

History 4998: Senior Honors in History

Dr. William Sturkey

Autumn, 2024

Syllabus

Location: VANP 402
Time: R: 1:45-4:44

wsturkey@sas.upenn.edu
Office: College Hall 306C
Hours: T, 2-4 & by appointment

Course Description:

This seminar is designed to facilitate the completion of an undergraduate Honor's Thesis in History. The Autumn course is the second of a two-part sequence that comes only after a great deal of research and study. This class will focus on the process of producing a major research essay that employs historical methodologies, engages relevant historiographies, and creates new knowledge. To achieve these ends, students will work closely with their advisors, the instructor, and each other. We will hold several workshops involving common readings that are designed to inform your approaches to historical research and writing. We will also spend a great deal of time reading and critiquing each other's essays in a constructive structure designed to improve the final thesis. Most of your time in this class will be spent on your own writing and research.

Readings:

1. Richard A. Marius & Melvin E. Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*, 9th edition (2014)
2. Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (2007)
3. Common readings posted to Canvas (Canvas)
4. Student writing. Students can expect to read and discuss drafts of their peers' theses.

Assignments and Evaluation:

Final Grades in this course will be determined by the following criteria:

1. Attendance & Participation: 15%
2. Thesis: 85%

Attendance:

- Attendance is required and will be taken at the beginning of every class. Each student is allowed **ONE** unexcused absence with no questions asked. Each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a 10% deduction from the overall Attendance Grade. More than **FOUR** unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the course.

Participation:

- In-Class Discussions are a crucial component of this course. **All students** are expected to read all course materials and engage in spirited class discussions. This is a small class. Please prepare yourself to speak. We will all learn from each other's perspectives and verbal contributions.
- The final Participation Grade will be determined at the instructor's discretion. Students will be evaluated based on their ability to vocally contribute to reading-based in-class discussions. Consistently tardy, disengaged, or disrespectful students (including those who text, surf the internet, or engage in other activities during class) will receive lower Participation Grades.

Thesis:

- The Undergraduate Honors Thesis is the most extensive research project open to undergraduate students at UPenn History. Students are expected to complete a thesis of 3 or 4 chapters based on original research.

Academic Integrity:

Students are expected to observe the highest standards of academic integrity. Any instances of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with the Code of Academic Integrity. For more details, please see the UPenn Center for Community Standards and Accountability: <https://csa.upenn.edu/>.

Plagiarism—the stealing of another person’s ideas and presenting them as your own—will be taken very seriously, and the instructor will impose appropriate sanctions in instances of Plagiarism. For more, please visit the UPenn Library Citation Practices and Avoiding Plagiarism website: <https://guides.library.upenn.edu/citationpractices/plagiarism>.

Students are prohibited from using any generative AI or similar tools to write any portion of their theses. The usage of any generative AI tool for written exams will be considered a violation of Penn’s Code of Academic Integrity and carry the same consequences as charges of Plagiarism.

Student Accommodations:

Students with any type of documented disability will be accommodated. Please inform the instructor immediately if arrangements should be made with the Weingarten Center to meet any particular learning needs. Their website for Disability Services can be accessed using the following link: <https://weingartencenter.universitylife.upenn.edu/disability-services/>.

Course Meeting and Reading Schedule:

- R (Aug. 29): Introductions and Workplan
- R (Sept. 5): Research & Writing Workshop
 - Marius and Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*, 88-143 [skim]
 - Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers*, 62-130 [skim]
- R (Sept. 12): No Class: Individual Meetings with Instructor
- R (Sept. 19): No Class: 1st round of drafts due
- R (Sept. 26): Peer Review Session #1
- R (Oct. 3): Fall Break—No Class
- R (Oct. 10): No Class: 2nd round of drafts due
- R (Oct. 17): Peer Review Session #2
- R (Oct. 24): No Class: Individual Meetings with Instructor
- R (Oct. 31): Introduction and Conclusion Workshop
- R (Nov. 7): No Class: 3rd round of drafts due
- R (Nov. 14): Peer Review Session #3

- R (Nov. 21): Intro and Conclusion Workshop
 - Canvas:
 - Intro Packet
 - Conclusion Packet
- R (Nov. 28): **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY: NO CLASS**
- R (Dec. 5): Class Presentations
- **Thesis Due via E-mail by 11:59pm on December 20**