

Department of History, University of Manitoba, Fall & Winter 2015-16
HIST 4400/7700

Historiography & Historical Methodology

SEMINARS: Fridays 8:30am – 11:25am

LOCATION: 129 St John's College

INSTRUCTOR

Dr L. Kuffert

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Office hours: Mondays 10:00 – 11:30, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:

In this course, we will investigate historians' approaches to the past. The course will introduce you to some of the debates about what history is, and what it can, can't, and should do. You will have the opportunity to examine some of the various methods and approaches to historical research and writing. You will also engage questions about historical methods, and the discovery, assessment, and interpretation of primary and secondary sources in historical research and writing. You will gain a better understanding of some of the dominant approaches to history, and develop an ability to read historical writing with a more critical eye. Even a full-year course cannot cover the range of questions that have emerged in the discipline, so this course should be seen as a selective, rather than comprehensive introduction to historical writing and method.

PREREQUISITE (UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY):

Written consent of department head.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINAR:

The class will meet weekly in seminar style. In the first week, we will outline the aims of the course and discuss routines, assignments, and expectations. You are expected to attend and participate in each weekly seminar.

The instructor will oversee the course and be present at each meeting, but some seminars will be structured/led by guest faculty. Regardless of who has set the readings for a given week, you are expected to play an active part in the class and, at times, to enrich the discussion by introducing a topic or sharing insights you've had.

READINGS:

The course is reading and writing-intensive. You are expected to come to class:

- a) having read the material, and
- b) with questions, points of interest, or points of contention to contribute.

Almost all of the required readings will be available on-line via the class dropbox.

ASSIGNMENTS:

In addition to attending the seminar, students *must complete all of the written assignments*. **Failure to complete all of the assignments will result in a grade of F.**

WEEKLY LOGS (ACCOUNTING FOR 25% OF COURSE GRADE):

Each week, you will write a 'log' entry addressing the weekly readings. Students will post their logs to the class dropbox so their classmates can read them before we meet. Logs should be *analytical* rather than descriptive. They should get to the point quickly and address questions, concerns, problems, or debates within the readings. Logs will be graded on a 0, P-, P, P+ basis*, without extensive comments, but students may discuss their log work with the instructor at any time.

* crude explanation of 'P' grades

0: Log was not submitted on time, or is an obvious attempt to earn a P- by submitting something instead of thought.

P-: log is in on time, but is cursory in its analysis or does not perform more than a summary of the articles.

P: log covers main contributions of week's readings, and is able to identify areas of comparison/contrast between them.

P+: log goes beyond main arguments and comparisons to suggest novel ways of looking at the historical problems discussed.

Some potential starting points for each week's log (not all these angles need to be covered):

- What is each author's main argument (a.k.a. thesis), and how are those ideas developed?
- What are some of the major points of contrast or comparison between the readings?
- What do the readings 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 works?
- How have historians used these approaches in their historical writing?

JOURNAL PROFILE, DUE 30 OCTOBER 2015 , ACCOUNTING FOR 15% OF FINAL GRADE:

You will choose a prominent historical journal in a field that interests you and, looking at the journal's output over a period of at least ten years, discuss:

- how (or if) the field has evolved
- the impact of prominent theoretical, archival, or other developments on the articles in the journal

HISTORIAN PROFILE, DUE 29 JANUARY 2016, ACCOUNTING FOR 15% OF FINAL GRADE.

You will choose a historian who is (or was) prominent in their field, and write a profile of their work, taking into account factors such as:

- the scope and scale of the work
- innovations in theory or method associated with this historian
- style of argument
- debates participated in
- trajectory of person's career (can you locate their MA or PhD thesis and look at that?)
- other factors that make this person worthy of our notice

HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY, DUE 18 MARCH 2016, ACCOUNTING FOR 30% OF FINAL GRADE:

In about 3500-4000 words or 14-16 pages (4500-5000 words or 18-20 pages for students in HIST 7700), you will define/describe and analyze a subfield of history such as post-colonial, Marxist, gender, or oral history. You will give an account of the origins, interpretive strategies, analytical frameworks, strengths, and weaknesses of the subfield you have chosen.

Students should join an on-line History discussion group on H-Net. There are now several groups established, one for nearly every sub-field of the discipline. Visit <http://www.h-net.org/lists/> and select a group that fits your interests.

All written assignments should be typed/word-processed and should use a formal academic style, free of contractions, colloquialism, slang, etc. Sentences should be clear and to the point. Please proofread your work carefully before submitting it. Papers should be free of technical errors of citation. Citations should follow the 'Chicago' style found in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Terms Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th ed. (Chicago, 1996) or the *Chicago Manual of Style* (14th edition or later). Evaluative feedback will be provided prior to the voluntary withdrawal (VW) date of **18 March 2016**.

EVALUATION

For **Undergraduate** Students (HIST 4400):

1. Seminar Participation	15%
2. Weekly Logs	25%
3. Journal Profile (2000-2500 words)	15% Due 30 October 2015
4. Historian Profile (2000-2500 words)	15% Due 29 January 2016
5. Historiographical Paper (3500-4000 words)	30% Due 18 March 2016

For **Graduate** Students (HIST 7700):

1. Seminar Participation	15%
2. Weekly Logs	25%
3. Journal Profile (2500-3000 words)	15% Due 30 October 2015
4. Historian Profile (2500-3000 words)	15% Due 29 January 2016
5. Historiographical Paper (4500-5000 words)	30% Due 18 March 2016

ATTENDANCE , PARTICIPATION, MISSED CLASSES:

Participation will be graded on the basis of the quality and consistency of the student's role in the class. Attendance alone will contribute only a fraction of the grade for this component of the course, so expect to come to class prepared to discuss, debate, challenge, and defend the ideas and opinions raised both in the required and supplementary readings, and by your classmates during the discussions and in logs. It is impossible for your colleagues to engage with — and for the instructor to positively evaluate — ideas that appear only in your mind. You must share them with the group. If you are unable to attend class, please let the instructor know as much in advance as possible. More than one absence per term will require explanation.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS:

Written work will be evaluated for content, style, and quality of argument. Students at this stage of their academic careers should understand that style is intertwined with content, and should pay careful attention to the quality and tone of their writing. This does not mean using what may seem like sophisticated terms or jargon just because they exist. It is your job as a writer to be as clear as possible. Plan on revising drafts of your papers before submitting them.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS:

Extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Late assignments will be returned with no or few comments. Missed log entries will receive a grade of zero for the corresponding week.

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

A+	90 – 100%	C+	65 – 69 %
A	80 – 89 %	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.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

The work you submit for grading must be your own original work, written *by you* specifically for this course. Students should familiarize themselves with the section on “Academic Integrity” 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. It is expected that all submitted work will be done independently.

STUDENT RESOURCES

You have access to several important resources to help you navigate your classes and university life more generally. There are writing tutors available to help you with your essays through the Academic Learning Centre (ALC): <http://umanitoba.ca/student/academiclearning/>. The ALC page also has resources to help you with study skills, organization, as well as assistance for students using English as an Additional Language (EAL). Other issues, including accessibility services, workshops, and tips about academic integrity are addressed at the Student Advocacy Services webpage (http://umanitoba.ca/student/resource/student_advocacy/). The History department will also make a writing tutor available exclusively to History students in the department on two days of the week. More information about scheduling etc TBA.

All of the above services can also be accessed through this link:

<http://umanitoba.ca/student/saa/accessibility/student-resources.html>

History students can also take advantage of the huge range of academic materials (including primary and secondary sources, as well as pages to help with writing and referencing) made available by the History subject librarian, Kyle Feenstra, tailored just for you! They are available on the Libraries page at this link: <http://libguides.lib.umanitoba.ca/content.php?pid=219304>