

Hist/AS3140{336}

Research in American History

Prof. Patrick Rael, Bowdoin College, Spring 2014

Meets: Hubbard 22, Tu 6:30-9:30pm
Office hours: TuTh2-3, by apt.

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This course provides students an opportunity to complete a semester-long research project in American history. Here is your chance to take on the historian's task, from soup to nuts. You will design a topic, research primary historical sources, locate a historical problem relating to your topic from secondary historical sources, and develop a hypothesis which addresses your question. The end result will be a paper of at least twenty-five pages. You may choose any doable topic on the history of the Civil War era (loosely considered) or African American history before the twentieth century. You *must* base your research in a major collection of historical materials from Bowdoin's rich (and vastly underutilized) collections.

This course is a 3000-level research course, intended especially for history majors. It fulfills the History Department's capstone requirement. The coursework involved will be of a high level, but the greatest challenge in the course will be the need for self-direction. Of all the courses you have taken at Bowdoin, this one will require you to control your own time.

BOOKS

Perrin, Robert. *Pocket Guide to the Chicago Manual of Style*. Boston: Heinle, 2006.
Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 5th ed. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 2001.
Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

ASSIGNMENTS

These assignments are all worth 5 points each:

Diagnostic essay
Source report
Road map exercise
Incorporating primaries exercise
Citations exercise
Arguing history exercise

The final paper assignment is broken down as follows:

Historical debate exercise (5)
Problem presentations (5)
Annotated bibliography (5)
Pre-draft road map (5)
First draft (20)
Peer eval (5)
Self eval (5)
Final draft (20)

COURSE CONTRACT

1. Students are responsible for any missed class material due to absences, including especially assignments due. If you must be absent, rely on friends in class for notes.
2. Please do not leave the room during the class session, except during breaks.
3. Please do not bring food to class, except
4. Notepads and laptops are permitted in class so long as they are used solely for class.
5. Print out any electronically assigned readings and bring them to class. You should be highlighting your reading, writing notes in the margins, etc.
6. *All work must be completed in order to pass this course.*

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.*

Hist/AS3140{336}: Schedule of class meetings

1/21: Introductions Discuss possible paper topics In-class research exercise (Electronic Classroom) Diagnostic essay assigned	Citations assignment given Library session (Archives)
1/28 Arguing history: John Brown Reading: See packet of readings on blackboard for week2 Source reports assignment given Diagnostic essay due	3/4 Citation methods Citations assignment due Making piles in-class workshop Book reviews (frame the argument) assignment given Pejepscot Historical Society (Blanchard)
2/4 Source reports Source reports assignment due: Each member of the class will report on a major source collection Arguing history assignment given	3/25 Library session (open - Rael) Book reviews assignment due
2/11 The writing model Reading: Patrick Rael, "What Happened and Why? Helping Students Read and Write Like Historians," History Teacher 39, no. 1 (November 2005): 23-32. (Jstor) Arguing history assignment due Road maps assignment given Library session (Rael) Historical newspapers workshop in-class	4/1 Annotated bibliography due
2/18 Road mapping Reading: Emma Jones Lapsansky, "'Since They Got Those Separate Churches': Afro-Americans and Racism in Jacksonian Philadelphia," American Quarterly 32, no. 1 (Spring 1980), 54-78. (Jstor) George M. Fredrickson, "Why the Confederacy Did Not Fight a Guerrilla War after the Fall of Richmond," 35th Annual Robert Fortenbaugh Gettysburg College, 1996. (Blackboard) Roadmap assignment due Incorporating primaries assignment given Library session (Levergood)	4/8 Problem presentations Each member of the class will offer a 10-minute presentation on his or her historical problem
2/25 Incorporating primaries Incorporating primaries assignment due	4/15 Pre-draft exercise (road map)
	4/22 First drafts due
	4/29
	5/6 Final meeting Peer and self-evaluations due Course evaluations
	5/15 Final papers due, 12noon