

History 294-001
Seminar on Historical Method: Research Techniques
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Spring 2021, TR 9:45-11:00 a.m.

Instructor: Professor Amanda I. Seligman
Access class meetings through Canvas Collaborate Ultra
Teams phone number: 414-229-4565
Office Hours: Mondays 9:30-11 a.m. and Thursdays 7:30-8:30 p.m.
Email me at seligman@uwm.edu to ask a question to set up an appointment

Course Overview

The purpose of this class is to introduce you to the techniques that historians use to conduct research and evaluate evidence, including primary, secondary, and tertiary sources. You will learn about historical research methods by meeting with librarians from various departments of the UWM Libraries, conducting exploratory research, and reading and discussing historical scholarship. Other topics of critical importance to history majors covered in this class include citations, historical argumentation, digital history, and academic integrity. A major goal of the course is to prepare you to take History 600, the capstone course in the history major at UWM, which requires students to produce original research papers based on primary sources. Accordingly, throughout the course, you will conduct scaffolded research assignments that constitute integral pieces of the kind of larger projects completed in History 600. The approach of this class is largely cultural and experiential. In order to understand the research techniques of historians, we will read about the experiences and views of historians and conduct our own historical research.

Readings

Reading assignments for this course are available through the UWM bookstore. The books ordered for purchase are:

Cullen, Jim. *Essaying the Past: How to Read, Write, and Think about History*, 4th edition. Malden, MA: Wiley Blackwell, 2020.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

A note on editions: Previous editions of Turabian have the basic information you will need to write correct citations (except online sources), but the 8th and 9th editions include new material that is part of the required reading for the course. A hard copy of *The Chicago Manual of Style*, the larger work from which Turabian derives, is also held

in the UWM Golda Meir Library reference collection; it is also available electronically through the library catalog. If you are a history major, I encourage you to purchase your own copy of *Turabian*, which you will refer to throughout this course and in History 600. Because you may have purchased either the 3rd or 4th editions of the Cullen book, I have given you the alternatives in the schedule section of this syllabus. The 3rd edition of Cullen's book is available electronically through the UWM Libraries online catalog, but the 4th edition is not. Other readings are available through Canvas.

Time Commitment

This course is an undergraduate level course carrying 3 credit hours; we meet twice a week for 75 minutes, for a total of 15 weeks, or 37.5 hours total. In addition, you are expected to commit a significant portion of your out-of-class time to preparing written assignments and for class discussion by completing the assigned readings ahead of time. Of course the amount of time spent on each assignment varies by student, but I estimate that the reading assignments will take approximately 35 hours and the written assignments will take approximately 56 hours, for a total of 91 hours of work outside class. Thus the class requires a commitment of between 2 and 3 hours of preparation time for every hour in class, or 7-9 hours per week. Students should be aware that this workload is not distributed exactly evenly throughout the semester and plan accordingly.

Grading

Throughout the course, I will provide you with feedback on your written assignments. In my view, providing personalized, detailed feedback helps you learn more about how to improve future work than a letter grade can; research suggests that students learn more when they receive feedback without grades attached. However, the university does require me to assign final letter grades assessing your performance in the course at the end of the semester. In this course, final letter grades are based on the total number of points you accumulate throughout the course. To earn an A for the course, you will need to accumulate 230 (or more) points out of the available 251 points; to pass the class with a C-, you need at least 172 points. Any assignments that you submit (or revise) in good faith will receive the maximum number of points available for that assignment opportunity. There are no penalties for "late" work; work is not "downgraded" or "upgraded" based on its quality. This method of allocating course grades is called "labor-based grading."

What does submitting an assignment "in good faith" mean? In this syllabus, I've used the term "in good faith" to describe a sincere attempt to engage with an assignment. That means completing the assignment to the best of your ability, as your circumstances permit, just as you would for any other class where you were receiving a grade based on the quality of your work. Turning in 1,000 repetitions of "jladkfja;flkajd" is not "in good faith." A paper that is unresponsive for the terms of

the assignment—for example, a personal memoir—is not “in good faith.” An assignment that contains plagiarized passages is also not “in good faith.” If I think you have submitted an assignment that does not rise to the level of “in good faith” submission, I will let you know in writing; you may resubmit it if you choose, or you may move on to some other assignment. However, assignments with plagiarism do require further discussion and are not eligible for resubmission. See the syllabus section on academic integrity.

Ways to accumulate points: There are two ways to accumulate points in this course: you can *claim points* for doing the assigned reading and attending class, and you can *earn points* for written assignments submitted in good faith.

Claiming points: After you have engaged in the following activities each week, go to the appropriate place in Canvas and “claim” the points associated with them. You tell me what you did and the number of associated points, and I will enter the number of points you claim into the Canvas gradebook on your behalf.

1. Do the assigned reading to prepare for class. 1 point per class meeting.
2. Attend and participate in class. 1 point per class meeting
3. Claim these points after class via the “Claim points for this class meeting” assignment embedded in the module associated with that day of class.

Notice how this works: you can claim a total of 56 points toward your final course grade just for attending class and doing the assigned readings (there are 26 class meetings with assigned reading and 4 without, providing a total of 56 claimable points). Claiming points works on the honor system. I expect you to be honest about the work you did and did not do; I do not plan to check up on you to make sure that you are truthfully reporting completed participation in doing the reading (though I will take attendance due to university policies).

Earn points from writing assignments: All writing assignments submitted in good faith earn the full allotment of points associated with that type of assignment. The assignments you need to turn in, their due dates, and their point values follow:

- February 11: Imagine a Research Project, Newspapers: 25 points
- February 18: citation scavenger hunt: 15 points
- March 2: Imagine a Research Project, Digital Archives: 25 points
- March 11: one paragraph on *Arming America*: 5 points
- April 6: 250 words on responses to *Arming America*: 10 points
- April 8: list of factually-based questions: 20 points
- April 20: Imagine a Research Project, Special Collections: 25 points
- April 27: Letter about tertiary sources: 15 points
- May 11: Imagine a Research Project, Archives: 25 points
- March 18: Imagine a Research Project, AGSL: 25 points
- May 18: Historian’s code: 15 points

Instructions for most assignments are embedded in the schedule section of this syllabus as well as on Canvas. Instructions for the “Imagine a Research Project” assignments will be posted separately on the course Canvas site under the Handouts module.

Your accumulated points will translate into your final course grade. The scale follows:

A: 230 and up	B-: 196-205	D+: 164-171
A-: 221-229	C+: 189-195	D: 157-163
B+: 213-220	C: 181-188	D-: 149-156
B: 206-212	C-: 172-180	F: 0-148

If you have any questions about this approach to grading, please feel free to come and speak to me one on one or to raise the question in class.

Citations

Note: formatting of footnotes and bibliographic items matters! All citations must comply with *Chicago Manual of Style* format. This format will be taught in class and can be found in a required book for this course: Turabian’s *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th edition. This book summarizes and gives examples of most citation forms from the *Chicago Manual of Style* that undergraduate students should need. A handout with examples will be reviewed in class and is posted on the course Canvas site. Chicago’s own overview of citation matters is available in [section 14.18](#) of the *Chicago Manual of Style* and through the online version at. The AGSL staff have prepared a special citation handout with recommendations for citation of maps; that handout is posted on the course Canvas site. See also the Chicago Manual of Style [section 14.237](#).

Office hours

If you have any concerns about the course, want to talk about your academic progress, or are interested in knowing more about history, please come and see me in my weekly student hours or send me email. I am also available for appointments at other times if you have a conflict with my scheduled hours.

Administrative Notes

If you need special accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible. You may explain your needs on the introductory information handout.

Handy email addresses:

- Max Yela, the head of Special Collections, can be reached at maxyela@uwm.edu.
- Abigail Nye, the Instructional Librarian at the UWM Archives, can be reached at anye@uwm.edu.
- Heidi Anoszko, who will conduct some of the library instructions in the course, can be reached at hanoszko@uwm.edu.
- Georgia Brown, Public Services Librarian at the American Geographical Society Library, can be reached at brownngl@uwm.edu.

I expect you to observe University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee standards of academic honesty. This critical topic, along with other aspects of historical ethics, will be a recurring theme in class. UWM's policies regarding academic integrity are available [online here](#). Even partially plagiarized assignments are not submitted in good faith. If you plagiarize in this class, you may receive not only a 0 for the particular assignment in question, but also a grade of F for the entire course—despite the labor-based grading approach used in this class. Northwestern University offers an excellent guide to understanding plagiarism, [online here](#).

All L&S students have to declare and complete an academic major to graduate. If you have not yet declared a major, you are encouraged to do so, even if you are at an early stage in your college education. If you are interested in declaring a major (or minor) in History, or if you need academic advising in History, please visit the Department of History undergraduate program [web page](#) for information on how to proceed.

University Policies: See [this webpage](#) for further information about UWM course-related policies, including those related to students with disabilities, religious observances, military duty, incompletes, academic misconduct, and other topics.

Accommodations: If you have a disability requiring accommodations, please connect with me early in the semester so that I can make any necessary adjustments to promote your learning.

Schedule of class meetings

Tuesday January 26, 2021: Introduction

- Course overview
- Historical rules to live by, or at least to consider

Thursday January 28, 2021: Primary Source Poetry Slam

- Patrick Rael, *Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: A Guide for College Students*, "[How to Read a Primary Source](#)" (section 2.B)
- Cullen, chapter 6

Tuesday February 2, 2021 Narrative

- Introduction to IRP assignments, to microtext, and to newspaper research
- Jacob Rindfleisch, "[How Microfilm and the Internet Get Along: A Demonstration](#)," *Encyclopedia of Milwaukee*, scroll down to "Explore More," hit + and then expand the "Understory."
- William Cronon, "A Place for Stories: Nature, History, and Narrative," *Journal of American History* 78(4) (1992): 1347-1376.
- Cullen chapter 7 and 9 and Appendix A

Thursday February 4, 2021: Introduction to the Library

- Librarian Heidi Anoszko has placed several items in the module associated with today's class. The purpose is to orient you to the library. Please review these materials asynchronously. Class time may be shorter today.
- Turabian chapters 3 and 15 and pp. 77-80
- Cullen, chapters 4 and 5
- Andrew Abbott, *Digital Paper: A Manual for Research and Writing with Library and Internet Materials* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), introduction.

Tuesday February 9, 2021: Locating Secondary Sources and Concept Mapping

- Synchronous session with librarian Heidi Anoszko
- Deborah Bernard et al., "[Plan: Developing Research Strategies](#)," in *The Information Literacy User's Guide: An Open, Online Textbook* (2014)
- Patrick Rael, "[How to Read a Secondary Source](#)," in *Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: A Guide for College Students* (Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin College, 2004).

Thursday February 11, 2021: Citation Workshop

- Please have your copy of Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, handy during class
- Cullen, chapters 1-3 and appendix C (3rd ed.) or D (4th ed.)
- **Assignment due: Newspaper IRP**

Tuesday February 16, 2021: Introduction to Digital Archives

- Ian Milligan, "[Historians' Archival Research Looks Quite Different in the Digital Age](#)," *The Conversation*, August 19, 2019,
- Marc Reyes, "[Why Do Historians Still Have to Go to Archives?](#)," *Contingent Magazine*, March 25, 2019
- Kathryn Kish Sklar and Thomas Dublin, "[Creating Meaning in a Sea of Databases: The Women and Social Movements Web Sites](#)," in *Writing History in the Digital Age*, ed. Jack Dougherty and Kristin Nawrotzki (2013).

Thursday February 18, 2021: Argument I

- Cullen, chapters 8 and 10
- Turabian, chapter 5
- Patrick Rael, "[Historical Arguments](#)," *Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: A Guide for College Students* (Brunswick, ME: Bowdoin College, 2004)
- **Assignment due: citation scavenger hunt**

Tuesday February 23, 2021 Xtreme Endnotes

- Karin Wulf, "[Could Footnotes Be the Key to Winning the Disinformation Wars?](#)," *Washington Post*, August 29, 2019
- Cullen, chapters 11 and 12

Thursday February 25, 2021 Maps

- Joni Seager, "[Maps](#)" (Read the "Getting Started," "Questions to Ask," and "Sample Analysis" sections).
- Maria Popova, "[Nonstop Metropolis: An Atlas of Maps Reclaiming New York's Untold Stories and Unseen Populations](#)," *Brain Pickings*
- [Mapping Decline](#) website. You do not need to follow the external links, but you should study the maps very carefully and examine the linked documents.
- How do you cite a map? Consult the Chicago Manual of Style, 17th edition, [14.237](#) and see the AGSL handout in Canvas.

Tuesday March 2, 2021: American Geographical Society Library

- Georgia Brown, AGSL Public Services Librarian, will meet with us online to introduce us to the American Geographical Society Library
- Brien Barrett and Genya Erling, "[Learning to Do Historical Research: Sources, Maps](#)."
- **Assignment due: Digital Archives IRP**

Thursday March 4, 2021 Reading a Primary Source

- Archives Instructional Librarian Abigail Nye will meet with us for a primary source reading exercise involving Six Hats."
- Cullen, chapter 13

- [“A Model of Historical Thinking,”](#) Center for History and the New Media, George Mason University
- [“Interrogating Texts: Six Reading Habits to Develop in Your First Year at Harvard,”](#) Harvard Library website

Tuesday March 9, 2021 Peer Review

- Peer reviews of Amanda I. Seligman, *Neighbors*, and response
- Kristen Nawrotzki and Jack Dougherty, [“Introduction,”](#) in *Writing History in the Digital Age*, Kristen Nawrotzki and Jack Dougherty, eds. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013)
- Kristen Nawrotzki and Jack Dougherty, [“Conclusion,”](#) in *Writing History in the Digital Age*, Kristen Nawrotzki and Jack Dougherty, eds. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013)

Thursday March 11, 2021 Argument II

- Cullen chapters 14 and 15 (3rd ed.) or chapters 14, 15, and 16 (4th ed.)
- Bellesiles, *Arming America*, introduction and pages 266-267, and 445.
- **Assignment due:** Write one paragraph summarizing Bellesiles’ argument in *Arming America*, based on the provided materials.

Tuesday March 16, 2021 Who Are Professors?

- Angelica Duran, “One Mama’s Dispensable Myths and Indispensable Machines,” *Mama PhD: Women Write about Motherhood and Academic Life* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 80-88.

Thursday March 18, 2021: Guest Speaker: Ellen Engseth on being an archivist and librarian

- UWM history alumna Ellen Engseth will join us to discuss her career. She is currently Curator, [Immigration History Research Center Archives](#) and Head, [Migration and Social Services Collections](#), at the University of Minnesota Libraries
- **Assignment due: AGSL IRP**

spring break

Tuesday March 30, 2021: Special Collections

- Librarian Max Yela will join us synchronously to introduce us to the Golda Meir Library’s Department of Special Collections
- Fung, Margaret C. “Safekeeping of the National Peiping Library’s Rare Chinese Books at the Library of Congress 1941-1965.” *The Journal of Library History* (1974-1987) 19, no. 3 (1984): 359-72.

Thursday April 1, 2021 Searching for Tertiary sources

- Librarian Heidi Anoszko will orient us to searching with tertiary sources
- Charlene Mires, "The Encyclopedia as a Process of Civic Engagement," *The Public Historian* 35, no. 2 (May 2013): 14-23, DOI: 10.1525/tph.2013.35.2.14.

Tuesday April 6, 2021: Academic Integrity I

- 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), chapter 5, "Falsification: The Case of Michael Bellesiles."
- The following articles, all in the April 2002 issue of the *William and Mary Quarterly* are assigned reading. Everyone is required to read #1 and #5; you will also be assigned to read one of #2, #3, or #4 and summarize it (with your small group) for the class as a whole.
 1. Gross, "Introduction" (pp. 203-204)
 2. Main, "Many Things Forgotten: the Use of Probate Records in *Arming America*" (pp. 211-216)
 3. Gruber, "Of Arms and Men: *Arming America* and Military History" (pp. 217-222)
 4. Roth, "Guns, Gun Culture, and Homicide: the Relationship between Firearms, the Use of Firearms, and Interpersonal Violence" (pp. 223-240)
 5. Bellesiles, "Exploring America's Gun Culture" (pp. 241-268)
- Optional reading or listening: Daniel Gullotta, "[Arming the Past: An Interview with Michael Bellesiles](#)," *Contingent Magazine*, August 24, 2019
- **Assignment due:** Free response, 250 words: How do these readings affect your interpretation of *Arming America*?

Thursday April 8, 2021: Guest speaker: Career as a History Teacher

- Dr. James K. Nelsen, who teaches social studies at Golda Meir School, will join us to discuss his career as a public school teacher.
- **Assignment due:** factually-based questions. At this point in the semester, you have imagined a total of three (and you are working on a fourth) different research papers you might write using primary sources available in the Golda Meir library and online. When conducting primary source research, historians often have questions about the material that can be answered quickly and easily using the kinds of tertiary sources recently introduced in class. This assignment requires you to pick three of the Imagine a Research Project proposals that you have developed so far (including the one you are working on). **For each of the three research projects, produce a list of 4 factually-based questions that you would like to know the answers to.** If you still like the factual questions that you submitted as part of your original IRP, you may use those; or, you may write new ones. Using the **library's tertiary sources**, find answers to those

questions. **Turn in a list of the questions and their answers. Each answer should conclude with a precisely footnoted citation (including page numbers, if in a print book) indicating where those answers can be found.** You should also mention which primary source is guiding each of the imagined research projects, and provide a bibliographic citation for that primary source.

Tuesday April 13, 2021 Wikipedia

- Roy Rosenzweig, "Can History Be Open Source? *Wikipedia* and the Future of the Past," *Journal of American History* (2006): 117-146.
- Timothy Messer-Kruse, "[The 'Undue Weight' of Truth on Wikipedia](#)," *The Chronicle of Higher Education* online, February 12, 2012
- Heather Ford and Judy Wajcman, "['Anyone Can Edit,' Not Everyone Does: Wikipedia's Infrastructure and the Gender Gap](#)," *Social Studies of Science*, 47, no. 4 (2017): 511-527.
- Before you come to class, spend no more than 1 hour on Wikipedia trying to answer the questions that you answered in the previous "factually based questions" assignment. Write out a chart showing how successful you were. Be prepared to report on your success in class (but you don't have to turn anything in).

Thursday April 15, 2021 What Are Archives?

- Craig Robertson, "Mechanisms of Exclusion: Historicizing the Archive and the Passport," in *Archive Stories: Facts, Fictions, and the Writing of History*, ed. Antoinette Burton (Durham & London: Duke University Press, 2005), 68-86.
- Tyler Stump, "[Archiving Danville](#)," *Contingent Magazine*, October 12, 2019.

Tuesday April 20 2021: Introduction to Archives

- Meet with Librarian Abigail Nye
- Watch "[Introduction to Finding Aids](#)," Youtube
- "[How Can You Help Archivists to Help You? Reference Service from Our Side of the Desk](#)," January 23, 2019.
- **Assignment Due: Special Collections IRP**

Thursday April 22, 2021 Academic Integrity II

- 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), chapter 6, "Plagiarism: The Cases of Stephen Ambrose and Doris Kearns Goodwin."
- Cullen, appendix D (3rd ed.) or appendix E (4th ed.)

Tuesday April 27, 2021 Guest speaker: UWM History alumna Danielle Ireland, MA

- Ms. Ireland, Document Unit Lead, Federal Emergency Management Agency, will talk with us about her career in history.
- **Assignment due:** Tertiary sources letter
 - ✓ Write a letter to someone you know about using tertiary sources, including Wikipedia and library sources, to do historical research. You pick who “someone you know” is.

Thursday April 29, 2021: Primary Sources Fast and Slow

- Librarian Abigail Nye has organized two activities for our class: Primary Source Speed Dating and Slow Reading. Please do them on Canvas before the class meeting; we will use the class discussion to process what we learned from doing these activities.
- Andrew Abbott, *Digital Paper: A Manual for Research and Writing with Library and Internet Materials* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), 142-148.

Tuesday May 4, 2021 Historiography

- Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, “Foreword,” in *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles outside the South, 1940-1980*, ed. Jeanne Theoharis and Komozi Woodard (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), viii-xiv.
- Jack Dougherty, *More than One Struggle: The Evolution of Black School Reform in Milwaukee* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), conclusion (pp. 194-202).
- Homework for use in class (not collected): Look at any one of the secondary sources that you have included in the bibliography of an Imagine a Research Project assignment this semester. Find a passage where the author discusses the other secondary scholarship relevant to the topic they are writing about. Bring a copy of that passage to class so you can share it with your classmates.

Thursday May 6, 2021 Big Data and Visualizations

- [Quantitative Literacy](#), American Historical Association website
- [“Data Is Beautiful: 10 of the Best Data Visualization Examples from History to Today,”](#) Tableau

Tuesday May 11, 2021 Guest speaker: Prof. Chia Vang, on Oral History

- Chia Youyee Vang, *Fly until You Die: An Oral History of Hmong Pilots in the Vietnam War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), chapter 2.
- **Assignment due: Archives IRP**

Thursday May 13, 2021: Conclusion

- Leslie Brown, “How a Hundred Years of History Tracked Me Down,” *Telling Histories: Black Women Historians in the Ivory Tower*, Deborah Gray White, ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 2008), 252-269.

- Dwight T. Pitcaithley, "Taking the Long Way from Euterpe to Clio," in *Becoming Historians*, ed. James M. Banner, Jr., and John R. Gillis (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 54-75.
- Cullen, conclusion

Tuesday May 18: Assignment due: Write your own historian's code (250-500 words).