

Texas A&M University Central Texas
HSTK 499-110: Senior Research Seminar
Spring 2015: January 20 – May 15
ONLINE

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Office Hours: On Campus by appointment, and available in Blackboard

Mode of instruction and course access: This course is 100% online, using TAMUCT Blackboard Learn (<https://tamuct.blackboard.com>). Technology Requirements & Support, p. 8-9.

Student-instructor interaction: Your instructor will check and reply to student emails daily – unless a notice is posted in Blackboard to indicate special circumstances. Virtual and on-campus appointments can be arranged. In addition, there is a virtual office within Blackboard for general questions.

Course Overview. Senior Research Seminar. (3-0) This course is designed to develop and apply historical research and writing skills through exploration of topics selected by the instructor. Prerequisites: HIST 101, 102, 201, and 202.

Course Objectives. Students will select a topic related to U.S. History before 1900. Students will develop and apply historical research and writing skills, specifically, Microhistory methodology. Students will demonstrate these skills in a series of assignments culminating in a Research Paper on their selected topic.

Student Learning Outcomes. Students will:

1. *Identify and explain factual knowledge:* Students will research and explain the historical context of their selected research topic. Students will demonstrate their understanding in written assignments and class discussion.
2. *Examine and apply fundamental theories:* Students will examine and apply the fundamental historical research theory and methodology best suited to their topic. Students will demonstrate their understanding in written assignments and class participation.
3. *Analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view:* Students will analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate the arguments and conclusions of peers and professional historians. Students will demonstrate their understanding in written assignments and class participation.
4. *Apply specific skills, competencies, and points of view needed by professionals in this field:* As future professional historians, students will evaluate and write formal critical

reviews of other scholars' work, and utilize Chicago Manual of Style/Turabian format. Students will demonstrate these skills in written assignments and class participation.

5. *Demonstrate skill in oral and/or written expression:* Consistent with an upper-level History course, students will develop skills in written and/or oral communication. Students will demonstrate their skills in written assignments and class participation.
6. *Use required resources and find additional scholarly resources for answering questions or solving problems:* Students will utilize the learning management system Blackboard, online library databases, and other research materials. Students will demonstrate these skills in written assignments and class participation.

Required Textbook:

Kate L. Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, Eighth Edition. Chicago Style for Students and Researchers. University of Chicago Press. (2013).

ISBNs: Cloth: 9780226816371; Paper: 9780226816388; E-book: 9780226816395

Additional Readings: will be required, including journal articles and research materials. These materials will be available through Blackboard and the TAMUCT Library.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This course consists of several assignments designed to encourage students to examine a topic related to U.S. History before 1900 in greater depth as they develop and demonstrate their research and writing skills in the discipline of history.

Research Proposal (10%). Students identify and propose a topic for scholarly investigation, related to our course subject. Students submit their topics by the deadline, utilizing the format posted in Blackboard. This is a brief 200- to 300-word proposal for the research project. The proposal should include the following:

- 1) A research topic,
- 2) Research questions,
- 3) A brief description of how it will contribute to current body of historical knowledge,
- 4) Two major sources where you will begin your research (primary or secondary).

Grading Criteria/Rubric: Research Proposal	Points Possible
Topic [your research topic]	4
Research Question(s) [identify research questions and/or thesis]	6
Contribution [how your project will contribute]	4
Sources [citations for two major sources that address your topic, where you will begin your research]	6
Writing Mechanics [format, clarity in grammar and spelling, originality, proper citations]	5
Total Points Possible:	25

Annotated Bibliography (10%). For our purposes, the annotated bibliography should encompass both descriptive and evaluative comments. You should have a minimum of 10 works in your bibliography. You should aim for a balance of primary sources and secondary sources. Your annotations for each source should be 50-150 words in length. Each entry should be formatted in proper Chicago Manual of Style/Turabian format. The annotations should address: thesis or main focus of the source, a brief description of the source's scope, its relevance to your research topic, and your brief observations or conclusions about the source. Guidelines and examples are provided in Blackboard.

Grading Criteria/Rubric: Annotated Bibliography	Points Possible
Number and Type of Entries [balance of primary and secondary sources.]	30
Annotations [descriptive and evaluative comments; address thesis or main focus, scope, relevance to your topic, and observations or conclusions]	40
Writing Mechanics [length, format, proper citations]	30
Total Points Possible:	100

Critical Book Review Project (20%)

Book Choice. Students will submit the author, title, and date of publication of the book they intend to read for the critical book review assignment.

Critical Book Review. A complete guide for the critical book review is posted in Blackboard. Critical Review essay should be approximately 1500 words (5+/- pages). Keep in mind that this is a critical evaluation of the book, not merely an overview or summary. Book choice must be submitted to the professor for approval.

Grading Criteria/Rubric: Critical Book Review (15%)	Points Possible
Introduction [include full citation of the book, main idea or thesis, and your approach to your review/analysis of it]	10
Evaluation and Evidence/Content [Discuss the author's argument and use of evidence to support his/her thesis or goals. This is your critical evaluation of the content and the historian's skills. Be sure to include specific examples to support your comments]	35
Conclusions [overall assessment, recommendations, and conclusion]	25
Writing Mechanics [length, format, clarity in grammar and spelling, originality, proper citations as needed]	30
Total Points Possible:	100

Peer Review. Students will read and provide constructive comments to several of their peers' essays using a feedback form, provided in class (and available in Blackboard).

These anonymous comments will be shared with the students who wrote the papers under review. The goal is to learn from each other's writing, and to apply the feedback from the professor and your peers in the final research paper.

Grading Criteria/Rubric: Peer Review (5%)	Points Possible
Feedback [thorough, detailed, constructive feedback for both critical review papers, responded to every question on the form]	10
Writing Mechanics [length, format, clarity in grammar & spelling]	5
Total Points Possible:	15

Research Paper (40%). Based on proposed and approved topic. This should be the same topic addressed in your Critical Book Review and Annotated Bibliography assignments. For your research paper, you should utilize the best (most relevant) sources from your annotated bibliography, including the book you reviewed for the critical book review assignment, and any additional research you feel is necessary. Papers should include a clear thesis, introduction, body, conclusion, footnotes (or endnotes), and a revised copy of your bibliography. Length: 20 pages. Papers should be typed, double-spaced.

Grading Criteria/Rubric: Research Paper	Points Possible
Introduction [clear thesis, introduction to your paper]	15
Content [discuss historical context, literature review, critical evaluation of primary sources, analysis of issues, interpretation and observations relevant to the project]	45
Conclusion [reiteration of key ideas and how they support the thesis or purpose of the paper, and overall conclusion statements]	15
Writing Mechanics [length, format, clarity in grammar and spelling, originality, proper citations as needed]	25
Total Points Possible:	100

Presentation of Research Paper (10%). Presentation involves posting a 200-word summary of your research and conclusions in the designated discussion forum. You will be expected to respond to questions about your research, and to read the summaries of other students and ask questions about their projects.

Grading Criteria/Rubric: Presentation of Review	Points Possible
Content [summary of your research paper in class]	5
Respond to others [Respond to questions and comments about your research from the other students and the instructor]	5
Engage others [read and respond to other presentations, promote discussion]	5
Writing Mechanics [length, format, proper citations]	5
Total Points Possible:	20

Participation (10%). Students are expected to participate in class discussions and presentation Q&A sessions. See Blackboard for specific requirements and deadlines.

Grading Criteria/Rubric: Discussions
Content: [demonstrate that careful attention has been paid to course materials and fellow students' comments]
Peer Response: [respond to others' questions and comments, promote further discussion and critical thinking]
Writing Mechanics: [length, format, clarity in grammar and spelling, originality, proper citations if needed]
Each category is weighted the same: Content, Peer Response, and Writing Mechanics. See Blackboard for more detailed rubric.

Course Grading Criteria Rubric and Conversion:

Research Proposal	10%
Annotated Bibliography	10%
Critical Book Review Essay	20%
Review (15%)	
Peer Review (5%)	
Research Paper	40%
Research Presentation	10%
Participation	10%
Total	100%

A = 90-100%
B = 80-89.9%
C = 70-79.9%
D = 60-69.9%
F = 0-59.9%

Posting of Grades: All grades will be posted in the Blackboard gradebook are, "My Grades." Students should regularly monitor their grades and contact the instructor promptly with any concerns. Throughout the course, the gradebook will be updated at the end of each week to include all work completed up to that point in the course.

Late Policy: Any assignment submitted after the due date and time will be subject to a penalty of ten percent. The only exception is the Literature Review assignment, which will not be accepted late because of the instructor's deadline to submit final grades. Contact the instructor before the deadline if you have a special situation that requires consideration.

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Unit Topics & Readings	Assignments
Unit 1	Overview	Due by midnight
Week 1 Jan. 20 - 25	Welcome, overview expectations, etc.	Post an Introduction Ungraded Discussion
Unit 2	Foundations	
Week 2	What is Research, Topics & Questions	Discussion (respond by 2/1)

Jan. 26 - Feb. 1	For discussion: Turabian, Ch. 1 & 2	
Week 3 Feb. 2 - 8	Finding and Evaluating Sources; Reading and Taking Notes For discussion: Turabian, Ch. 3 & 4	Discussion (respond by 2/8) Research Proposal (2/8)
Week 4 Feb. 9 - 15	Refining Research Questions; Planning your Argument For discussion: Turabian, Ch. 5	Discussion (respond by 2/15)
Unit 3	Research & Writing	
Week 5 Feb. 16 - 22	Finding Primary Sources	Discussion (respond by 2/22)
Week 6 & 7 Feb. 23 - Mar. 8	Writing an Annotated Bibliography Review Turabian, Part III: Style	Annotated Bibliography (3/8)
Week 8 & 9 Mar. 9 - 29	Research . . . Spring Break: March 16- March 22 Writing a Critical Book Review	Critical Book Review (3/29)
Week 10 & 11 Mar. 30 - Apr. 12	Why we do Peer Review Conceptualizing a First Draft For discussion: Turabian, Ch. 6-8	Discussion (respond by 4/12) Peer Review (4/12)
Week 12 - 14 Apr. 13 - May 3	Writing . . . For discussion: Turabian, Ch. 9-13	Submit a first draft by 4/26 for constructive feedback! History Dept. ACAT Exam
Unit 4	Presentations	
Week 15 May 4 - 10	Presentation of research papers	Research Papers (by Friday, 5/8) Presentations (5/10)
Week 16 May 11 - 15	Presentation of research papers	Presentations , continued

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

UNILERT. Emergency Warning System for Texas A&M University – Central Texas
UNILERT is an emergency notification service that gives TAMUCT the ability to communicate health and safety emergency information quickly via email, text message, and social media. All students are automatically enrolled in UNILERT through their myCT email account. Connect at www.TAMUCT.edu/UNILERT to change where you receive your alerts or to opt out. By staying enrolled in UNILERT, university officials can quickly pass on safety-related information, regardless of your location.

Drop Policy. If you discover that you need to drop this class, you must go to the Records Office and ask for the necessary paperwork. Professors **cannot** drop students; this is always the responsibility of the student. The record’s office will provide a deadline for which the form must be returned, completed and signed. Once you return the signed form to the records office and

wait 24 hours, you must go into Warrior Web and confirm that you are no longer enrolled. Should you still be enrolled, FOLLOW-UP with the records office immediately? You are to attend class until the procedure is complete to avoid penalty for absence. Should you miss the deadline or fail to follow the procedure, you will receive an F in the course.

Academic Integrity. Texas A&M University -Central Texas values the integrity of the academic enterprise and strives for the highest standards of academic conduct. A&M-Central Texas expects its students, faculty, and staff to support the adherence to high standards of personal and scholarly conduct to preserve the honor and integrity of the creative community. Academic integrity is defined as a commitment to honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. Any deviation by students from this expectation may result in a failing grade for the assignment and potentially a failing grade for the course. Academic misconduct is any act that improperly affects a true and honest evaluation of a student's academic performance and includes, but is not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism and improper citation of sources, using another student's work, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. All academic misconduct concerns will be reported to the university's Office of Student Conduct. Ignorance of the university's standards and expectations is never an excuse to act with a lack of integrity. When in doubt on collaboration, citation, or any issue, please contact your instructor before taking a course of action.

Disability Support and Access Services. At Texas A&M University – Central Texas, we value an inclusive learning environment where every student has an equal chance to succeed and has the right to an education that is barrier-free. The Office of Disability Support and Access is responsible for ensuring that students with a disability enjoy equal access to the University's programs, services and activities. Some aspects of this course or the way the course is taught may present barriers to learning due to a disability. If you feel this is the case, please contact Disability Support and Access at (254) 501-5831 in Warrior Hall, Ste 212. For more information, please visit their webpage at www.tamuct.edu/DisabilitySupport. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such.

Tutoring. Tutoring is available to all TAMUCT students, both on-campus and online. Subjects tutored include Accounting, Finance, Statistics, Mathematics, and Writing, and APA formatting. Tutors are available at the Tutoring Center in Warrior Hall, Room 111. Visit www.ct.tamus.edu/AcademicSupport and click "Tutoring Support" for tutor schedules and contact information. If you have questions, need to schedule a tutoring session, or if you are interested in becoming a tutor, contact Academic Support Programs at 254-501-5830/5836 or by emailing Cecilia.morales@ct.tamus.edu

Chat live with a tutor 24/7 for almost any subject on your computer! Tutor.com is an online tutoring platform that enables TAMUCT students to log-in and receive FREE online tutoring and writing support. This tool provides tutoring in Mathematics, Writing, Career Writing, Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Spanish, Calculus, and Statistics. To access Tutor.com, log into your Blackboard account and click "Online Tutoring."

University Library. The University Library provides many services in support of research across campus and at a distance. We offer over 200 electronic databases containing approximately 250,000 eBooks and 82,000 journals, in addition to the 72,000 items in our print collection, which can be mailed to students who live more than 50 miles from campus. Research guides for each subject taught at TAMUCT are available through our website to help students navigate these resources. On-campus, the library offers technology including cameras, laptops, microphones, webcams, and digital sound recorders.

Research assistance from a librarian is also available twenty-four hours a day through our online chat service, and at the reference desk when the library is open. Research sessions can be scheduled for more comprehensive assistance, and may take place on Skype or in-person at the library. Assistance may cover many topics, including how to find articles in peer-reviewed journals, how to cite resources, and how to piece together research for written assignments.

Our 27,000-square-foot facility on the TAMUCT main campus includes student lounges, private study rooms, group work spaces, computer labs, family areas suitable for all ages, and many other features. Services such as interlibrary loan, TexShare, binding, and laminating are available. The library frequently offers workshops, tours, readings, and other events. For more information, please visit our homepage: <http://www.tamuct.edu/departments/library/index.php>

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT.

As noted on page 1, we will use the TAMUCT Blackboard Learn learning management system. Logon to <https://tamuct.blackboard.com> to access the course.

Username: Your MyCT username

(xx123 or everything before the "@" in your MyCT e-mail address)

Initial password: Your MyCT password

Check browser and computer compatibility by using the "Test Your Browser" button, found in the "Check Your Browser" module on your Blackboard dashboard, once you have logged in.

Technology Support. For technology issues, students should contact Help Desk Central. 24 hours a day, 7 days a week:

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Phone: (254) 519-5466

Web Chat: <http://hdc.tamu.edu>

When calling for support please let your support technician know you are a TAMUCT student.

Professor Policies & Responsibilities. Late work: If you need to miss an assignment or exam deadline, notify the professor in advance. If you miss an assignment or exam without notification, there is a 20% penalty. At the end of the course, opportunities for submitting late work will end.

- Return email within 24 hours except on weekends.
- I will be prepared for class, so I expect the same from you.

- Every rubric for every written assignment in this course assesses: grammar, spelling, originality, and format.
- Respect and professionalism.

Netiquette. All students are expected to behave in a courteous manner toward the instructor and other students at all times. Remember, with online communications, we do not have the benefit of seeing facial expression, body language, or tone of voice to soften the words on the screen. Disruptive or disrespectful behavior will be grounds for dismissal from the class. Continuous violations may result in being removed from the class and may result in a failing grade.

Professor reserves the right to amend this syllabus at any time