COURSE GOALS AND OUTCOMES

This course is about historiography, which is the study of how history is done (the methodology of history) and how history has been done in the past (the history of history, or the history of historical methodology). Even more briefly: We will read history and examine approaches to writing and interpreting it, starting with older history and coming up to the present.

This course will prepare you for success in the graduate study of history by helping you to develop the knowledge, the strategies, and the confidence to read, write, and discuss history on a professional level, week after week.

The main goals of the course, then, are to give you (1) a working familiarity with major approaches to doing history; (2) a familiarity with different kinds of historical literature, from monographs to the articles and reviews available in JSTOR; (3) mastery of the Chicago style of documentation; (4) the ability to work through your thoughts on paper efficiently and clearly, every week, without the grammatical errors that would distract your reader from what you are saying, or that would leave your thoughts unclear even to yourself; and (5) the ability to talk through historical and historiographical issues each week with others engaged in the same enterprise.

We will meet in a seminar, which is very traditional in the field of history. In each class meeting, we will discuss the reading, the history behind it, and the historiographical issues that it raises. The seminar will be lively and free-form. This is a highly demanding and highly rewarding class, a shared exploration of really good writing and really good thoughts. It is intense. It is the introduction to the ways and means of your profession.

You cannot participate in the seminar in any meaningful way if you have not done the reading. Almost as bad as not doing the reading is having done the reading but sitting there at the seminar table and not saying anything. Be warned – if you are quiet I will sometimes call on you at random to add the next piece of the discussion, so you had better come to class prepared. Be further warned – I will not call on people at random in this way very often, or as often as some other professors do. Usually my mind will be on what we are discussing, and as I am very single-minded, calling on quiet people does not often occur to me. In other words, the responsibility is on you to get in there and join the fray if you want to get a decent participation grade.

The outcomes by which your progress will be measured will be your success in discussing and writing about historiography. The discussions that you will participate in (graded) and the papers that you will write (also graded) are both the medium (how you will explore history, by sorting out your thoughts assertions with evidence) and the message (for these written and spoken words are the history itself).
READING HELP

As you do your weekly reading, you might want to keep track of the following issues. You will not give equal weight to every question for every author. You need to develop a sense of which questions are most relevant to the work before you.

What is the historian trying to find out?
What is the historian trying to communicate?
Does the historian seem to tell us her purpose openly, or do you have to figure it out?
Why did the author pick this particular set of evidence and put it together in the order that she did?
What audience does the historian seem to be writing for?
Is the author reacting against earlier schools of history, or building on top of them?
What, from money to sex to philosophical enlightenment (or what have you), motivates people, in the author's mind? And does the author assume that individuals are the same in what motivates them, or in their ways of conceiving the world?
Does the historian maintain that change dominates continuity, or that continuity dominates change?
Are any analytical categories like class, status, race, national character, or gender being employed?
What historical methodologies (of the kind discussed in class) is the author using?
Is the author taking you behind the scenes, to discuss sources and uncertainties and alternatives, or is the historian "hiding her bones" behind a smooth narrative?

You can't cram all of these things into a short paper, and probably not even into a long one. Go with what works in making an interesting exploration of what you are reading that week.

But for every work of history that you read, there are THREE key questions which I really want you to ask yourself. Each of them takes you closer to thinking like an historian:

1. Could this evidence support these conclusions in the way the author would like? That is, are the conclusions of the book well supported according to the evidence presented? (With this first question, you are asking yourself how the book works on its own terms.)

2. Are the book's conclusions well-supported according to the evidence that might have been presented? Answering this question involves exercising your historical imagination about the nature of other evidence out there in the world. (Answering Question 2 means going beyond the careful thinking of the generalist reader, which was all that was needed to answer Question 1. For Question 1, you had to judge the book from the inside, on how well it seemed to work based upon the terms parameters set by the author. Question 2 asks you to judge the book by the wider world of other history and other possible historical sources.)

3. Are the conclusions of the book based up new thinking and new research, or are they rehashed? (Answering Question 3 means looking at other scholarship, in part through the book reviews in journals. You cannot answer this question out of your own head, as you could with Questions 1 and 2, unless you already know the relevant historical literature.)
**COURSE SCHEDULE, BY WEEK**

*Books ordered in the bookstore are marked with an asterisk.

Most of the journal articles listed here can be found by looking them up in the PAC by title and clicking "Online Access." The few articles not available through the PAC I have noted below.

I. History as Inquiry – Into the Present?

II. History and Enlightenment.
Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* [1776], Chapters 1-2, 15-16, 26. {Get these online or in a library. Be sure to sample Gibbon's footnotes.}

III. Nineteenth-Century Liberal History: Archival Research and Enquiry into the Modern.
*A. de Tocqueville, The Old Regime and The French Revolution* [1856].

IV. Nineteenth-Century Liberal History: Cultural History.
*J. Burckhardt, The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* [1860].

V. Liberal Critiques of Liberal History.
VI. Scientific History and the American Academy: Origins.

VII. Scientific History and the American Academy: Glory Days.

VIII. Scientific History and the American Academy: Later Destinies.
And look in JSTOR for reviews of Novick, *That Noble Dream.*

IX. Toward Total History: Structuralism and the Annales School.

X. Toward Total History: Post-War Belles Lettres and Marxism.
{These articles are in a book that is on reserve.}

XI. The Linguistic Turn: Literary Scholars and Literary Theory.


{I will provide electronic copies of these articles.}

**XII. Making Anti-Social Bodies: Quality Control in History.**

This week there are four clusters of articles:

1) Whither the *AHR*?:

2) The Career of David Abraham:
   - And please read this: www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,962720,00.html

3) The Goldhagen Controversy:

4) Exercising Power over Foucault:

{Copies of these *Times Literary Supplement* articles will be on reserve in the library.}
[[The reading for this week is fairly light, but you might want to start the book for Week XVII, *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, and get some of it out of the way.]]

**XIII. Social History, Gender History, and the Monograph.**

**XIV. Biography and Memory.**

**XV. History as Analysis: The Problem of Empire and the World System. Undoing the Linguistic Turn?**
William H. Sewell, Jr., Gabrielle M. Speigel, and Manu Goswami, "AHR Forum: Geoff Eley's *A Crooked Line*," *American Historical Review* 113:2 (April 2008): 391-424. {N.B.: Geoff Eley also contributed a piece to this forum (pp. 425-437), but we are not reading it.}
[[The reading for this week is fairly light, so you might want to read more of *Guns, Germs, and Steel*.]]

**XVI. Scientism and Social Scientism Redux.**
YOUR ORAL WORK FOR THIS CLASS

The heart of this course is our discussion each week of issues of historical methodology and the nature of historical scholarship. Everything else serves this end. The reading is there for you to discuss it. And the writing is there to underpin our discussions as well.

YOUR WRITTEN WORK FOR THIS CLASS

In everything you write, you will be responsible for the elements of writing and documentation in these two books:


You might also want to explore the University of Chicago Press website, which has a *Chicago Manual* home page and various online resources.

The Chicago format, which Turabian presents, is THE way to do things in the American historical profession. In other words, we use footnotes (or endnotes, it does not matter) -- but we never use the in-text parenthetical references that the social scientists and the English professors use. As historians we work with primary source documents. Our references are often longer and weirder. So we need the room that footnotes or endnotes give us. And we need to evaluate a book or article's sources at a glance; the bare author-date system does not allow that. Moreover, as historians we want to keep our work readable. We are humanists, and we write to inform and persuade. So we do not like parenthetical references.

Or, if you want, we test what we write in large part by whether it can be made coherent and readable, with proper footnoting -- not by the statistical tests in some software program.

So footnotes it is, and in the precise Chicago format. Without all that *Chicago Manual* standardization, those long references of ours can get really confusing, both for the writer in editing her own work and for the reader as well.

Get to know the Chicago style from day one. Feel it in your bones. That way, in taking your notes, you can label everything with all the information you will later need for your footnotes. If you do not label everything -- every cocktail napkin with full Chicago-style information -- you will soon have unattributed notes whose sources you will have to try to reconstruct late at night as you are trying to finish typing something. Not fun. And it happens to us all.

Now, after all that material on footnoting in your papers, what papers are you writing and what are they supposed to be about? Every week except the first, discuss and make some interesting case about your reading in a paper of not less than three and not more than four pages, typed, double-spaced (12-point Times Roman, 1-inch margins, no cover page) turned in at the beginning of class. Late papers will be late (!), and counted down by one full grade that day and then one grade each business day afterward. But even if a paper is so late that it will get an F, it must still be done sometime. All written work must be done to pass the class. The only excuse that I will accept for lateness is a doctor's note written on your cast.

To be counted on time, the paper must be handed in at the beginning of class, and you must stay to the end of class. The purpose of the paper is to facilitate discussion, so if you leave early, or if you
have sent the paper with someone else and you do not come yourself, the paper is not "being all that it can be" in helping you in the discussion. The paper will feel neglected and sad, and it will not be able to hold its head up high enough for full credit. Poor little paper.

On the final day, you have a 15-page paper due which goes into more detail on two or more of our readings, and how they connect to or model the historical discussion in an area of history of interest to you.

In each paper, short or long, use a selection of readings from the class to make a case about something or to explore a theme. You must have an introduction with thesis, body paragraphs with evidence, and a conclusion, and of course those blessed footnotes (or endnotes) and the bibliography. The bibliography might be pretty short in some of your short papers, but it still must be there. It does not count toward the page minimums or maximums.

The case that you make in your papers might focus more on the history itself or more on the historiography. That is up to you. In other words, you can write about what happened, or you can write about how to write about what happened, or you can write about the people who have written about what happened.

The big paper needs to include both history and historiography. Besides looking at a significant amount of the reading from our class, it needs to examine a historical monograph (a single-authored historical work that makes a case and uses primary-source research) published in the last ten years. Choose this monograph and run it by me before committing to it. To examine your monograph properly, your paper will also need to use reviews pertaining to the book and articles or other books pertaining to the subject.

Finally, I want to make clear that you are not writing book reports, but arguments. To me, book reports are a kind of summary. Book reports are exercises in typing, not writing; I want writing. You are not trying to "get all of it in" –you certainly will not do so in those weeks when we have many short pieces to read. What I am looking for is not a catalog but an analysis that uses selection and judgment. All history involves selection.

**GRADING**

A paper that has all of its parts working well gets a B. That is, a B paper has an introduction with a thesis, body paragraphs with evidence from our readings, a conclusion, and the full scholarly apparatus of notes and bibliography in the Chicago Style -- all the parts that a paper needs. A paper substantially missing one or more of these elements, or showing a pattern of errors, will get a C, which is usually not considered an acceptable grade in graduate school. An A paper shows that you know the readings well enough to pick the best elements of them to make and refine your case. In other words, what I am looking for in an A paper is selection and judgment. If you have mastered the material well enough to select, judge, and smoothly communicate the best evidence, then you should have an A, while evidence that merely does the job will not provoke so many good thoughts on your part -- a B.

There are fifteen smaller papers. The one with the lowest grade will be dropped. Each of the other fourteen small papers counts as one part for the grade. The big paper counts as five parts. A single overall grade for discussion counts as four parts, for a total of twenty-three parts.