

SENIOR HONORS SEMINAR IN HISTORY

Monday 1:45 - 4:45

Van Pelt 625

Prof. Benjamin Nathans
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The goal of this seminar is simple: each student will complete an honors thesis based on research in primary sources, drawing on careful analysis of the evidence and presented in a clear, organized, argument-driven exposition. Experience suggests, however, that reaching this goal will be anything but simple. It will require an unusual commitment of time and effort. With this in mind, assigned readings have been kept to a minimum and the class as a whole will meet only occasionally. Instead, we will convene for the most part in small groups, workshop-style, to discuss successive portions of the theses as they are drafted. Students are expected to arrange periodic one-on-one meetings with their thesis advisor and the instructor. We will keep to a **strict schedule of deadlines (see below)** to ensure that the writing process begins early in the semester - before research is fully completed - and continues on track to meet the **final due-date of December 18.**

Honors theses should be between 60 and 100 double-spaced pages in length.

Course Materials (already assigned in spring 2023):

Richard Marius and Melvin Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*, 8th ed. (2012)
Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed. (2013)

Grading:

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| Completed honors thesis: | 90% |
| Participation in small group meetings: | 10% |

Written Assignments and Due Dates:

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| Aug. 30: | report on summer research (max 1500 words) plus preliminary thesis outline |
| Sept. 11: | 5- to 10-page fragment of thesis (double-spaced) |
| Oct. 2: | minimum 10-page fragment plus revised thesis outline |
| Oct. 23: | minimum 10-page fragment |
| Nov. 20: | penultimate draft plus revised thesis outline |
| Dec. 18: | completed honors thesis |

CALENDAR (dates in red involve seminar meetings)

- Aug. 30** **Assignment due: written report on summer research (max 1500 words) plus preliminary thesis outline**
- Sept. 11** **Honors Thesis Boot Camp**
- Marius and Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*, 88-143
Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers*, 62-130
- Deadline for submission (via email) of a 5- to 10-page fragment of your thesis**, to be sent to your thesis adviser, instructor, and three classmates
- Sept. 18** Small group meetings (4 students plus instructor) to discuss and critique fragments
- Oct. 2** **Deadline for submission of at least a 10-page fragment of your thesis (not to overlap with earlier fragment) as well as a storyboard or outline (whichever works best for you)**, to be sent to your thesis adviser, instructor, and three classmates
- For tips on storyboards and outlines, consult Turabian, sections 2.3 and 6.2.1
- Oct. 9** Small group meetings (4 students plus instructor) to discuss and critique fragments
- Oct. 16** 6-8pm: dinner/bull session/group therapy/pep rally/faith healing (location TBA)
- Oct. 23** **Deadline for submission of at least a 10-page fragment of your thesis (not to overlap with earlier fragments)**, to be sent to your thesis adviser, instructor, and three classmates
- Oct. 30** Small group meetings (3 students plus instructor) to discuss and critique fragments
- Nov. 20** **Deadline for submission of penultimate draft of your thesis**, to be sent to your thesis adviser, instructor, and three classmates
- Nov. 27-29 Individual meetings with instructor to discuss penultimate drafts
- Dec. 18** **Completed honors thesis due**

Friday May 3, 2024: Senior Honors Symposium in 209 College Hall (details to follow)