

## **HIST 2302 (PARTIAL DISTANCE LEARNING)**

### **THE HISTORIAN'S CRAFT: METHODOLOGY**

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Spring 2015  
 MW 2:00pm-3:20pm, TLC 3205

“Among intellectual pursuits, one of the most useful is the recording of past events.”  
 ~ Sallust, *The Jugurthine War*

“The single task of the historian is to tell of things as they happened.” ~ Lucian of  
 Samosata, *How to Write History*

**Office hours:** M 9:30-11:00am, 12:30-2:00pm; W 2:00-4:00pm and by appointment

**CourseDen online office hours:** W and Th. 10:00am-1:00pm

**Office location:** TLC 3239 (Office phone #: 678-839-5370)

You are always welcome to drop by my office, even outside of office hours, but I recommend calling in advance, to make sure that I am in.

**Course description:** What is history? What do professional historians do, and how and why do they do it? This course provides answers to these questions while introducing students to historical research methods and different fields of history. In the process, the course equips students with essential skills for success as history majors at the University of West Georgia.

This is a required course for students majoring in history. In order to graduate, history majors must attain a grade of C or higher in this course.

Please note that this is a partial distance learning course. This means that approximately 60% of the learning in this class will be done online through CourseDen. Students are responsible for keeping up with the schedule on the course syllabus, and knowing when in-class and online assignments are due. As a general guideline, we will meet in class most Mondays, and you will have CourseDen assignments due on Wednesdays or later in the week. Please follow the schedule below carefully! All days that are online and do not include a face-to-face meeting are designated as “Online Days” in the schedule.

**University Policies for Students:** Please review carefully the information at the following link:  
[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf)

**\*All students will also be required to take an in-class assessment examination during the second week of classes. The examination is not graded, but no student will pass the class without taking it.\***

**Learning Outcomes:**

Students who successfully complete this course will demonstrate the following:

1. An ability to differentiate between different types of primary and secondary sources
2. An ability to locate primary and secondary sources necessary for a particular topic in the UWG library and beyond.
3. An ability to analyze different types of primary and secondary sources both orally and in writing, and to cite them correctly in papers.
4. An ability to lead scholarly discussions and make oral presentations.
5. An ability to ask historical questions based on primary sources.
6. An ability to think historically. Thinking historically requires one
  - \* To seek to understand the people of the past;
  - \* To seek to understand the perspectives and motivations of historical actors, and to view those historical actors from a critical, scholarly perspective;
  - \* To recognize that people, events, ideas, and cultures have influenced later people, events, ideas, and cultures;
  - \* To recognize that history involves the study of both continuity and change over time;
  - \* To draw and explain connections between particular people, events, ideas, or texts and their historical contexts

**Required Books (additional short readings will be posted on CourseDen):**

Steve Goodson, *Highbrows, Hillbillies, & Hellfire: Public Entertainment in Atlanta, 1880-1930*. ISBN: 978-0820329307

Brent Shaw, *Spartacus and the Slave Wars: A Brief History with Documents*. ISBN: 978-0312183103

Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*. ISBN: 978-0199540556

Ken Bain, *What the Best College Students Do*. ISBN: 978-0674066649

Robert Tracey McKenzie, *The First Thanksgiving: What the Real Story Tells Us About Loving God and Learning from History*. ISBN: 978-0830825745

**Grading Policies:**

Attendance and active participation in class discussions and activities: 10%

Attendance and participation in class is an integral part of the learning experience. Students who do not attend regularly, or who do not participate, will not succeed in this class.

Online discussions, papers, and presentations: 45%

Each student will complete 15 online assignments over the course of the semester. The assignments are located on the class website in CourseDen (D2L). Twelve of these assignments are discussions, two are quizzes, and one is a formatting exercise on Chicago/Turabian style of citations. Each of these assignments will be worth 3% of your final grade. Please see course schedule below for details on assignments and deadlines.

Primary Source Based Paper I (3-4 pages): 10%

Each student will write a 3-4 page paper on any aspect of Spartacus' slave rebellion using the primary sources collected Brent Shaw's *Spartacus and the Slave Wars: A Brief History with Documents*. Citations in all papers for this course must follow the Chicago Manual of Style.

Primary Source Based Paper II – Novel as a Source (3-4 pages): 10%

Each student will write a 3-4 page paper using Apuleius' *The Golden Ass* as a historical source for any aspect of life in the Roman Empire.

Book review (3-4 pages): 10%

Each student will write a brief review of Steve Goodson's *Highbrows, Hillbillies, & Hellfire: Public Entertainment in Atlanta, 1880-1930* OR Robert Tracey McKenzie's *The First Thanksgiving: What the Real Story Tells Us About Loving God and Learning from History*.

In-class presentation on final research project: 5%

Each student will make a 10-minute presentation on a final research project on a topic of his/her choice, leading the class through the research process, primary and secondary sources available and consulted, research questions posed, and the conclusions reached. You will, in essence, be doing all of the work that you would need to do for a research paper, except for writing the paper.

Abstract and Bibliography of final research project: 10%

Each student will turn in a one-page abstract and bibliography of the final research project. Your bibliography must follow the Chicago Manual of Style format.

**N.B. There will be no curve in this course!** Final grades will be assigned according to the following scale, keeping in mind that the University of West Georgia does not recognize +/- grades:

89.49 - 100 = A

79.49 - 89.48 = B

69.49 - 79.48 = C

59.49 – 69.48 = D

< 59.48 = F

### **Class Communication:**

Per university policy, all email communications between faculty and students should be limited to the UWG email accounts. I will not respond to emails sent from other accounts. Also in accordance with university policies, I cannot discuss your grade with you over email. I am, however, always happy to discuss your grade with you in person.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Academic dishonesty on any assignment in this course will result in an F for the course, and the referral of the student to the appropriate university committee. Academic dishonesty can take many shapes. Please avoid inadvertent plagiarism by ALWAYS citing any sources that you use when writing papers or essays. For further information, see

<http://www.westga.edu/~handbook/index.php?page=honorcode>

### **Classroom Etiquette:**

Please arrive to class on time (11:00am), and plan to remain in class until 12:20pm. Late arrivals and early departures are highly disruptive and distracting, in addition to being rude. When in class, I expect you to pay attention, ask questions if anything is unclear, and participate actively

in class discussions. In addition to being polite, such active presence and engagement in the course is also a part of your grade for the semester. Furthermore, studies have repeatedly shown that active learning is more effective than passive learning – meaning, students who participate actively in the classroom, learn more than those who do not.

### **Religious Holidays:**

Students shall be excused from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day. If you will miss class to celebrate a religious holiday, you must notify me **AT LEAST 14 days** prior to the holiday so that we can make arrangements for you to make up any missed assignment. All make-up work must be completed no later than one week after the missed class.

## **Schedule of Assignments and Exams**

**N.B. All assignments must be completed BEFORE class, unless indicated otherwise.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignments Due</b>
01/05	1. Introduction: what is history? Definitions from the ancient world: Herodotus, Thucydides, Cato, and Tacitus 2. The historical profession today: who are historians, and what do they do?	
01/07	<b>Online day:</b> Syllabus and expectations; how to succeed in college and beyond	<b>Online assignment I due by midnight:</b> Syllabus quiz Start reading Ken Bain, <i>What the Best College Students Do</i>
01/12	1. In-class Assessment Exam 2. Distinguishing primary and secondary sources	
01/14	<b>Online day:</b> Discussion of Bain, individual student goals and learning styles	Ken Bain, <i>What the Best College Students Do</i> (finish book)  <b>Online assignment II due by midnight:</b> List three particular insights that you can take from Bain's book and apply to your college career.
01/19	<b>MLK Day, no class!</b>	
01/21	<b>Online day:</b> locating primary sources, and building a historical argument based on them	<b>Online assignment III due by midnight:</b> finding primary sources online. Please post a link to <b>THREE DIFFERENT TYPES</b> of primary sources on the course discussion board designated for this assignment. Be thoughtful and creative in considering what could be a primary source! Briefly summarize each source, and explain how you might use it as a historian. Comment on two other students' posts.

01/26	The historical profession and citations; introduction to citing in Chicago/Turabian style	
01/28	<b>Online day:</b> Chicago style of citations; plagiarism and the historical profession	<p><b>Online assignment IV due by midnight:</b> Exercise in formatting citations according to Chicago/Turabian style.</p> <p>A quick, no-frills introduction to Chicago/Turabian can be found here:</p> <p><a href="http://www1.hollins.edu/docs/academics/writingcenter/index/documentation/Turabian.html">http://www1.hollins.edu/docs/academics/writingcenter/index/documentation/Turabian.html</a></p> <p>and here:</p> <p><a href="http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocChicago.html">http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/DocChicago.html</a></p> <p><b>Online assignment V due Friday by midnight:</b> Exercise on plagiarism: post 2-3 paragraphs on the class discussion board on CourseDen, responding to the definition of plagiarism in the article link below. Do you think historians are right to be worried about plagiarism? Why or why not? Can you think of examples of inadvertent plagiarism? Comment on two other students' posts.</p> <p><a href="http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/Issues/2004/0402/0402vie1.cfm">http://www.historians.org/Perspectives/Issues/2004/0402/0402vie1.cfm</a></p>
02/02	1. History as a story: constructing a historical argument based on primary sources 2. Formulating a historical thesis argument	Shaw, <i>Spartacus and the Slave Wars</i> , pages 1-68
02/04	<b>Online day:</b> practicing the art of constructing a historical argument	<p>Shaw, pages 69-106</p> <p><b>Online assignment VI due by midnight:</b> select any ONE document from Shaw's reading for today, and write a brief analysis of the document, and the kinds of historical questions that it raises. Each student must select a document that no one else had analyzed! Comment on two other students' posts.</p> <p><b>Online assignment VII due Friday by midnight:</b> Story-telling in a historical paper is different from story-telling in encyclopedias or textbook. Select a Wikipedia article</p>

		on a historical topic, and revise it in such a way as to turn it into a history paper. Comment on two other students' posts.
02/09	Constructing a historical argument from primary sources: bringing together the primary sources on the Spartacus rebellion	Shaw, pages 107-165; questions on pages 180-181
02/11	<b>Online day:</b> constructing an argument from primary sources – work on Primary Source Paper I.	<b>Primary Source Paper I due by midnight!</b>
02/16	<b>Online day:</b> editing your own work and that of others; honing proper spelling and grammar use	<b>Online assignment VIII due by midnight:</b> Upload your Primary Source Paper I on the discussion board. Post a list of 10 stylistic/spelling/grammar corrections that you can identify in your paper. Then select the paper of ONE classmate, and post 5 stylistic/spelling/grammar mistakes in your classmate's paper.  Start reading Apuleius, <i>The Golden Ass</i> .
02/18	<b>Online day:</b> editing your own work and that of others; honing proper spelling and grammar use	<b>Online assignment IX due by midnight:</b> correct grammar and spelling quiz, based on common offenders. Please study the following link before taking the quiz: <a href="http://www.oup.com/uk/booksites/content/0199296251/essentials/commonspellingerrors/">http://www.oup.com/uk/booksites/content/0199296251/essentials/commonspellingerrors/</a> Also consider the differences between the following commonly confused words: they're/there/their, you're/your, it's/its, who/whose/whom, cavalry/Calvary, his/he's, loose/lose, weird (not wierd), Caesar (not ceasar), effect/affect, wonder/wander, then/than.  Continue reading Apuleius!
02/23	Using a novel as a primary source	Apuleius, <i>The Golden Ass</i> (all)
02/25	<b>Online day:</b> constructing an argument from primary sources – work on Primary Source Paper II.	<b>Primary Source Paper II due by midnight!</b>
03/02	LIBRARY DAY: finding sources for your final research project <i>Class will meet in the Library – 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Mac Lab!</i>	Start reading McKenzie, <i>The First Thanksgiving</i>
03/04	<b>Online day:</b> Research methods, and academic book reviews	<b>Online assignment X due by midnight:</b> Post a brief (one paragraph) description of your topic for your final project, and your preliminary research question, which

	Oral history and interviews as historical sources	<p>your project will address</p> <p><b>Online assignment XI due Friday by midnight:</b> how do you write a good book-review? Find an academic book review online, and post a link to it on the course discussion board. Explain what you liked about this review, and what (if anything) you found problematic. What features do you expect a review to include?</p> <p>Continue reading McKenzie, <i>The First Thanksgiving</i></p>
03/09	Discussion of McKenzie and the historical profession: can a historian be a person of faith? Should historians learn from history?	McKenzie, <i>The First Thanksgiving: What the Real Story Tells Us About Loving God and Learning from History</i> (all)
03/11	<b>Online day:</b> Writing day	<b>Review of McKenzie due by midnight!</b>
03/16 - 03/20	<b>Spring Break! No class!</b>	Start reading Goodson, <i>Highbrows, Hillbillies, &amp; Hellfire</i>
03/23	Guest lecture by Dr. Goodson, author of <i>Highbrows, Hillbillies, &amp; Hellfire</i>	Goodson, <i>Highbrows, Hillbillies, &amp; Hellfire</i> (all)
03/25	<b>Online day:</b> Writing Day; Oral history exercise	<p><b>Review of Goodson due by midnight!</b></p> <p><b>Online assignment XII due Friday by midnight:</b> Interview one professor in the History department about his/her life, and the decision to become a professional historian. Write a brief (2-3 pages) biography of the individual whom you interviewed, based on the oral history interview that you conducted. Comment on two other students' posts.</p>
03/30	ARCHIVES DAY <i>Class will meet in the Library!</i>	
04/01	<b>Online day:</b> work on your final project!	<p><b>Online assignment XIII due by midnight:</b> Post updated research question and thesis statement for your final project. Comment on two other students' posts.</p> <p><b>Online assignment XIV due by midnight:</b> post an overview of Monday's Library archives session, explaining different types of archival materials, and how a historian might use them. What was your favourite item from the presentation?</p>
04/06	<b>Online day:</b> work on your final project!	
04/08	<b>Online day:</b> Identifying bias	<b>Online assignment XV due by midnight:</b> select a

		secondary source (article or monograph) that you have read for ANY history class recently. Briefly describe the source, and identify the assumptions and biases of the author. How do these assumptions and biases shape the author's argument? Could he/she have reached different conclusions, had he/she made different assumptions about the topic? Comment at two of your classmates' posts.
04/13	In-class Final Project Presentations	
04/20	In-class Final Project Presentations	<b>Final project abstract and bibliography due on CourseDen by 5:00pm</b>