **Essay 1 – grant proposal, due Oct. 29, worth 10% of final grade.**

This assignment involves writing a simulated grant proposal, 8-11 pages long, in which you sketch out a proposed research project and explain to an audience of non-specialist historians why your project is important. To do this, you will have to lay out the historiographical context, the major works in the field, the questions you would pose, the primary research you would conduct, and so on. It would be best (and most efficient!) to select for this assignment a topic on which you will be writing an actual paper in another course (an Honours paper, perhaps?). Another option is to develop a topic you might use for future fellowship applications.

### **Essay 2 – journal article assignment, due Dec. 3, worth 15% of final grade.**

You will browse through several journals that carry articles related to a field of history in which you are interested (the field can be defined geographically or thematically). You will then select two articles from different journals and write a short essay examining the arguments, methods, and interpretations of the two articles.

### **Essay 3 – short essay, due Feb. 11, worth 15% of final grade.**

This assignment is a short essay on a question provided by the instructor.

### **Essay 4 – historiographical essay, due Apr. 8, worth 20% of final grade.**

This is a major paper of about 15-16 pages (16-20 pp for grad students) in which you will produce a description and analysis of a major subfield of history such as “post-colonial,” Marxist, gender, or oral history (you will be given a list of subfields from which to choose). You will give an account of the origins, interpretive strategies, analytical frameworks, strengths and weaknesses of the subfield you have chosen.

**Note: you will receive more detailed information about each assignment well ahead of time.**