

HIST 297: HISTORY COLLOQUIUM

Dr. Jason Sellers

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*please allow at least 24 hours for me to respond (I will usually be quicker)

Office: 218 Monroe Hall

Class times/locations: TR 3:30-4:45, Monroe 233

Office Hours: MWF 2-3pm, T 9:30-11:30am, and by appointment

Course description:

This course is an introduction to the methods historians use to interpret the past. We will consider a variety of historical approaches, and how these approaches have developed or changed over time. We will also examine the role of historiography—the scholarship that already exists on a given topic, and the ways in which that scholarship has been written—in framing and shaping a historian’s work. Readings, discussions, and assignments are designed to allow students to explore different historical methods and interpretive frameworks.

During the first half of the semester, we will examine a variety of historiographical fields within the scope of American history generally, with some reference to our case study. In the second half of the semester, we will concentrate explicitly on that case study, the French and Indian War/Seven Years’ War. That multidimensional conflict lends itself to a wide range of historical approaches, some of which students will further explore in individual projects that entail researching and writing a literature review, and preparing formal presentations.

In doing so, this course will help students familiarize themselves with diverse historical approaches while also building skills in analysis, writing, and spoken communication. The on-line projects related to their project and to the course readings will allow students to build digital skills.

Course objectives and outcomes:

This course fulfills the first half of the two-semester history methods sequence (the second half is HIST 298). HIST 297 is the prerequisite for taking HIST 298. Along with HIST 298, this course is designed to prepare you for the research and writing required in history courses at the 400-level and the capstone HIST 485 research paper project. HIST 297 also fulfills one Speaking Intensive credit and one Writing Intensive credit.

This course aims to teach students the fundamentals of historical research and analysis. As a course in the Department of History and American Studies, this course aims to teach the following skill sets:

1. Understanding of the discipline’s methods and processes.
2. Ability to communicate in a group setting.
3. Ability to synthesize research findings.
4. Appreciation of the diversity of methods and processes.
5. Ability to utilize technological resources in research, data analysis, and presentation.

This course also aims to achieve the following goals and objectives of the Writing Intensive requirement:

1. Satisfactory knowledge of the varying strategies to convey arguments, main ideas and support/evidence.

2. Satisfactory knowledge of the varying patterns of composition organization and development.
3. Satisfactory knowledge of the audience, the role of the writer, and rhetorical strategies.
4. Satisfactory knowledge of writing conventions and correctness.

This course also aims to achieve the following goals and objectives of the Speaking Intensive requirement:

1. Understanding of and ability to explain the conventions and expectations of oral communication as practiced within the discipline of history.
2. Ability to apply theories and strategies for crafting messages (verbal, nonverbal, and visual) for particular audiences and purposes.
3. Ability to craft oral messages after a conscious process in which various options are reviewed and be able to explain and support choices.
4. Ability to plan, research, organize, support, and deliver ideas and arguments in a public speaking setting.

Required materials:

Anderson, Fred. *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Viking, 2005).

All other readings will be available online (links provided on the syllabus), in the Documents section of Canvas, or in the collections (usually digital) at UMW’s Simpson Library.

You will also need a (free) Google account; an account and a (free) version of the bibliographic software Zotero, available for free download at <http://www.zotero.org>; and your own website for blogging, which we will set up as part of a workshop run by the Division of Teaching and Learning Technology during regular class time.

Grading and Participation:

Students are expected to attend all classes, read all assigned texts, participate in class and on individual blogs, complete all assignments and papers, make presentations, and visit both the Speaking and Writing Center.

*Class participation:	20%
Website/digital:	10%
Secondary source analysis:	10%
Book review:	15%
4-minute presentation:	5%
10-minute presentation:	10%
Literature review:	30%

Students must complete all required assignments to receive a passing grade in the course.

*This course is a workshop for building skills in research, analysis, speaking, and writing, and as such, requires consistent attendance and active participation. Students may miss two classes without penalty; after two absences, your participation grade will drop by a full letter grade for each additional absence. This policy does not distinguish between “excused” and

“unexcused” absences. Additional in-class assignments will be turned in and count toward the participation grade.

Students will receive a midterm deficiency report if they receive a C- or below for participation, blogging, or any written assignments before the midterm break.

Numerical grades in this course correspond to the following letter grades: A (95-100); A- (90-94); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72); D+ (67-69); D (60-66); F (59 and below). I do not round grades, so for instance, a 79.7% is a C+.

Assignments:

*More detailed descriptions and grading breakdowns will be posted on Canvas.

1) Website/digital: Students will create, organize, and maintain a webpage and blog with the help of the instructor and DTLT staff. In addition to creating the webspace, including a short profile, portfolio, and resume/list of skills, students will write and organize a series of short blog posts about historiography, and the research and writing process, with the idea that they will further develop those ideas in classroom discussions; they will also use mapping and timeline tools to add features to this website. Some topics and due dates will be assigned, but others will allow more open responses.

2) Secondary source analysis: A 2-3 page paper summarizing and critiquing a scholarly article located using university resources. In this paper, students will discuss the major historiographical fields to which the article pertains; the ways in which the author positions her/his work; the primary sources used; and the author's overall argument and major points.

3) Book review: A 2-3 page review of a scholarly monograph. The review should summarize the content and argument of the book; explain its contribution to the scholarly literature; consider the author's use of primary sources; and suggest directions for further research. Students must take a draft of the book review to the Writing Center for consultation.

4) 4-minute presentation: This short presentation will address your proposed literature review topic, and your progress to date. Your peers will offer thoughts and suggestions. Meet with consultants at the Speaking Center as you plan and practice.

5) 10-minute presentation: This longer presentation will address your literature review. Meet with consultants at the Speaking Center as you plan and practice.

6) Literature review: Students will complete an 8-10 page literature review, complete with title, footnotes, and bibliography. I will grade and return your draft, which you will then revise and resubmit for a final grade.

7) Class participation: This course is a workshop for building skills in research, analysis, speaking, and writing, and as such, requires consistent attendance and active participation. IN ADDITION to classroom participation, students are required to attend one APPROVED History and American Studies-sponsored event during the semester and submit a brief (1 page) written response; failure to do so will result in the loss of 1/4 of the participation grade. All Talking History events (which will be Mondays at 12pm) are acceptable, as is the Nov. 5 speaker listed on this syllabus; other appropriate events will be announced as they arise.

If you think you may need an extension, you *must* request it in advance; I will not grant extensions after assignments are due. If you are having printer problems, or for some reason are unable to attend class, email the electronic file to me as a Word document or PDF file before class time (electronic submissions are acceptable). If the assignment is not in my possession in some form at the time it is due, it will be considered late. Late assignments will receive an

automatic deduction of one-third of a letter grade, and an additional deduction every day thereafter; I will not accept assignments that are more than one week late.

While I am willing to discuss assignment grades with students, you will need to wait at least 24 hours and have carefully reviewed my comments on your work. You have one week after the return of graded assignments to speak with me; after one week, grades are final.

Writing Center and Speaking Center:

To fulfill the WI and SI designations, students in this class are required to visit the Writing and Speaking Centers. Consultants from both centers will visit our class early in the semester to discuss the services and resources they offer.

Students are required to visit the Writing Center for two consultations, one regarding the book review, and the other the literature review. They may meet with the Writing Center before writing an assignment, before rewriting an assignment, or after the instructor returns a graded paper. Students must go to the Speaking Center to plan or practice both the 4- and 10- minute presentations.

Both centers are busy, so plan ahead and schedule your appointments. You can schedule appointments online, and see useful resources, at <http://academics.umw.edu/writing-fredericksburg/> and <http://academics.umw.edu/speaking/speaking-center/> Each failure to meet will reduce relevant grades (book review, literature review, 4-minute presentation, 10-minute presentation) by 10%.

Requirements for written assignments:

All assignments should adhere to the department's standard style: 1" margins; 12 pt. Times New Roman font; a title page including the paper title the author's name (centered, all caps), course number and title, instructor, and date; pages numbered consecutively through all materials, excluding title page; and a bibliography conforming to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/16/contents.html>). For more information on proper bibliographic format for your sources, consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, or an equivalent abridgement of the *Chicago Manual of Style*. [Note the most recent versions of the *Chicago Manual of Style* (16th) and Turabian (7th) include updated information for electronic citations. Be sure to use the newest editions.] A helpful UMW library guide to citations is available at <http://libguides.umw.edu/content.php?pid=245752&sid=2029722#6812498>

Students with Disabilities:

The Office of Disability Resources has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through the Office of Disability Resources and require accommodations for this class, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you have not contacted the Office of Disability Resources and need accommodations, I will be happy to help you contact it. The office will require appropriate documentation of disability. The office is located in 401 Lee Hall, and can be reached by phone at 540.654.1266 and email at ods@umw.edu.

Honor System:

Please write and sign the University of Mary Washington honor pledge (“I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work”) on every written assignment. More information about the Honor System is available at <http://students.umw.edu/fredericksburghonorcouncil/> You are welcome to discuss your work on assignments with classmates and work together to refine your writing, but your ideas and language must be your own.

Class and Reading Schedule:

Week 1

T 8/25: Introductions and syllabus

+Discussion of primary and secondary sources, historiography

Th 8/27: Consensus history and professionalization

+Peter Charles Hoffer, *Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 17-31. [Canvas]

+Martha Howell and Walter Prevenier, *From Reliable Sources: An Introduction to Historical Methods* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001): 88-118. [Canvas]

Week 2

T 9/1: Domain of One’s Own workshop with Jess Reingold—meet in ITCC 407 at 3:30

Th 9/3: Professionalization and fragmentation, and historiographical fields

+Peter Charles Hoffer, *Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin* (New York: Public Affairs, 2004), 32-92. [Canvas]

+American Historical Association’s Taxonomy of the Discipline:

<http://www.historians.org/x15216.xml>

***Week 3**

T 9/8: Secondary source research session with Jack Bales—meet in Simpson Library 225A at 3:30; we’ll use our leftover time to stop by the Writing and Speaking Centers, and the Digital Knowledge Center

*Blog post 1: Professionalization of history--how are popular and academic histories different, and why are those differences significant?

Th 9/10: Selections from Francis Parkman, *Montcalm and Wolfe: France and England in North America* (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1910). Available in a variety of formats for online reading or download at

<https://archive.org/details/montcalmandwolfe03parkgoog>

+Introduction to secondary source analysis assignment AND Google Docs introduction and set-up

***Week 4**

T 9/15: Selections from Francis Jennings, *Empire of Fortune: Crowns, colonies, and tribes in the Seven Years War in America* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1988). [Canvas]

+Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Viking, 2005), 267-275.

*Blog post 2: Parkman and Jennings in historical context--what contemporary events/developments shaped their approach to historical thinking and writing?

Th 9/17: Fred Anderson, *The War that Made America: A Short History of the French and Indian War* (New York: Viking, 2005), xv-115 (v. Parkman and Jennings)

+Getting to know the *Chicago Manual of Style*

<http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.ezproxy.umw.edu/16/contents.html>

Week 5

T 9/22: Zotero workshop with Peter Catlin—meet in Simpson Library 225A for a Zotero workshop with Peter Catlin

+*Chicago Manual of Style* citation worksheet due for discussion

Th 9/24: Atlantic World and Colonial America

+Anderson, *The War that Made America*, 119-265 (v. Anderson's *Crucible of War*)

+Ian K. Steele, "Exploding Colonial American History: Amerindian, Atlantic, and Global Perspectives," *Reviews in American History* 26, no. 1 (1998): 70-95.

*Week 6

T 9/29: Military history

+Robert M. Citino, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," *American Historical Review* 112, no. 4 (2007): 1070-1090.

+Mark Moyar, "The Current State of Military History," *The Historical Journal* 50, no. 1 (2007): 225-240.

*Secondary source analysis assignment due

Th 10/1: Economic and diplomatic

+Meg Jacobs, "State of the Field: The Politics of Consumption," *Reviews in American History* 39, no. 3 (2011): 561-573.

+Thomas Zeiler, "The Diplomatic History Bandwagon: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 95, no. 4 (2009): 1053-1073.

*Week 7

T 10/6: Women's and Gender History

+Kathleen M. Brown, "Beyond the Great Debates: Gender and Race in Early America," *Reviews in American History* 26, no. 1 (1998): 96-123.

+Cornelia H. Dayton and Lisa Levenstein, "The Big Trend of Women's and Gender History: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 99, no. 3 (2012): 793-817.

*Blog post 3: Traditional fields--do you find more "traditional" historiographical fields (military, political/diplomatic, economic) appealing, and why/why not? What are their strengths/weaknesses? Why do you think historians have expanded, complicated, challenged these genres, like they did in rethinking their approach to Colonial America?

Th 10/8: Book Reviews

+Bruce Mazlish, "The Art of Reviewing," <http://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/february-2001/the-art-of-reviewing>

+Discussing examples

+Introduction to the book review assignment

Week 8

T 10/13: No class—Fall break

Th 10/15: Social and cultural history

+Paul E. Johnson, "Reflections: Looking Back at Social History," *Reviews in American History* 39, no. 2 (2011): 379-388.

+Amy Bass, "State of the Field: Sports History and the 'Cultural Turn,'" *Journal of American History* 101, no. 1 (2014): 148-172.

*Week 9

T 10/20: Bad books and questionable websites: Evaluating secondary sources

+CRAAP test: <http://www.umwgeppilot.com/>

+Bill Cronon on Wikipedia <http://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/february-2012/scholarly-authority-in-a-wikified-world>

*Book reviews due in class

Th 10/22: Ethnohistory and historical archaeology

+Alan Mayne, "On the Edges of History: Reflections on Historical Archaeology," *The American Historical Review* 113, no. 1 (2008): 93-118.

+Ned Blackhawk, "American Indians and the Study of U.S. History," in Eric Foner and Lisa McGirr, eds., *American History Now* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 376-399.

*Week 10

T 10/27: Environmental history

+Ted Steinberg, "Down to Earth: Nature, Agency, and Power in History," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (June 2002): 798-820.

+J.R. McNeill, "The State of the Field of Environmental History," *Annual Review of Environment and Resources* 35 (2010): 345-374.

*Blog post 4: What do these more recent fields (women's/gender, social and cultural, ethnohistory, environmental history) offer to the study of history as a whole? What are their strengths and weaknesses? How do you feel about them personally?

*Th 10/29: 4-minute presentations—proposals and progress reports, and discussion

+Introduction to the Literature Review assignment

*Week 11

*T 11/3: 4-minute presentations—proposals and progress reports, and discussion

+Writing workshop--common problems, useful tips, and practice

Th 11/5: Plagiarism

+Joyce Seltzer, "Honest History," *Journal of American History* 90, no. 4 (2004): 1347-1350.

+Richard Wightman Fox, "A Heartbreaking Problem of Staggering Proportions," *Journal of American History* 90, no. 4 (2004): 1341-1346.

+Michael Nelson, "The Good, the Bad, and the Phony: Six Famous Historians and Their Critics," *VQR* 90, no. 3 (2002). <http://www.vqronline.org/essay/good-bad-and-phony-six-famous-historians-and-their-critics>

+Brock Read, "Anatomy of a Serial-Plagiarism Charge," *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 21 August 2014. <http://m.chronicle.com/article/Anatomy-of-a-Serial-Plagiarism/148437/>

+”Plagiarism” in the American Historical Association’s Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct: <http://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/governance/policies-and-documents/statement-on-standards-of-professional-conduct#Plagiarism>

HISA-sponsored event: Don DeBats, Finders University of Australia, 7pm, room TBD, will discuss combining archival sources with the use of GIS (geographic information system); check out his online project at <http://sociallogic.iath.virginia.edu>

***Week 12**

T 11/10: Peer review and revision workshop

*Literature review draft due

Th 11/12: Digital workshop with Jess Reingold—meet in ITCC 407 at 3:30pm

+Historic sites itinerary—in-class mapping assignment

+Seven Years’ War timeline

*Contribute to the Google Doc of dates/locations before class so we have a list to draw from as we work with these tools

Week 13

T 11/17: Historical problems

+Michael Kammen, “An Americanist’s Reprise: The Pervasive Role of ‘Histoire Probleme’ in Historical Scholarship concerning the United States since the 1960s,” *Reviews in American History* 26, no. 1 (1998): 1-25.

+Literature review draft returned, discussing revisions

Th 11/19: Primary source document workshop, and historiographical interventions

+Rachel Herrmann, "Teaching the Historiographical Intervention," *The Junto: A Group Blog on Early American History*, <http://earlyamericanists.com/2015/04/17/teaching-the-historiographical-intervention/>

+Introduction to 10-minute presentations

***Week 14**

T 11/24: Workday and individual appointments--no class meeting

*Blog post 5: Digital resources and production--what is the utility of digital tools (used in sources and research, presentation and communication, analysis, etc) for historians? For other professionals?

Th 11/26: No class—Thanksgiving

***Week 15**

T 12/1: Wrap-up and looking ahead to HIST 298

+Brainstorming possible 298 topics

+Discussing upcoming presentations

+Careers: jobs, skills, resumes, on-campus resources

Th 12/3: Presentations

+10-minute presentations on research findings

*Final literature reviews due in class

***Final exam period:** Tuesday, Dec. 8, 3:30-6:00pm

+10-minute presentations on research findings