

History 499.2: Senior Seminar in History  
*Late 20<sup>th</sup>-Century U.S. Women's History*  
Spring 2017, George Mason University

Professor Laura Moore

Email: lmooreb@gmu.edu (best way to contact me)

Office: Robinson B 369A

Office Hours: Vary by week, but you will usually find me in my office before class

Mailbox: Robinson B 359

History Department Phone: (703) 993-1250

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History 499 is the capstone course for history majors. Students build on their experience in History 300 and other advanced courses to write a full-length original research paper of around 6,000 words. In this particular section of History 499, we will focus on late 20<sup>th</sup> century U.S. history (approximately the 1960s-1980s) in the era of “second-wave feminism.” We begin the course with readings and discussions about historical scholarship in general and the women’s movement in this time period specifically, and students complete a series of research projects. By the fifth week of the semester, you will have developed a research question that will grow out of that “digging.” You will then spend the bulk of the semester on your own original research and writing, as well as on sharing findings and drafts with classmates.

In addition to its importance in the history major, History 499 officially fulfills several other aspects of a GMU undergraduate education. It is a Mason Core “synthesis” course, meaning it should “expand students’ ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills.” As a “writing intensive” course, students must write drafts and revisions based on the professor’s feedback. Finally, History 499 is “Research and Scholarship Intensive,” requiring students to take responsibility for carrying out an original research project.<sup>1</sup>

In the end, as the capstone to a history major’s liberal arts education, History 499 students gain experience with the methods, challenges, and collaboration required of advanced historical scholarship. In this class, YOU are the historian, YOU are the scholar.

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The course is organized around the four major elements that go into creating an original research project:

1. Reading scholarly works, **secondary sources** that relate to one’s research topic
2. Finding and analyzing **primary sources**
3. Organizing one’s findings and writing **drafts**
4. Getting **comments** and advice from colleagues

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<sup>1</sup> For information about these designations, see <http://masoncore.gmu.edu/general-education-at-mason-2/synthesis/>, <http://wac.gmu.edu/wi-course-resources/wi-course-criteria/>, and <http://oscar.gmu.edu/students/Students-as-Scholars-Classes.cfm>

## HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE:

**-Stay in touch with Professor Moore:** Always let me know right away if you get stuck, confused, or worried about any assignments. Keep me updated on your research and writing. I'll follow your progress through the weekly journal and, most weeks, will catch up with you in class. In addition, you can always email me. Don't hide problems from me – I know this is a hard class, and I can help you to navigate it. But also please share exciting finds and insights!

**-Do EVERY assignment, on time and following instructions:** This class emphasizes the research PROCESS. Assignments take you on the step-by-step journey of researching and writing an advanced, original research paper. You cannot succeed if you don't complete the steps *in order* and *on time*. You should be able to complete the readings and assignments averaging about ten hours per week outside of class time. We all have busy lives, though. Sometimes you won't have as much time as you'd like to do your school work. Sometimes other classes or other parts of your life will take priority over this one. Even then, by following the steps, you can reach a successful end result in your senior thesis paper. *In other words*, get the assignments (including all reading) done in the time you have to do them, meeting all deadlines. Please don't make me give you a "zero" on anything.

**-Come to EVERY class meeting, on time and well-prepared:** For a small seminar like this one to succeed, every student must attend every class – with the reading done and assignments in hand. Because scholarship is a collaborative enterprise, your absence would also hurt other students. We will not hold class every week, and often we will not use the full allotted time. When we are in class, we all need to be there, fully participating.

## TECHNOLOGY

I assume that all History 499 students have basic computer literacy and *daily* internet access, including on weekends.

I expect you to check your **GMU email** at least once every twenty-four hours. GMU's official policy is to use only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with students, and you are required to use it for university communications, including this class.

Every week you will read and submit materials on our course page on **Blackboard**, available via <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu>.

This course requires that you use the bibliographic management software **Zotero**. We will use class time to go over Zotero, but first you need to download the most recent version at <http://www.zotero.org/>. For installation advice go to <https://www.zotero.org/support/installation>.

I encourage you to bring a computer to class, but it should remain closed during class discussions except when I say otherwise. Cell phones, etc., should also be turned off. You will, of course, need a **notebook and pen or pencil** every day.

## READINGS

You can purchase the two required books at the campus bookstore:

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (2013). You may use either the paperback or e-book (Kindle) version, as long as it's the correct edition. **Bring your copy to every class meeting.**

Nancy MacLean, *The American Women's Movement, 1945-2000: A Brief History with Documents*.

Another main text is online only:

William Cronon's *Learning Historical Research* at  
<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/index.htm>

Additional assigned reading will be available online or through the course Blackboard page.

**Always bring to class copies of assigned readings and your notes on them.**

Finally, as part of your original research, you will find primary and secondary sources that you are, of course, required to read. You will find them in online databases, library shelves, archival collections and elsewhere, as we will practice in class. Always keep me up-to-date on what you're reading and bring notes or copies to class.

## HONOR CODE

I take my obligations under the University Honor Code seriously and expect you to do the same. All the work you do in this course is subject to the policy. It is especially important that you do not commit **plagiarism** – that is using others' wording or ideas without attribution. You can avoid it by **using proper citation methods** (including to ALL internet sources used in any kind of research) and quotation marks when quoting. Remember that summary, paraphrasing, and quoting all require citations. And remember, as well, that plagiarism includes not just published sources, but also the writing or ideas of friends, family, or classmates without acknowledging them. You have signed the Honor Code stating that you understand what plagiarism is. I also expect you to review the Writing Center's plagiarism handout available here: <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources> and the Honor Code statement on plagiarism available here: <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>

If you are at all worried that you (or a classmate) may be in danger of an honor code violation, you should talk to me immediately. Any suspicions of any kind of cheating will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER/CAMPUS CLOSINGS

If campus closes because of bad weather (or any other reason), you are still responsible for **completing all work as scheduled**, and we will be in touch via email and Blackboard – so, you need to make sure you can contact me. If the University is open, no matter what the weather is like, we will be having class as scheduled and all of the rules regarding attendance and punctuality apply.

## RESOURCES

I encourage you to utilize the many support services available to GMU students. For example, **Learning Services** at CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) offers workshops in academic skills, some of which are particularly well-suited to history majors:

<http://caps.gmu.edu/learning-services/>.

I also expect History 499 students to make use of the **Writing Center**. You can make an appointment for a writing tutor session (which I recommend you do at least once this semester) at <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>.

Librarians are a historian's greatest allies, and you will spend a lot of time this semester at **Fenwick Library** and on its website, <http://library.gmu.edu/>. We will be working with the History Liaison Librarian, George Oberle, who you can contact for research help at [goberle@gmu.edu](mailto:goberle@gmu.edu)

If you are a student with a disability who needs academic accommodations, please see me privately and contact the **Office of Disability Resources** at (703) 993-2474 (<http://ods.gmu.edu/>). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Finally, please note the following key dates:

Last Day to Add: January 30

Final Drop Deadline: February 24

Selective Withdrawal Period: February 27 – March 31

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Participation: 10% of course grade

Journal: 10%

Research Digs: 10%

Quizzes: 5%

Writing Assignments (drafts and comments): 15%

Paper Proposal: 10%

Senior Thesis: 40%

**Participation:** This part of the grade credits you for coming to class well-prepared and for participating actively in discussions. More generally, it reflects my expectation that every student will be a “good citizen,” that is, treat the course and fellow students with attention, respect, responsibility and professionalism.

Being *well prepared* means, at a minimum, that you have reviewed the syllabus as well as notes and handouts from the previous class, that you have the assigned readings with you along with ideas for discussing them, and, of course, that you know what’s due that day. Attendance is also a factor – after all, you cannot participate if you’re not there.

If you do come to every class meeting, on time and prepared, offer something substantial to every discussion, and listen respectfully and take notes, then you will earn at least a “B” for your participation grade, and participation will not lower your course grade. If, however, you miss more than one class meeting (or arrive late), assume you will not earn better than a “C” for participation, and if you miss more than four meetings, you will likely NOT PASS THE COURSE.

**Journal:** Throughout the 13 weeks of semester, you will use Blackboard to keep a weekly journal on the reading, research, and writing that you’re doing for this course. I will check the journals every Tuesday at 1:30pm, so you need to post at least one entry every week by that time. If you miss more than one journal entry, you can earn at best a “C” for the journal grade, missing more than four earns an “F” on the journal, and missing more than six means you FAIL THE COURSE.

To get credit, journal entries must detail how you spent approximately ten hours that week on the class, and they should reflect on what you learned doing that week’s reading, research, and writing. It will take at least 300 words every week to log this work in your journal, usually more.

When reading is assigned, it must also be clear from the journal entry that you have done it ALL and have given it some serious thought. You might respond in your journal to reading questions I provide. At least, let me know, what especially interested or confused you about the assigned readings, what you think is especially important, what questions you have, and what you might like to talk about in class.

In addition, use the journal to brainstorm and to communicate with me about how your research and writing go, to reflect on the process by which you’re conducting your research, where you run into roadblocks, where the research leads in different directions than you expected, which resources are especially helpful, problems or questions you’re wrestling with, ideas for writing paragraphs or sections of your paper, and so on.

**Research Digs:** During the first five weeks of the semester, you will complete a series of research assignments using different methods to find a variety of sources. They will require you to go to the library, to make printouts and photocopies, to include citations, to take notes, and to informally address questions I give you about the sources and research tactics. The research question and topic for your senior thesis will emerge out of these “digs.”

I will provide detailed instructions on these assignments. If you turn the digs in on time, following instructions exactly with nothing missing, you will earn an “A” for this part of the course grade. Just one zero, however, that is missing just one dig, means FAILING THE COURSE. I *may* accept one research dig a little late, with a grade reduction, but *only* if you contact me before it’s due to let me know you’ve run into difficulty and to make arrangements to turn it in.

**Quizzes:** I will occasionally give you an in-class or take-home quiz that will require you to refer to your notes on class discussions and readings. Three of these are included in the syllabus. Others will be “pop” quizzes, given without warning. They will vary in length and style. They will always be open-note, because a main goal of the quizzes is to encourage you to practice note-taking skills. As long as you keep up with all class assignments and meetings and take good notes, then, you will be prepared for quizzes. Quizzes cannot be made up or rescheduled under any circumstances.

**Writing Assignments:** The key to writing well is writing steadily and learning how to revise drafts effectively. You will start writing early and spend much of this semester helping each other. During the sixth week of class, I will divide you into writing groups. For the rest of the semester, you will write comments on drafts written by your group members.

I will provide detailed instructions for each writing assignment, including questions you must address for the comments. To get credit, a draft must follow instructions carefully and demonstrate care and serious thought as well as attention to previous comments. In the comments, I’ll be looking for thoughtful insights and useful, concrete advice, again *following instructions* and addressing all of the questions seriously.

**DRAFTS:** You must turn in each of these assignments or YOU WILL NOT PASS THE COURSE. They must also be on time. If you need a little extra time, you must contact both me and your group members before the deadline to obtain permission – which I may not grant.

Research Question: Due

First Draft:

Second Draft:

**COMMENTS:** Missing a set of comments will LOWER YOUR COURSE GRADE by one full letter grade. As with the drafts, you must obtain permission from me and your group members, before the deadline, if you want some extra time.

Comments on Paper Proposals: Due

Comments on First Drafts:

Comments on Second Drafts:

**Paper Proposal:** A graded assignment, the proposal will lay out your research question, discuss relevant secondary sources, explain your primary source research strategy, and include a bibliography. I will provide detailed guidance on this assignment. The proposal is REQUIRED TO PASS THE COURSE.

**Senior Thesis:** This paper is the end result of the semester's work and the capstone of your career as a history major. It will be an original research paper of approximately 6,000 words (around 20 pages), plus the bibliographies. As with any history paper, this one will be evaluated on how clear, convincing, logical, original, and insightful the argument is and how well it uses evidence from primary sources. It must show solid understanding of relevant scholarly literature, while being grounded in primary source research (at least half of its footnotes should be to primary sources).

In format, the paper must follow standard scholarly practice (which we will discuss in class), relying on Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*. In addition to footnotes, the paper must also include an annotated bibliography of primary sources and a separate bibliography of secondary sources, which should include every source you used during your research, including websites, whether or not you refer directly to them in the paper. Obviously, you must turn in the senior thesis to pass the course.

In addition to the written version of the paper, you will do an ORAL PRESENTATION of your research at the end of the semester. This presentation constitutes 5% of the senior thesis grade. I will provide instructions and advice. The oral presentation is required in order to PASS THE COURSE, which means you must attend class both those days.

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I look forward to exploring history with you and to learning from your research!

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After re-reading the entire syllabus, please sign the following statement and show it to me in class on January 31:

*I have read the entire syllabus for Spring 2017 Hist 499.2. I have noted all due-dates. I understand that missing assignments, including readings and participation, means failing the course or a substantially lowered course grade. I understand that if I have problems completing an assignment on time, I should contact Professor Moore and that she may or may not grant extra time. I have asked Professor Moore any questions I have about the syllabus, and I will ask her when I realize I need any further clarification. I will also make sure I receive and read all forthcoming instructions and handouts.*

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** I reserve the right to make changes to the course and to the assignment schedule in ways that I deem in the best interests of the class. It is ***your responsibility*** to use the syllabus, to keep track of any changes, and to make sure you have received all handouts and other instructions. The key to success is to be proactive!

January 24

Introductions and Review

Read: "Learning Historical Research: Introduction" at

<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/index.htm>

Turabian, "A Note to Students," "Preface," "Overview of Part I"

"Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide" at

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

January 31

Historical Context

Remember to post first journal entry to Blackboard

Turn in: Review Quiz and Research Digs 1, 2, and 3

Read: Chapter Introductions, *In Our Time*, on Blackboard

Kerber, et al, "Struggles Against Injustice 1945-2010" on Blackboard

MacLean, *The American Women's Movement*, Part One, pp 1-43 and

"Chronology," pp. 175-180

American Historical Association's "Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct" sections 1-4 (only) at

<http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm>

Turabian, Chapter 1

"Learning Historical Research: On the Search" at

<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/searching.htm>

February 7

Going to the Documents

Turn in: Digs 4 and 5

Read: Turabian, chapters 2-3

MacLean, Part Two, pp 45-174 (selections TBA)

"Documents" on Blackboard

"Learning Historical Research: Manuscripts and Archives" at

<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/manuscripts.htm>

"About SCRC" at <http://sca.gmu.edu/about.php>

SCRC InfoGuide: "Primary Source Research,"

[http://infoguides.gmu.edu/sca/sca\\_research](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/sca/sca_research);

and "Glossary/FAQ" [http://infoguides.gmu.edu/sca/sca\\_faq](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/sca/sca_faq) at

SCRC Finding Aids, to be assigned in previous class, links at

<http://sca.gmu.edu/collections-alpha.php>

February 14

Historical Conversations

Turn in: Digs 6 and 7

Read: Turabian, chapter 4

Bailey, "Sexual Revolution(s)," on Blackboard

Craig, "Madison Avenue Versus *The Feminine Mystique*," on Blackboard

Martin, "The Shock Troops of Direct Action," on Blackboard



- Sunday February 19      Post to Blackboard: **Research Question**
- February 21      Turn in: Dig 8  
Read: Turabian, chapters 15, 16, and skim chapter 17  
“Learning Historical Research: Positioning Your Argument” at  
<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/positioning.htm>  
Zotero “QuickStart Guide,” and “Screencast Tutorials” at  
<http://www.zotero.org/support/>  
Review: “Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide” at  
[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)
- February 28      Turn in: PAPER PROPOSAL
- Sunday, March 5      Post to Blackboard: **Comments** on your group members’ Proposals
- March 7      Turn in: Secondary Source Analysis Quiz  
Read: Comments on all your group members’ Proposals  
Turabian, chapters 5, 6, 7 and skim chapter 25  
“Learning Historical Research: Drafting, Revising, Editing” at  
<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/writing.htm>
- March 14      SPRING BREAK
- March 21      Come to class prepared to discuss progress on your first draft
- Friday March 24      Post to Blackboard: **First Draft**
- Sunday March 26      Post to Blackboard: **Comments** on group members’ first drafts
- March 28      Read: Comments on your group members’ drafts  
Turabian, chapters 9, 10, 11, 12  
Skim: Turabian, Appendix (pages 371-408) noting especially Figures A.1, A.9, A.10, A.12, A.14, and A.15
- April 4      Individual Meetings (bring revised draft) – We will not gather together in class
- April 11      Turn in: **Second Draft**

Sunday April 16	Post to Blackboard: <b>Comments</b> on your group members' second drafts
April 18	<p>Bring to class: Draft of oral presentation</p> <p>Turn in: Final Quiz</p> <p>Read: Comments on your group members' drafts</p> <p>Turabian, chapters 13 and 14</p> <p>Stearns, "Why Study History" at <a href="http://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/archives/why-study-history-%281998%29">http://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/archives/why-study-history-%281998%29</a></p> <p>"History Discipline Core: American Historical Association Tuning Project" at <a href="https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/tuning/history-discipline-core">https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/tuning/history-discipline-core</a></p>
April 25	ORAL PRESENTATIONS
May 2	<p>ORAL PRESENTATIONS, cont.</p> <p>Turn in: SENIOR THESIS</p>
May 16	Keep the scheduled final exam period available

**Review "Quiz" -- Due in class January 31**

I'm looking for thorough, well-written answers that use specific examples. To get full credit for these answers, you will need to paraphrase and quote readings from this class, and, if you choose, previous study - and, of course, cite those sources appropriately.

You may use the back of this page, or you may type your answers on a separate page.

1. What are historians talking about when they talk about:

Primary sources?

Secondary sources?

2. A. What citation format do historians use?

B. Why is proper citation an ethical issue for scholars, including historians?

3. A. Imagine you have to write instructions on how to check out a book from an academic library for someone who has no idea how. Provide clear and detailed directions for obtaining the following book from GMU library:

\_\_\_\_\_ (will give you book author and title in class)

In addition:

B. Write a bibliography citation for this book

C. Write a footnote citation for this book as though you were paraphrasing from p. 28.

D. How might you use this book to find other secondary sources on similar topics?