History 250: Historical Inquiry

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Office Hours: M-W-F 3-4 pm (or by appointment)  
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Overview:

This seminar will serve as an introduction to historiography (scholarly debate) and methodology (research procedures). It will emphasize the use and analysis of primary and secondary sources as well as appropriate citation. Students will write common papers on the New Deal and research individual topics, selected in consultation with the instructor.

Texts:

• Anthony Badger, *The New Deal*
• Mark Gilderhus, *History and the Historians: A Historiographical Introduction* (5th ed.)
• Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (6th ed.)

All texts are available at the bookstore.

Written Requirements:

• **Document essay**: Each student will write a critical analysis (750 words) of a set of documents in the course packet. The essay should make use of the “AAAAA” method described in *The History Handbook*.
• **Research paper**: Each student will prepare a paper (1500–2000 words) on the New Deal using primary sources and the Badger text. Consult the course packet for more details.
• **Peer critique**: Each student will prepare a careful evaluation (500 words) of a classmate’s paper, focusing on the quality of the argument, structure, evidence, and style. Consult the course packet for more details.
• **Annotated bibliography**: Each student will compile a bibliography of at least 30 titles. It should include secondary works (15), journal articles (5), and primary documents (10) as well as brief comments (several sentences) on their relevance and significance. Consult the example in the course packet for guidance.
• **Journal précis**: Each student will prepare a brief essay (250 words) summarizing (one paragraph) and analyzing (one paragraph) a scholarly article cited in the bibliography. The analysis should focus on the evidence and logic used to support the thesis. Consult the examples in the course packet for guidance. Include the article with the précis.
• **Footnote review**: Each student will write a concise essay (500 words) examining two footnotes (one based on a primary source and one based on a secondary source) from a secondary work cited in the bibliography. The review should assess whether the historian used and cited the factual information appropriately and accurately.
• **Topic memo:** Each student will write a short memo (250 words) describing their proposed project in general terms. It should discuss important sources, pose critical questions, and offer a tentative thesis. Consult the example in the course packet for guidance.

*All written work must conform to the standard guidelines set forth in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers.* Any act of plagiarism (see the OWU Catalog and The History Handbook) will lead to an “F” for the assignment and a report to the dean of academic affairs, with additional penalties possible.*

**Oral Requirements:**

- Class discussion
- Paper presentation
- Peer critique
- Topic presentation

*Regular attendance and informed participation are required. More than one excused absence will lead to a reduction of one letter in the course grade. Any unexcused absences will result in an “F” for the course.*

**Grading:**

- Class participation 20 percent
- Research paper 40 percent
- Research project 40 percent

*Late work will result in substantial penalties (one full letter grade per day). Significant progress will receive appropriate recognition. Class participation will include the document essay, writing quizzes, paper presentation, and peer critique. The research project will include the annotated bibliography, journal précis, footnote review, and topic memo.*

**Topics and Readings** *(assignments are due in class that day unless otherwise noted):*

1. January 18: **Course Introduction**

2. January 25: **Atomic Bomb**  
   Due: Document essay (packet); Enola Gay (ERes); begin Badger

3. February 1: **Historiography (I)**  
   Due: Continue Badger; Gilderhus, chapters 2-3; writing quiz #1
4. February 8:  **Individual Conferences (I)**
   Due: Finish Badger; New Deal research topic

5. February 15:  **Methodology (I)**
   Due: Begin research paper; writing quiz #2

6. February 22:  **Methodology (II)**
   Due: Research notes (class copies); Gilderhus, chapter 6; F&B worksheet

7. March 1:  **Presentations**
   Due: Research paper

8. March 8:  **Individual Conferences (II)**
   Due: Research topic

9. March 15:  **University Holiday**

10. March 22:  **Peer Critique (I)**
   Due: Revised file for ERes posting by **noon on March 20**

11. March 29:  **Peer Critique (II)**
   Due: Begin research topics

12. April 5:  **Individual Conferences (III)**
   Due: Research rewrite; topic update

13. April 12:  **No Class**
   Due: Prepare annotated bibliography

14. April 19:  **Historiography (II)**
   Due: Annotated bibliography; Gilderhus, chapters 4-5

15. April 26:  **Research Project (I)**
   Due: Topic memo (class copies); journal précis

   Due: Topic memo (class copies); footnote review

*For changes and updates, please consult the ERes course page.*