

History 350 00 2, Senior Research Seminar
Cedar Crest College
Instructor: Barton Shaw
Office: Hartzel Hall 120
Office Phone: (610) 606-4666, ext. 3403
Email: bcshaw@cedarcrest.edu

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COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES

The senior seminar is designed to introduce the undergraduate to research and historical thinking on the advanced level. The course is mainly devoted to reading, classroom discussion, and research. (See below.) Students who successfully complete this course will have gained a broad knowledge of historical theory and the history of historical writing. In addition, the student will have gained a number of important skills—in particular, the ability to write clearly and to conduct research in primary sources. Such skills will serve students well, especially those who go on to teaching or who attend graduate, law, library, or divinity school. In addition, the skills that students acquire in this course can be of substantial value in the world of business. Indeed, many successful executives were history majors as undergraduates.

READING AND DISCUSSION

Reading and classroom discussion will center around three subjects:

- a.) Research methods and writing. In brief, this portion of the course introduces the student to the many strategies that can be used to find information about the past. It will also introduce the class to the mysteries of writing publishable history.
- b.) Historiography. This part of the course is mainly an overview of historical thinking from the ancient Greeks to the present. The class will study such ancient and latter-day historians as Herodotus, Thucydides, St. Augustine, Petrarch, Voltaire, and Leopold Ranke. The class will also look at the great “schools” of American historical writing, such as the Romantic, the Scientific, the Progressive, and Consensus, and the New Left.
- c.) Problems of historical thinking. This portion of the course, which is based heavily on D.H. Fischer’s Historians’ Fallacies, offers an introduction to the epistemology, logic and value of historical thinking. What can we know, if anything, about the past? And if we can know something about the past, how can we be sure, or reasonably sure, that what we know is valid? Finally, even if we can know something about the past, what good is this knowledge?

READINGS

David Hackett Fischer, *Historians' Fallacies: Toward a Logic of Historical Thought*

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations*, 7th Edition

(Please remember that you may be able to buy used copies of these books at amazon.com.)

RESEARCH PAPER (REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT)

Each student will write a research paper, the text of which should be about twenty typed pages in length. Notes must be placed at the bottom of the page or at the end of the text. Your paper should also include a title page and a bibliography. The format must follow the guidelines found in Kate Turabian's Manual for Writers. Among other things, this paper should take considerable portions of its material from primary sources. Historiographical papers will not be acceptable for this project. Your paper will be graded on the quality of its argument, research, and writing. Don't underestimate the importance of the last point. The well-researched but poorly written paper can normally receive a grade no higher than C.

Keep all notes and rough drafts of your work until after you have received your final grade. If I ask to see your notes and drafts and you don't have them, you will be required to write a new paper on a new subject. For security purposes keep a second copy of your final paper.

This project will be discussed at length in class. Please remember that plagiarism is a violation of the Cedar Crest College honor code. Your paper will not be graded unless on the title page you have written and signed the following pledge: "I have carefully read and understand the course handout entitled 'Citations, or How to Avoid Plagiarism.'" Also, remember that if your work involves living human subjects, you may have to get your research plan approved by Cedar Crest's Institutional Review Board.

Your paper must be in my mailbox, located in the office of the history and humanities secretary (Office 119, Hartzel Hall) by 11:30 a.m. on November 16. For every unexcused day it is late, your paper will lose a letter grade.

CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE AND DISCUSSION ASSESSMENT

Although I do not require perfect attendance, students should realize that a highly important component of this course (and your grade) is your participation in classroom discussion, much of which is grounded in the readings. The discussion grade will be based on an assessment of the student's grasp of the course materials and especially the readings. If you do not, or cannot, attend a class, it is your responsibility to get the missed notes. It is also your responsibility to be aware of any announcements—for example, assignments, schedule changes, etc.—that may have been given during the class.

GRADING

Discussion	25%
Paper (due November 16)	75%

DISABILITIES

Students with documented disabilities and who may need academic accommodation should see me during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodation should also contact the Advising Center.

COURSE WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE

November 9, 2009

OFFICE VISITS

Office visits are welcome. If you would like to discuss the course material, or if you just want to chat, feel free to drop by. My hours are Wednesday 11:00-11:30 a.m. and Thursday 11:00-11:30 a.m. I am also available by appointment on Tuesday 9:30-9:45 p.m. If none of these times are convenient for you, see me after class for an appointment.

THIS COURSE WILL BE TAUGHT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CEDAR CREST COLLEGE HONOR SYSTEM AND THE CLASSROOM PROTOCOL CODE FOUND IN THE CUSTOMS BOOK. PLAGIARISM AND/OR CHEATING WILL RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE COURSE. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS, PLEASE SEE ME.

CITATIONS OR HOW TO AVOID PLAGIARISM

Students often use other people's work in their own research. This is perfectly acceptable. Students should realize, however, that when they borrow ideas that are not in the realm of common knowledge, they must indicate the source of this information. This is done by means of citations. To cite improperly, or to fail to cite at all, is considered by scholars to be unethical. Although some scholarly fields place citations in parentheses within the body of the text, most historians use the footnote (located at the bottom of the page) or the endnote (located at the end of the text, but before the bibliography) as the means of citation. Accordingly, in this class your citation should appear at the bottom of the page or at the end of the text. I will assume that any passage that lacks a citation represented common knowledge or the original thinking of the author.

Citations and Quotations

1. **Paraphrasing Other People's Work:** Let's say you are writing a paper on Theodore Roosevelt's ideas about Native Americans. You will find that historians A, B, and C all say Roosevelt held Native American in contempt; indeed, he even thought that the most criminal of cowboys possessed higher morals than the average Indian. Then, using your own words, you paraphrase the three historians' ideas. This is legitimate. However, you must footnote the three historians from whom you obtained the information.
2. **The Quotation:** It is also proper to quote directly one or all of the historians mentioned above. If you do this, you must put quotation marks around the historian's exact words. In addition, you must indicate to the reader in a footnote or endnote where the quote can be found.

It is also possible to quote Roosevelt himself. Let's say that one of the historians uses Roosevelt's own words, found in a letter Roosevelt wrote to a friend, to prove his anti-Indian views. You may use this quote. But you must put quotation marks around Roosevelt's words and provide a footnote or an endnote. Thus you may write: "I don't go so far as to think that the only good Indians are the dead Indians," Roosevelt told a friend, "but I believe that nine out of ten are, and I shouldn't like to inquire too closely into the case of the tenth. The most vicious cowboy has more moral principle than the average Indian." (At this point you would provide a footnote or endnote number).

3. Plagiarism: If you take someone's ideas and fail to include a citation, you are guilty of plagiarism. If you take someone's exact words, or something that approximates their exact words, and fail to include quotation marks and a citation, you're guilty of plagiarism.
4. Common Knowledge, or What Need Not be Cited: It is unnecessary to provide a citation for information that falls into the realm of common knowledge. Common knowledge is the information that any educated adult (perhaps with a high school education) possesses. You can expect these people to know that Columbus sailed to America in 1492, that Lincoln, Napoleon, and Hitler once lived, that World War II was fought in the twentieth century. Common knowledge is not a large body of knowledge. When in doubt, put in a citation.

Other Points and Quotations:

- a.) Sometimes you may want to drop unimportant words from a quote. This is done by dropping the words and inserting three ellipses (. . .). For example, an original passage tells us: "Martin Luther King and several of his aids arrived in Atlanta on 2 July." The use of ellipses can transform the passage to: "Martin Luther King... arrived in Atlanta on 2 July."
- b.) You may add information (for example, punctuation, dates, or words that make a passage more intelligible, etc.) to a quote, but only if it is enclosed in brackets. For Example, the above quote could be changed in the following way: "Martin Luther King...arrived in Atlanta on 2 July [1962]. Never use parentheses when you mean to use brackets.
- c.) When you are using a quote that is more than three lines in length, you may skip a line, indent and single space the passage. This quote should end with a footnote number. Then skip a line and return to double spacing.
- d.) You may insert a sic into a quoted passage. The sic indicates that the passage contains a spelling, grammatical, or typographical error. For example, "Two days later, Goerge [sic] Washington moved his army to Valley Forge." Sics should be used sparingly. You should never use them to correct the work of someone who is poorly educated.

Footnotes or Endnotes:

1. The first time you cite a work, you should give a complete citation. For example, if the citation refers to a book, it should normally include the author's name, the book's full title, the place of publication, the publisher, the date of publication, and the page number. After you have done this once, you should simplify the citation, giving only the author's last name, a shortened version of the book's title, and the page number. (See below.)

2. Ibid. The ibid. always refers to the source found directly above it. It simply means that you are citing that source. If you are citing the same source, but a different page, just write ibid. and the new page number.

For example:

- 1
Barton C. Shaw, *The Wool-Hat Boys: Georgia's Populist Party* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1984), 36-37
- 2
C. Vann Woodward, *Tom Watson, Agrarian Rebel* (New York: MacMillan Company, 1938), 45
- 3
Shaw, *Wool-Hat Boys*, 56
- 4
Woodward, *Tom Watson*, 22
- 5
Ibid.
- 6
Ibid., 80

See the attached pages for an example of citations that appear at the bottom of the page, the shortening of a citation, and the use of the ibid.

3. To answer all of the questions that relate to the correct rendering of citations, find a Standard style manual. Historians use Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations*. But remember: Whatever your style manual might say, in this course citations should appear at the bottom of the page or at the end of the text.