

History 60

Introduction to Historical Writing

Bowdoin College, Fall 2010

Meets: MW 11:30-1:00 (Mass. Hall Fac. Rm.)
Prof. Patrick Rael
Office hours: MT1-3, by apt.

Office: 211C Hubbard
Phone: x3775
prael@bowdoin.edu

This introductory seminar course is for students interested in improving their writing. We will spend the semester practicing skills necessary to read, research, and write successfully at the college level. While our focus will be on the discipline of history, the skills we hone will be of use in a wide range of courses in the humanities and social sciences. The work load will not be heavy, but it will entail short exercises due every week. Attendance at each class will be mandatory. We will conclude with a short research paper project on topics students choose. The course is open to students at all levels, with preference given to first- and second-year students. It cannot be taken for credit toward the history major.

BOOKS

- Michael J Salevouris, Conal Furay. *The Methods and Skills of History: A Practical Guide*. Harlan Davidson Incorporated. Trade Paper. 01/2000. ISBN: 0-88295-982-4. \$21.95
- Mary Lynn Rampolla. *Pocket Guide to Writing History*. Bedford/Saint Martin's. Paper Text. 10/2000. ISBN: 0-312-24766-4. \$9.50
- Diana Hacker. *Rules for Writers*. Bedford/Saint Martin's. Trade Paper. 08/2003. ISBN: 0-312-40685-1. \$19.50
- Keith Hjortshoj. *The Transition to College Writing*. Bedford/Saint Martin's. Paper Text. 01/2001. ISBN: 0-312-14916-6. \$26.50
- Kate L Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*. University of Chicago Press. Trade Paper. 02/1996. ISBN: 0-226-81627-3. \$14.00
- Patrick Rael. *Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: A Guide for College Students*. Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin College. Also available online at <http://academic.bowdoin.edu/WritingGuides/>.

COURSE CONTRACT:

ATTENDANCE: No absences are “excused” -- you are responsible for all material covered during missed class days. Those who may miss class to attend extra-curricular events are requested to inform me, as a courtesy, of planned absences. If special considerations prevent you from fulfilling course obligations (such as illness), please provide me with documentation so we may consider an exception.

A NOTE ON ACADEMIC HONESTY: Each author owns his or her own ideas, words, and research. You *must* give appropriate credit — generally in the form of quotations and proper footnotes — when using the work of another scholar. I expect you to be familiar both with Bowdoin's honor code, and with the guidelines for proper citation and attribution of sources provided for this course. If you have any questions, ask rather than take risks. *Plagiarism, whether intentional or not, is a serious violation of academic standards and Bowdoin's honor code.* I will enforce

violations of the honor code by bringing immediate, uncontested action before the Judicial Board. Minimum penalties for plagiarism will be to fail the course.

ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments are due at the start of class. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the class.

Short assignments	50
Advanced keyhole essay	15
Draft	5
Peer critique	5
Final	5
Final paper	25
Annotated bibliography	5
Road map	5
First draft	5
Peer + evaluations	5
Final draft	5
Attendance and participation	10

CLASS MEETINGS:

The syllabus for the course is available online via Blackboard. Reading and exercises should be completed before class. I may change this syllabus to suit class needs — you may always find the latest syllabus online.

Thrs., Sept 2	<p>Introductions</p> <p>Read for next class: Patrick Rael, "What Happened and Why? Helping Students Read and Write Like Historians," <i>History Teacher</i> 39, no. 1 (November 2005), 23-32. (Readings) Keith Hjortshoj, "Footstools and Furniture," in <i>The Transition to College Writing</i> (Boston: Bedford/Saint Martin's, 2001), 32-45. Begin reading for one week from today: George M. Fredrickson, "Why the Confederacy Did Not Fight a Guerrilla War after the Fall of Richmond," 35th Annual Robert Fartenbaugh Lecture, Gettysburg College, 1996. (Readings)</p>
Tues., Sept. 7	<p>Roadmaps I</p> <p>Read for next class: George M. Fredrickson, "Why the Confederacy Did Not Fight a Guerrilla War after the Fall of Richmond," 35th Annual Robert Fartenbaugh Lecture, Gettysburg College, 1996. (Readings) Assignment for next class: Prepare a "road map" of Frederickson, using the questions at the end of the Rael essay ("What Happened and Why?"). Be prepared to hand in your computer-produced assignment.</p>

History 60 syllabus (Rael)

Thrs., Sept. 9	<p>Roadmaps II</p> <p>Hand in road map of Fredrickson.</p> <p>Read for next class: Emma Jones Lapsansky, "'Since They Got Those Separate Churches': Afro-Americans and Racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia," <i>American Quarterly</i> 32, no. 1 (Spring 1980), 54-78 (Readings)</p> <p>Road map this reading to hand in during class.</p>
Tues., Sept. 14	<p>Roadmaps forever</p> <p>We will review Fredrickson and Lapsansky road maps, and work in groups to road map introductory paragraphs from student essays.</p> <p>I will assign your first formal essay assignment: the advanced keyhole essay, on the topic of Reconstruction and African American families.</p>
Thrs., Sept. 16	<p>Predatory reading</p> <p>Read for today: Hjortshoj, <i>Transition to College Writing</i>, ch. 5.</p> <p>I will assign some exercises from this chapter.</p>
Tues., Sept. 21	<p>Reading from Fields of Writing</p>
Thrs., Sept. 23	<p>Student papers and mechanics</p> <p>We will spend class working on mechanical problems from sample student papers.</p>
Tues., Sept. 28	<p>Reading from Fields of Writing</p>
Thrs., Sept. 30	<p>Student papers and mechanics</p> <p>We will spend class working on mechanical problems from sample student papers.</p>
Tues., Oct. 5	<p>Paper writing I</p> <p>Read for today: Hjortshoj, <i>Transition to College Writing</i>, pp. 161-64, 172-79.</p> <p>Furay and Salevouris, <i>The Methods and Skills of History</i>, ch. 2 ("The Nature of History"). Complete and hand in Exercise Set A (remove the pages, name them, and staple them).</p>
Thrs., Oct. 7	<p>Workshop: plagiarism</p> <p>Workshop: citation/bibliography form</p>
Tues., Oct. 12	<p>Fall vacation</p>
Thrs., Oct. 14	<p>Read: <i>Methods and Skills of History</i>, ch. 11 ("Interpretation"). Complete and hand in Exercise Set A.</p>
Tues., Oct. 19	<p>Workshop: topic sentences</p>

History 60 syllabus (Rael)

Thrs., Oct. 21	Advanced keyhole essay due Read: Hjortshoj, ch. 3 (“How Writing Gets Done”) I will assign peer critiques of the advanced keyhole essay.
Tues., Oct. 26	Library session (Carmen/Ginny)
Thrs. Oct. 28	Library session (Rael) <i>Methods and Skills of History</i> , ch. 6 (“Libraries”), assignment TBA.
Tues., Nov. 2	<i>Methods and Skills of History</i> , ch. 9 (“Evidence”), assignment TBA. Joshua Chamberlain exercises. Hand in peer critique of advanced keyhole essay.
Thrs., Nov. 4	Library session (me) Read: Hjortshoj, ch. 6 (“Investigative Writing”), pp. 152-68 only.
Tues., Nov. 9	Workshop: incorporating evidence and presenting primaries
Thrs., Nov. 11	<i>Methods and Skills of History</i> , ch. 12 (“The Paper”). I will assign an exercise set.
Tues., Nov. 16	For final paper: “Find the argument” book review exercise.
Thrs., Nov. 18	For final paper: Annotated bibliography and problem statement due.
Tues., Nov. 23	For final paper: “Making piles” research checkup (group meetings).
Thrs., Nov. 25	Thanksgiving
Tues., Nov. 30	For final paper: Road map due Students report out on projects? Formal presentations?
Thrs., Dec. 2	For final paper: First drafts due No meeting, or class film
Tues., Dec. 7	For final paper: Peer/self evaluations due Read: Hjortshoj, ch. 7 (“Rules and Errors”). I will likely assign an exercise from this chapter.
Thrs., Dec. 9	Last class I will return your draft and issue final paper reminders. We will brush up our editing skills and focus on some writing mechanics.
Sun., Dec. 19	Final paper due, 12:00 noon