This capstone research seminar will challenge you to conduct original historical research relying on Bowdoin College’s extensive holdings in the George J. Mitchell Department of Special Collections and Archives. Working closely with the Archives staff as well as the course instructor, we will learn the basics of archival research, culminating in research projects yielding a paper of approximately 25-30 pages in length. Topics may include a range of subjects related to nineteenth-century American history, the Civil War era broadly construed, slavery and race, and Bowdoin College itself.

Our connection to Archives will be Marieke Van Der Steenhoven, Special Collections Education and Outreach Librarian. Her email is mvanders@bowdoin.edu, and phone is 207-725-3385.

This course is a 3000-level research course that 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

ASSIGNMENTS
These assignments are all worth 5 points each:

- Archives scavenger hunt
- Arguing history exercise
- Explore a digital resource
- Road map exercise
- Incorporating primaries exercise
- Citations exercise

The final paper assignment is broken down as follows:

- Book reviews 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

- 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.
- On papers, always number and staple all pages; I encourage you to email me a copy of your paper as a backup.
- Please do not leave the room during the class session.
- Please do not bring food to class.
- Please do not bring notepads and laptops to class. Mobile phones should be turned off and kept away.
- Print out any electronically assigned readings and bring them to class. I strongly urge you to highlight your reading, writing notes in the margins, etc.
- We will "knock" at the end of class, to acknowledge our mutual effort.
All work must be completed in order to pass this course.

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 citations — when using the work of another scholar. Be familiar with Bowdoin’s honor code, Bowdoin’s general guidelines for proper citation and attribution of sources (we use Chicago/Turabian style in History), and any guidelines provided specifically for this course (see Blackboard > Library/Research). Plagiarism, whether intentional or not, is a serious violation of academic standards and Bowdoin's honor code.

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

1/24  No class

1/26  Introductions
The research paper model

1/31  Archives: Close reading and narrative building
Archival scavenger hunt assignment given

2/2   Arguing history: John Brown
Read: See packet of readings on Blackboard
Arguing history assignment given

2/7   Archives: Understanding Collections and How to Use Them
Guest speaker: Caroline Moseley
Archival scavenger hunt assignment due

2/9   The writing model
Arguing history assignment due
Roadmap assignment given

2/14  Archives: Complicating the Archive
Guest speaker: Marika Cifor
Read: TBD
Explore a digital resource assignment given

2/16  Road mapping
Read:
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
2/21 Archives: Digital Resources & Digital Humanities
Guest speaker: Meagan Doyle and Kat Stefko
Explore a digital resource assignment due

2/23 Incorporating primaries
Incorporating primaries assignment due
Citations assignment given

2/28 Archives: Using Archival Holdings in History Scholarship
Skype guests: David Thomson and Rachel Miller

3/2 Citation methods
Citations assignment due
Book reviews (frame the argument) assignment given
Presentation assignment given

3/7 Archives: Individual or small-group meetings

3/9 Class
Making piles in-class workshop

3/28 Problem presentations
Each student will offer a 15-minute presentation on their work.
Book reviews assignment due with your presentation

3/30 Problem presentations
Each student will offer a 15-minute presentation on their work.
Book reviews assignment due with your presentation

4/4 Problem presentations
Each student will offer a 15-minute presentation on their work.
Book reviews assignment due with your presentation

4/6 Problem presentations
Each student will offer a 15-minute presentation on their work.
Book reviews assignment due with your presentation

4/11 Class
Annotated bibliography due

4/13 Class
Pre-draft road map due

4/18 No class

4/20 No class
First drafts due
Peer evaluation and self-evaluation assignment given

4/25 Small group meeting

4/27 Small group meeting

5/2 Small group meeting

5/4 Small group meeting

5/7 Final meeting
Peer and self-evaluations due

Final paper due