The Historian's Craft
History 200, Section 002, Fall 2010
TTH 1:35-2:50 2114 JFSB

Instructor: Eric Dursteler
Email: ericd@byu.edu
Office: 2129 JFSB, Ext. 25260
Office Hours: T/Th 3-4

History 200 is intended to be an introduction for history majors. As with any academic discipline, history has its own methodologies, philosophies, standards, language, and its own history. This course is designed to provide both a theoretical foundation in the philosophies and varieties of history, as well as practical skills necessary to succeed as a history major. The skills you begin to acquire in History 200 will help you succeed in your major, but will also be invaluable tools that will serve you long after you leave the university.

There are two main objectives you will be expected to fulfill in this class. First, acquire an understanding of the history of historical thought and practice over the centuries. Second, prepare a carefully researched and written, original work of history. To help you accomplish these two tasks, you will also be introduced to range of other skills and information, which include:

- The difference between history and historiography
- Selecting a good topic for a historical paper
- The difference between primary and secondary sources
- Analyzing primary sources
- How to read books quickly and critically
- The history of history
- Building bibliography
- How to use the library
- Effective research techniques
- Writing clearly and effectively

History 200 will be unlike any other class you have will take as a student. Rather than a lecture course, or even a seminar, it is primarily a historical workshop. I will lecture a portion of the time, but the bulk of the course will be devoted to discussing and applying historical techniques that you will master through practice. To accomplish this, you will be organized into study groups, and you will work closely with your group members in acquiring the basic knowledge and tools necessary to succeed as a history major.

Prerequisites

English 150, recommended History 201-202
Rules of the game

1. Because of the unique collaborative nature of this class, **attendance is required**.

2. Please observe the following common courtesies during class:
   1) **Do not disrupt by arriving after class has started or leaving before it has ended.** If you cannot make it on time, or if you need to leave early, just skip that day's class.
   2) **Be engaged during class**: please do not read the newspaper, study for other classes, play computer games, write letters, or sleep. Please turn off your cell phone.

3. **The exam must be taken on the day scheduled.** Do not sign up for the class if you already know you have a conflict. Please do not ask if you can take the exam on a different day; the size of the class, and the logistics of scheduling multiple test times make this impossible.

4. **Assignments are due at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be docked 10% the first day, and 2% each additional day they are late.** If you are sick or have an emergency, let me know beforehand and I will try to accommodate you. Some assignments cannot be turned in late.

5. **I will not accept assignments that are left on my door or sent via email.**

6. **Academic Dishonesty in any form will earn you an automatic failing grade for the class** and a referral to the Honor Code Office. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes academic dishonesty, please refer to the BYU Honor Code: http://honorcode.byu.edu/.

7. **Sexual Discrimination or Harassment**: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to me; contact the Equal Employment Office at 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours), or www.ethicspoint.com; or the Honor Code Office at x2847.

8. **Students who have a disability** that may affect their performance in this course, should get in touch with the office of Services for Students with Disabilities (1520 WSC). This office can evaluate disabilities and assist me in arranging for reasonable accommodations.

9. **Class Participation**: To encourage learning, I will call on students at random to participate in class. This may include responding to questions, summarizing readings, explain concepts, etc. If you feel uncomfortable with being called on to participate, please let me know in private.
Learning Communities

To help you master all the course material, and maybe even enjoy the class, you will be assigned to a learning community that you will work with throughout the semester. As a community you will work together on assignments, study for tests, give in-class presentations, and especially read and critique each other’s papers. Though you will work together, each individual is responsible for mastering the material and producing his/her own work.

I will set aside time for you to interact in class, but you will also be required to meet outside of class occasionally. In your first meeting, you will elect a community leader who will be your liaison with me, will be responsible for organizing and tracking community events, and will keep attendance at community activities.

Group members who do not participate fully in all activities or do not carry their fair share of the load, will have their final grade reduced by 10%.

Texts

The following books are available in the Bookstore and from numerous online sources.

Ernst Breisach, Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern
Brian Downing, The Military Revolution and Political Change
Ron Rosenbaum, Explaining Hitler
Kate Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations
Joseph Williams, Style: The Basics of Clarity and Grace

Additional Course Readings are on Blackboard (BB)

Assignments

1) Research Project
   
   See the attached guideline. It includes a number of different steps, in addition to the final paper. All steps must be completed to receive credit. Some assignments are graded, others are process assignments, which must be completed at an acceptable level or your grade will be reduced by the indicated number of points.

   A. Paper topics (up to -10 pts)
      Bring two potential paper topics to class. Based on our discussion, revise one of these topics (or choose a completely new one), and bring it to the next class.

   B. Research Package (+25 pts)
      Bring to class an analysis of the primary source (see guidelines) you will be using for your research paper, your research question(s), and a tentative bibliography of 10-15 secondary sources (articles and books). These will all be workshopped in class.
C. **Proposals (1st draft up to -10 pts, +20 pts total)**
You will prepare two drafts of a proposal for your research project (2-3 pages each, plus bibliography). See attached guidelines.

D. **Outline & Abstract (+10 pts each, +20 pts total)**
Prepare a working outline to help you organize and write your paper. Also bring a 1 paragraph abstract of your paper for discussion. These will be workshopped in class.

E. **First Draft (up to -40 pts)**
This is not a rough draft. Your paper should be polished, complete with footnotes, bibliography, abstract, title page, all in Turabian format. If your first draft is in good shape, you will have little fine-tuning for the final draft. First drafts that appear to have been thrown together will be graded severely. You receive no positive points for the first draft, but if it is late or a rough draft, your final paper grade will be docked up to 40 points. Bring 2 copies of the first draft to class. This may not be turned in late.

F. **Peer Critique (+10 pts)**
Your critique should follow the attached guidelines and rubric. It should indicate the paper’s strengths and weaknesses and concrete ways that it may be improved. Be fair but do not pull punches.

G. **Final Draft (+200 pts)**
The name says it all. It should be perfect.

2) **Miscellaneous Class Exercises**

Throughout the semester you will have an array of in class and out of class assignments. Some assignments are graded, others are process assignments, which must be completed at an acceptable level or your final class grade will be reduced by the indicated number of points.

A. **Why Study History (+10 pts)**
Write a 1 page single-spaced reflection on why the study of history matters, why you are a history major, what you hope to gain from your historical studies, etc.

B. **Trevisan Primary Source Analysis (+20 pts)**
See attached guidelines.

C. **Downing Secondary Source Analysis (+20 pts)**
Prepare a 1 page, single-spaced Secondary Source Analysis of Downing based on the attached guidelines.

D. **Rosenbaum Secondary Source Analysis (+20 pts)**
Prepare a 1 page, single-spaced Secondary Source Analysis of Rosenbaum based on the attached guidelines.

E. **Historiographical flowchart (up to -10 pts)**
Using class lectures and the Breisach text, prepare a flow chart on a single 8x11 sheet of paper (front and back) that shows the evolution of historical thought and practice. You will be able to use this during the final. **Work as a community on this.**
F. **Williams exercises (+15 pts)**
Complete the assigned exercises based on the Williams book. **Work as a community on this.**

G. **Library Exercise (+20 pts)**
This is a labor-intensive attempt to familiarize you with the many resources the library has to offer the historical researcher. It will be painful and will seem like busy work, but it will help you learn a great deal about what the library has and how to use it. **Work as a community on this.**

H. **Breisach Paper and Presentation (+20 pts)**
You will be assigned a chapter in the Breisach book: you should read it closely, write a 3 page detailed summary of the ideas presented there, and prepare a succinct, well-rehearsed presentation of 3 minutes on your chapter. Your grade will be based on the clarity and completeness of your paper, and the quality of your presentation.

I. **Book Review (up to -5 pts)**
Find a book review in a professional historical journal of one of the key books you are using in your research project. Copy it, read it, annotate it, and bring it to class.

5) **Final exam**
The final will cover the semester’s readings and class discussions. It will be in short answer and essay format. It must be taken on the university scheduled date. **Study as a community for this.**

6) **Attendance/Participation**
There is a 1% deduction for each missed class. All students are expected to participate in class and learning community discussions. Failure to participate actively and regularly will also result in a reduction of the final grade. Conversely, good class citizens will receive special consideration when grades are calculated. Approved absences (university activities, health issues) need to be cleared before class.

**Grand Total: 500 points**

*Nota bene:* Assignments will be graded within about two weeks of the due date, and grades will be posted on Blackboard. You are responsible to keep track of your grades throughout the semester. Any errors or omissions must be brought to my attention no later than a week after the grade is posted. You should keep all of your returned assignments until the end of the semester.

**Grading Philosophy**

The A recognizes excellent performance, and is reserved for outstanding students. Their work is always characterized by a mastery of the material, excellent exposition, thoughtful analysis, engaged classroom participation, in short, a solidly above average effort that exceeds course expectations.
The B grade is characterized by a sound understanding of the material, good exposition, regular class participation, but is perhaps somewhat lacking in critical analysis. This grade range covers average (B-) to slightly above average (B+) performance.

The C grade indicates a satisfactory, but slightly below average effort. Students have a working knowledge of the material, but their work is often unpolished and has minimal analysis, and they rarely participate in class. A C grade still fulfills all the basic course requirements.

The D grade indicates unsatisfactory work, which is still nonetheless worthy of credit. A D effort is characterized by minimal knowledge of the material, careless work and an absence of reflection or analysis.

E work fails to meet the minimum requirements for the course, and does not merit any credit.

**Tentative Course Schedule**

**Week 1:** Th- BB: Stearns, Appleby, Schlesinger

Aug 31  Class Introduction and Organization
Sept 2   Why Study History?
         Why Study History essay due

Sept 3-6 Learning Community Opening Social

**Week 2:** Tu- Turabian 1-2

Sept 7   Workshop: Let's Start at the Very Beginning - Choosing a Topic / Basic Skills
         2 potential paper topics due
Sept 9   Introduction to the Library with Albert Winkler (meet in 2234 HBLL)

Sept 10-11 Learning community meets to work on library exercise

**Week 3:** Th- Turabian 3

Sept 14  The Raw Materials of History: Primary, Secondary and Internet Sources
         Revised paper topic due
Sept 16  The Mechanics of Research: Building Bibliography / Taking Notes
         Library exercise due

**Week 4:** Tu- BB: Trevisan readings, Turabian 4

Sept 21  Reading and Analyzing Primary Sources
         Primary source analysis of Trevisan due
Sept 23  Workshop: Your primary source, your questions, and your bibliography
         Research package due
Sept 21-23 Individual Topic Consultations
Week 5:
Tu- Downing

Sept 28  How to Read a Book / Secondary Source Analysis and Book Reviews
Book review due
Sept 30  Discussion of Downing
Downing analysis due

Week 6:
Th- Breisach

Oct 5  Workshop: Proposals
Bring 2 copies of proposal first draft
Oct 7  The History of History: The First 2500 Years

Week 7:

Oct 12  The History of History: The First 2500 Years II
Oct 14  Independent Research

Week 8:

Oct 19  19th Century Historical Trends
Oct 21  20th Century Historical Trends
Proposal final draft due
Oct 21-23  Learning community meets to work on historiographical flowchart

Week 9:
Tu- Rosenbaum

Oct 26  Knee-deep in a Historical Debate: Rosenbaum's Explaining Hitler
Rosenbaum analysis due
Historiographical flowchart due
Oct 28  Independent Research

Week 10:
Tu- Turabian 7, 9-11, BB: Guide to Writing at BYU; Th- Turabian Part 5-6

Nov 2  Writing Workshop: Introductions, Conclusions and Theses
Nov 4  Writing Workshop: Outlines
Bring 2 copies of a working outline

Week 11:
Th- Turabian II; Th- Williams, Turabian Part III

Nov 9  Writing Workshop: The Mechanics of Style and Documentation
Nov 11  Writing Workshop: Style
Williams exercises due
**Week 12:**

Nov 16  Writing Workshop: Abstracts / Paper Critiques and Grading Rubrics
        * Bring 2 copies of a working abstract
Nov 18  Peer Critique
        * 2 Copies of first draft of paper due

**Week 13:**

Nov 23  No class - Friday Instruction
Nov 25  Thanksgiving

**Week 14:**  Th- Packer & Quinn Readings

Nov 30  Individual Consultations with TA
Dec 2   Faith and History
        * 2 copies of written peer critique due

**Week 15:**

Dec 7   Honors Program Introduction
        * 1 paper and 1 electronic copy of final draft of research paper due

Dec 16  Final Exam, 2:30-5:30 PM in class
        * Indicates an assignment is due

*Nota bene:* Reading assignments should be completed before the appropriate class period each week.

*Nota bene II:* This schedule is tentative: assignments and due dates may be changed. You will be responsible to know these changes.
History 200 Research Project

Research, analysis and writing are at the heart of the historical process, and while you may never become a professional historian, mastering these will teach you invaluable skills that will serve you in whatever direction your life takes. The centerpiece of your History 200 experience will be an in-depth research project which will allow you to apply the skills and ideas you have acquired in the class to your own historical research. This research project will be the culmination of this course, and will represent the bulk of your grade - be sure to give it your best effort.

Assignment:
Your assignment is to prepare a research paper based on a primary source, supplemented by wide-reading in the secondary literature. Your paper must use some form of travel literature as its central primary source. In terms of your research question you may, however, range as widely as you wish.

Audience & Style:
The audience for your paper will be an average, college educated person. You may assume this person has a good general knowledge of history. You should write in a way that will be accessible to a non-BYU audience. The tone of your paper should be professional and formal. Avoid slang, contractions, and informal dialogue.

Requirements:
Your paper should be 10-12 double-spaced pages. The paper must be based chiefly on a primary source(s), and should represent your own, unique contribution to the historical dialogue, rather than a regurgitation of the ideas of others.

In addition to a primary source(s), your paper should draw on a minimum of 10 secondary sources: including scholarly books (no general or popular histories) and articles from scholarly journals. Internet sources are not acceptable.

Your paper must include a historiographical element, usually in the form of a paragraph or footnote in which you briefly survey the most important secondary literature on your topic.

Format:
Your paper must meet all the following guidelines.
• Title Page with clear, engaging title
• Stapled
• Page Numbering (top center, except 1st page, bottom center)
• Footnotes, not endnotes
• Double spaced
• 1 inch margins all around
• Bibliography divided into primary and secondary sources
• All formatting, notes, bibliography must be in Turabian style
• Quotes over 3 lines in length must be single-spaced and double indented
• A 12 point font

Schedule:
You must meet all the deadlines indicated in the syllabus for the different parts of your project - topics, proposals, research package, historiography, outline and abstract, first draft, final draft, critique. In order to receive a grade for the research project, you must complete all elements of the assignment.
Paper Proposal Guidelines

An effective proposal is crucial stage in any historical research, and an important tool in successfully carrying out a project. It is written at a stage in which you have done some good research: you should have identified primary and secondary sources, begun reading in both, and have a sense of where you are going and what you hope to be able say with your research. The proposal is intended as your mission statement, that states where you are in your project and where you intend to go with it. A well-written proposal can serve as a roadmap to the remaining stages of your research.

Here is a basic outline of what a proposal ought to include. Your proposal should be in a prose, not outline format. This schematic is not set in stone, and there are many ways to craft a proposal. What is important is that you generally cover these key points.

1. **Introduction:** In this two or three paragraph section you should accomplish three things:
   a) set up the basic historical context of your paper: i.e. the who what, where, when, etc. for your paper.
   b) present a brief overview of the basic historiography of the issue you are examining, that is what historians have said about it, what they agree and disagree on, etc.
   c) introduce the research question(s) you will be addressing in your paper.

2. **Sources:** In a paragraph (or two), you should discuss the sources that you will be using to answer your questions. This will focus predominantly on the primary source(s) that will be the foundation of your research, but if there are one or two key secondary sources that are central to your project, you can mention these too. Do not discuss every source you have found, only the most important, and on how they will allow you to answer your questions.

3. **Hypotheses:** In this final paragraph (or two) you should suggest the tentative conclusions that you think may be the final result of your research, based on your preliminary work so far. If you have not already discussed it, you should also indicate the significance of your project, i.e. why it matters and what you will add to the historical discourse surrounding it.

4. **Bibliography:** Attached to your proposal, you should include a comprehensive bibliography, divided into primary and secondary sources, that lists in Turabian format all the works you have discovered that you will use to research your project.
Effective Critiques

In writing a critique, remember that your end objective is to help the author to write the best possible essay. To achieve this end you need to give clear, honest, constructive advice. To do this you will need to read the paper very closely, at least one time, and probably twice. Remember, you owe the author of the essay you critique a fair, careful, honest reading. The final paper will be infinitely better if you give the first draft a careful, detailed reading. As you read, assess the paper in each of the following areas:

1. **Thesis**: First identify what the argument, the thesis, of the paper is. This must be clear, concise, understandable, and convincing. It should be a question with an answer, not just a description of what is going to happen in the paper. The thesis is the keystone of a successful paper; without it, you have just a bunch of data organized on a sheet of paper.

2. **Organization**: Every piece of the paper should relate to the larger whole, and should help develop the argument. Does the paper have a clear introduction and conclusion? Does the author develop his/her argument systematically and clearly? Does s/he clearly tie the parts of the paper together and to the overall thesis? Are transitions handled smoothly?

3. **Development of argument**: Read the paper with the thesis always in mind. Does the paper show convincingly what was promised in the thesis? Are there any areas that need fleshing out, details or questions that if addressed would strengthen the overall paper? Are there pieces that do not belong or that detract or distract from the overall argument?

4. **Historiography**: Is the author familiar with the historical literature related to his/her paper, and does s/he dialogue with it effectively?

5. **Research**: Examine the paper’s sources. Is the paper based on at least one primary source? Are the secondary sources the best and most appropriate sources to answer the author’s questions - scholarly books and articles as opposed to general histories and internet sources? Are there enough of them? Are the secondary sources old? Could the paper benefit from more sources? If you have time it would be a good idea to visit the library and check several of the sources used in the paper to make certain that the author has cited accurately.

6. **Originality**: Does the author say something new or insightful in the essay, or at least incorporate his or her own ideas? Or does s/he simply repeat what others have said already? How original and thought-provoking is the essay?

7. **Narrative**: History is about analysis and argument, but also about telling stories. Does the author convey his/her story effectively?

8. **Structure**: Do paragraphs function as coherent units with first sentences that introduce and transition, and last sentences that summarize and transition? Are sentences connected logically?

9. **Clarity**: Look carefully at the composition, the writing style of the essay. How easy is it to read and understand? Do you find yourself having to backtrack and to reread to understand the paper? Is the language clear and precise?

10. **English Usage**: Read the paper closely for grammar, punctuation, spelling and other similar issues. Mark up your copy of the paper extensively, so that when you return it the author will have clear guidelines to improve the mechanics of the paper.

11. **Critical Apparatus**: Look carefully at the scholarly apparatus of the paper - the notes, the bibliography, the style, formatting, etc. Make sure they are in the correct, Turabian format. Make sure everything that ought to be cited is; check for any evidence of plagiarism.
Primary Source Analysis Guide

Analyzing a primary source is the foundation of the historical method, and is the basic building block of any historical paper. The French call this kind of assignment an *explication de texte*, which means roughly "explanation of a text." A primary source analysis is a fairly formulaic model that helps you break a text apart and look at its pieces so as to understand and assess what it is saying. Being able to read and evaluate a text critically is a skill that will serve you well in your career and in life more generally.

Your objective in a primary source analysis is three-fold: 1) develop a detailed snapshot of the text, 2) put that source under an analytical and critical microscope and ask it probing questions, 3) develop questions and ideas for ways to use the source as a basis for a research paper.

To accomplish these tasks you will 1) read the text itself closely, 2) if necessary, fill in the gaps in your understanding of the text through some brief contextual reading in synthetic works, specialized encyclopedia articles, journal articles, and historical monographs.

**Primary Source Analysis Format**

The analysis you write should follow a fairly strict format made up of a variety of factual and analytical questions. Depending on the source, you may not be able to complete all the fields of analysis, but the more you are able to say about the document, the more complete and competent your analysis will be. A good analysis can be done in 1-2 single-spaced pages.

1. **Source Title:**
2. **Source Author:** A brief biographical snippet, 1-2 short paragraphs
3. **Source Type:** Diplomatic dispatch, journal, travel narrative, newspaper article, etc
4. **Date of Source Creation:** Was it created after the fact, at the time of the event
5. **Provenance:** Where does the text come from, how did it get to us
6. **Intended Audience:** Public, private; what implications does this have for the source; is author able to be candid
7. **Authorial Location and Intent:** Is author in best position to report on event; does author have firsthand knowledge of what s/he is reporting; is text meant to persuade, inform, entertain, etc.; does author have an agenda
8. **Verification:** Can the source and its information be corroborated; is it typical, exceptional in relation to other similar texts of the time
9. **Rhetorical Analysis:** What is the author trying to say with the document; what does the author imply between the lines; what assumptions does s/he make about you as the reader, about right and wrong, about gender roles, religion, etc.; how have the values and issues of the times influenced the source
10. **Critical Analysis:** Do you have concerns, doubts, questions about the text
11. **Further Research:** Record intriguing, unusual, confusing, thought-provoking aspects of the source; what insights does the source provide into your understanding of the era; what questions are left unanswered by the source; what sorts of additional research could you do using this source
Secondary Source Analysis

A secondary source analysis is brief note that includes an analysis of the argument of a monograph, and your own critical assessment of that argument. It is divided into two parts - analysis and critical assessment - each of which accomplishes a specific task. Your secondary source analysis should be single-spaced and no more than one page long. It must adhere exactly to the following format.

Author, Book Title. Publication Information.

Analysis

Thesis: This section clearly identifies the central argument or thesis of the book in no more than two or three sentences. This is not a description of what the author is trying to do, or a discussion of what the book is about, but is a concise restatement of the central contention of the book.

Evidence: This section provides a brief overview of the major sub-arguments that support the author's main thesis in one or two concise paragraphs. You do not want to get lost in details, but rather want to identify what the arguments of the most important supporting chapters are and identify how they buttress the overall thesis of the monograph.

Historiographical Observations: This brief section attempts to locate the book historiographically by relating it to other important works and debates in the field.

Source Assessment: This brief section identifies the source base of the text, and assesses how they are used, whether they are the appropriate sources for the supporting book's argument, and whether they are sufficiently numerous.

Critical Assessment

Reader's Critique: This part is where you provide your own critical assessment of the monograph in one or two short paragraphs. You have identified the monograph's basic thesis and the supporting elements of the argument, now what is your own assessment of the book? Do you agree with the author entirely, partially, not at all? How compelling is both the argument and the evidence that the author musters? Has this changed the way you think? The critique is not about whether you "liked" the book or not, but rather is your critical and analytical assessment of its argument and effectiveness.

(For more on secondary source analyses, see Norman Cantor and Richard Schneider, How to Study History, chapter 6)