

History 499 (Fall 2012)
Senior Research Seminar on Revolutionary America

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Office hours: Thursdays, 10:00 a.m.-noon and by appointment

This course is the capstone of the History major. Students are required to do a major research paper on a topic dealing with the era of the American Revolution. The paper requires students to demonstrate that they have mastered the skills of historical research, analysis, oral presentation, and written communication. Papers must be 20-25 typed, doubled-spaced pages, plus bibliography. This course is an RS-designated course,* fulfills the Writing Intensive requirement for the History major,** and is a Synthesis course*** for the university's General Education requirement.

Books:

William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*, 4th ed.

Gordon S. Wood, *The American Revolution: A History*

Revolutionary America, 1763-1815

Date: Topic/Assignment:

Aug. 30 **Introduction: Researching the Revolutionary Era/Introduction to Fenwick Library**

Sept. 6 **Sources and Methods in Researching Revolutionary America**
Reading and Discussion: Wood, *American Revolution*; Storey, *Writing History*, 1-20. BRING BOTH BOOKS TO CLASS.

Written Assignment: Turn in *two* possible research topics for your paper. In devising a topic, feel free to consult the instructor, choose from the list at the end of the syllabus, get ideas from Wood's *American Revolution*, or draw on your own interests. INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS TO DISCUSS YOUR TOPIC WILL BE SCHEDULED.

Sept. 13 **Using Online Databases**
MEET AT JOHNSON CENTER COMPUTER CLASSROOM, ROOM 311B

Reading and Discussion: Storey, *Writing History*, pp. 20-30,

Writing: Turn in a short description (1-2 sentences) of your proposed paper topic, along with three questions you hope to answer in the course of doing the paper. What kind of primary sources will most likely help you answer your questions?

Sept. 20

Reading Primary Sources

Reading and Discussion: Storey, *Writing History*, pp. 50-62. BRING BOOK TO CLASS.

Written Assignments: **Turn in Research Log #1.** YOU WILL ALSO BE EXPECTED TO TURN IN A RESEARCH LOG AT EACH CLASS FOR THE NEXT SIX WEEKS. Make sure you have turned in the **Database Exercise** from the previous week.

Also turn in an annotated bibliography. The Bibliography should have three sections: Major Primary Source Collections/Edited Volumes/Databases; Secondary Source Books; Scholarly Articles. Write two or three sentences describing each work. Be sure to use the Chicago Manual of Style format (Turabian), found in Storey, *Writing History*, pp. 50-58.

For the secondary sources: at least two of the articles and seven of the books should be published within the last 25 years. For the primary sources: Make sure you describe the **kind** of source (e.g., letters, autobiography, newspaper, pamphlet); the **medium** (edited collection, handwritten manuscript, original printed volume, online database, microfilm, microfiche); and the **location** (e.g., Fenwick Library, Library of Congress Manuscript Room, National Archives, database url, etc.).

Sept. 27

Historiography/ Constructing a Thesis Statement

Reading and Discussion: Storey, *Writing History*, pp. 31-42. BRING BOOK TO CLASS.

Written Assignments: **Turn in Research Log #2.**

Also turn in a 3-paragraph historiography assignment. Choose two secondary sources (books and/or articles) related to your topic. Write one paragraph summarizing each source's major argument/thesis. Devote the third paragraph to explaining the major points of agreement or disagreement between the two historians. Use appropriate footnote citations.

Oct. 4

Historical Text and Context

Reading Assignment: Storey, *Writing History*, pp. 62-74.

Written Assignments: **Turn in Research Log #3.**

Also turn in a one-page primary source exercise. In this exercise, you should choose one short primary source that is relevant to your research topic. Summarize the contents of the document and place it in the appropriate historical context. Use appropriate footnote citations.

Oct. 11 **Individual Meetings—Turn in Research Log #4.** Be prepared to discuss where you are in your research and where you need to go.

Oct. 18 **Oral Presentations**
Written Assignment: Turn in Research Log # 5.

Presentation: Prepare a **5-minute oral report** in which you BRIEFLY summarize your topic. Provide a Powerpoint outline of your talk along with one or two relevant images. In your presentation, be sure to explain what your subject is, the chronological boundaries of your project, the kinds of primary sources you are using, and your tentative conclusions or research questions. Be prepared to answer questions from the audience. **Practice your presentation. Time limits will be strictly enforced.**

Oct. 25 **Organization/Writing Strategies**
Reading and Discussion: Storey, *Writing History*, 75-91, 99-118.

Written Assignments: Turn in Research Log #6.

Group A students should also turn in a 3-4 page Introduction.
The Introduction should describe your historical subject/topic, explain why it is important, establish the historical context, and discuss the relevant historiography. **INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH GROUP A STUDENTS WILL BE SCHEDULED.** Students should bring their thesis statement and a brief outline of the entire paper with them to the individual meetings.

Nov. 1 **Plagiarism/Peer Review**
Reading and Discussion: Storey, *Writing History*, 42-50, 119-123.

Written Assignment: Turn in your final Research Log #7.

Group B students should also turn in a 3-4 page Introduction.
The Introduction should describe your historical subject/topic, explain why it is important, establish the historical context, and discuss the relevant historiography. **INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH GROUP B STUDENTS WILL BE SCHEDULED.** Students should bring their thesis statement and a brief outline of the entire paper with them to the individual meetings.

Nov. 8 **Independent Writing--Groups A and B**

Group A papers are due on Friday, Nov. 9 at noon. This is **NOT** a draft; this is the first version of the entire paper complete with footnotes (though a bibliography is not yet necessary). Send an email version to the person assigned to read your paper AND put a hard copy of the paper in my mailbox in the History Office.

Nov. 15

Group A only: Discussion of Group A Papers

Group A meets to discuss their papers. Write a one-to-two page critique of the paper assigned to you. Provide one copy for me and one copy for the author. For class discussion, the reviewer should prepare a short summary (no more than five minutes) which summarizes the paper's thesis, discusses the paper's major primary sources, and analyzes the paper's greatest strength and weakness. You must also suggest at least one concrete means of improving the essay. Focus on substance, argument, and evidence, not on writing style.

Group B papers are due on Friday, Nov. 16 at noon. This is **NOT** a draft; this is the first version of the entire paper complete with footnotes (though a bibliography is not yet necessary). Send an email version to the person assigned to read your paper **AND** put a hard copy of the paper in my mailbox in the History Office.

Nov. 29

Group B only: Discussion of Group B Papers

Group B meets to discuss their papers. Write a one-to-two page critique of the paper assigned to you. Provide one copy for me and one copy for the author. For class discussion, the reviewer should prepare a short summary (no more than five minutes) which summarizes the paper's thesis, discusses the paper's major primary sources, and analyzes the paper's greatest strength and weakness. You must also suggest at least one concrete means of improving the essay. Focus on substance, argument, and evidence, not on writing style.

Dec. 6

History Research Papers and Lifelong Learning

Discussion: Prepare a **5-minute oral presentation** reflecting on your research experience. First, remind us what your topic was. Then discuss one thing that you learned or that worked well for you in the research and writing process. Then mention one thing that didn't work well or that you would do differently next time. Finally, be prepared to answer a question about how the research/writing/analytical skills learned in this course prepare you for a job in the real world.

Students are encouraged but not required to make an appointment to meet with the professor as they prepare the final version of their papers.

FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE BY noon on Friday, Dec. 14.

Papers should be 20-25 pages in length (plus bibliography), typed, double-spaced. Papers **MUST** use the Chicago Manual of Style citation format (Turabian), also discussed in Storey, *Writing History*, pp. 50-58. In the **Bibliography**, secondary sources should be listed under three headings: **Primary Sources**; **Secondary Sources**; **Scholarly Articles**. At least 10 books and 3 articles must be cited. Online sources/databases/websites should be listed under the appropriate category listed above.

Please turn in ONE hard copy in my mailbox along with the first version of your paper containing my comments. IN ADDITION, send me an email with your paper as an attachment.

Grading:

Oral presentations and discussion:	15%
Preliminary writing assignments (including Research Logs):	35%
Research paper (first and second version):	50%

In order to receive a passing grade, students must complete ALL the written and oral assignments for the course. Late work will be penalized.

Criteria for evaluating Research Papers:

- *States an original thesis or historical interpretation
- *Uses primary sources effectively
- *Relates work to existing secondary literature in the field
- *Synthesizes and analyzes diverse sources
- *Links the subject to broader historical questions or historiography
- *Integrates skills and knowledge acquired in other disciplinary contexts
- *Writing is clear and grammatical; essay is well-organized, coherent, and follows citation norms of the field

Criteria for evaluating Oral Presentations:

- * Demonstrates ability to present one's work in a clear and organized manner
- * Completes the essential elements within the allotted time
- *Engages and maintains the audience's attention
- *Demonstrates ability to handle questions from the audience
- *Demonstrates ability to synthesize elements from different disciplines

Drop Deadlines

The last day to drop a class without tuition liability is Sept. 4. If you drop by Sept. 18, there is a 33% tuition penalty. THE FINAL DROP DATE is Sept. 28, when there is a 67% tuition liability.

Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

All GMU students are bound to abide by the Honor Code (<http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/honorcode/>). One of the most common honor code violations is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a broadly defined term that includes a wide spectrum of violations. Put most simply, it is appropriating another person's words or ideas as if they were your own. It includes, but is not limited to, the use of another person's words without attribution or proper citation; submission of work that is not one's own, whether the work is stolen, purchased, or used with the author's permission; the too-close paraphrasing of another person's words or ideas. If you don't know if something constitutes plagiarism, ask the instructor. Students suspected of Honor Code violations will be turned over to the university Honor Board for disciplinary action.

Students with Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

History 499 is:

***RS-Designated course:** This class is designated as a Research and Scholarship Intensive Course, which means that students are given the opportunity to actively participate in the process of scholarship. Students will make a significant contribution by creating an original research paper that synthesizes the student's reading and analysis of primary and secondary sources into a coherent historical essay.

In this RS course, students will:

- Create an original scholarly research paper. .
- Communicate knowledge from the original research paper in written and oral form.
- Engage in scholarly inquiry by:
 1. Articulating and refining an historical question.
 2. Following ethical norms and principles within the discipline of history.
 3. Gathering historical evidence appropriate to the question
 4. Assessing the validity of historical evidence.

****Writing Intensive course.** This class is designated as a Writing Intensive course and fulfills the Writing Intensive requirement in the History major. It does so through the completion of a 20-25 page original historical research paper. The paper will be completed through a draft/feedback/revision process. The first version is due on Nov. 9 or 16. I will provide suggestions for revision. The revised paper is due on Dec. 14.

*****Synthesis course.** This course is designated a Synthesis course. The purpose of a Synthesis course is to provide students with the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills, and values gained from the general education curriculum. Synthesis courses strive to expand students' ability to master new content, think critically, and develop life-long learning skills across the disciplines.

FINDING A TOPIC

Finding a viable topic is one of the hardest things to do in this course. The purpose of this research paper is to explore a specific, narrowly defined topic relating to the American Revolutionary Era (defined broadly as the period from 1760-1820) using primary sources and the relevant secondary literature. Although the possibilities are endless, it is very important to make sure you have a definite set of primary sources in mind for your paper. These sources can include: newspapers, pamphlets, letters and correspondence, magazines and periodicals, legislative records, laws, novels and poetry, petitions, court records, church records, political cartoons, maps, wills, etc. These sources may be available through online databases, in printed volumes, or at particular libraries and archives (Library of Congress, Fairfax County Courthouse, Society of the Cincinnati, Virginia Historical Society, Massachusetts Historical Society, etc. etc.).

Here are some examples of good topics. You may choose one of these topics or define your own topic, in consultation with me.

1. Use the manuscript collections at the Society of the Cincinnati Library in Washington, DC to examine George Washington's role in the creation of the Society.
2. Go to the Virginia Room at the Fairfax Library to look at materials related to the Fairfax Resolves passed prior to the American Revolution.
3. Use manuscripts at Holy Trinity Church in Washington, DC to study the role of Catholics in the revolutionary era.
4. Use the online Papers of the War Department from the 1780s and 1790s to examine the role of Indians during the American Revolution.
5. Use the online version of the *Pennsylvania Gazette* newspaper to understand the experiences of indentured servants during the American Revolution.
6. Use printed debates of the ratifying conventions to understand why some Virginians opposed the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
7. Use pamphlets available online from the Early American Imprint Series (Evans) to understand why people like Andrew Oliver, Samuel Seabury, and Thomas Hutchinson opposed the American Revolution.
8. Using their published writings, compare and contrast the experience of women such as Mercy Otis Warren and Abigail Adams during the American Revolution.
9. Look at BroadSides available in American Memory collection online through the Library of Congress to understand the importance of boycotts against Britain prior to the American Revolution.
10. Look at the American Periodicals Series online to examine connection between the American Revolution and either the Haitian Revolution or the French Revolution.
11. Examine the *Virginia Gazette* online to explore the impact of the American Revolution on runaway slaves.
12. Use the printed papers of General Nathanael Greene to explore the relationship between George Washington and Greene.

13. Look at the printed papers of John and Abigail Adams to understand the effects of the American Revolution on their marriage and family life. .
14. Use newspapers on Historical Newspapers database to study responses in colonies outside of Massachusetts to the Boston Massacre.
15. Use the online Peter Force/American Archives collection to examine the response of colonial legislatures to British policies from 1764-1776.

RESEARCH LOG INSTRUCTIONS

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO SPEND *AT LEAST* 10 HOURS/WEEK OUTSIDE OF CLASS working on their HISTORY 499 projects. Students will be required to submit a Research Log for each of 7 weeks during the semester, beginning Sept. 20 Below is a sample of the format.

For example:

Student's Name

Topic: Revolutionary Women in the Public Sphere

TOTAL RESEARCH TIME FOR THE WEEK: 10 hours, 45 minutes

Date/Time/Activity/Sources

9/12/2012--1 hr., 10 min. TOTAL:

30 minutes: spoke to research librarian at Fenwick
25 minutes searching for sources in online catalogue
15 minutes in Fenwick stacks finding books

9/13/2012--3hours TOTAL:

3 hours reading/taking notes on following works:

Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor, eds., *Women, Gender and Enlightenment*. Hampshire: Palgrave/Macmillan, 2005.

Sheila L. Skemp. *First Lady of Letters: Judith Sargent Murray and the Struggle for Female Independence* ,Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009.

Evans/Early American Imprints (Fenwick online database) (various documents).

Rosemarie Zagarri, "Morals, Manners, and the Republican Mother," *American Quarterly* 44 (June 1992), pp. 192-215 (found in JSTOR online).

Papers of George Washington, digital edition (Fenwick online database) various documents

9/15/2012--1 hour, 45 minutes TOTAL:

Reading primary sources in the Cookbook Collection in the Manuscript Collection at Fenwick Library.

9/16/2012--2 hours, 15 minutes TOTAL:

Perused articles in America's Historical Newspapers (Fenwick online database)

9/18/2012--2 hours, 35 minutes TOTAL:

15 minutes: looked up articles on women's role in revolutionary America in online database, America History and Life

2 hours, 20 minutes: read and took notes on the following articles:

Dana Roberts, "Influence of American Missionary Women on the World Back Home," *Religion and American Culture* 12 (Winter 2002), 59–89.

Mary Kupiec Cayton, "Canonizing Harriet Newell: Women, the Evangelical Press, and the Foreign Mission Movement in New England, 1800–1850," in *Competing Kingdoms: Women, mission, nation, and the American Protestant empire, 1812–1960*, ed. Barbara Reeves-Ellington, Katherine Kish Sklar, and Connie Shemo (Durham, NC, 2010), 69–93.

Amy Kaplan, "Manifest Domesticity," *American Literature* 70 (Apr. 1998), 581–606;
Michelle Burnham, "The Periphery Within: Internal Colonialism and the Rhetoric of U.S. Nation Building," in *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies*, ed.

Durba Ghosh, "Gender and Colonialism: Expansion or Marginalization?" *Historical Journal* 47 (Sept. 2004), 737–55

Research Log Template

HISTORY 499/Senior Research Seminar in Revolutionary America

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO SPEND *AT LEAST* 10 HOURS/WEEK OUTSIDE OF CLASS working on their HISTORY 499 project. Print out copies of this form--or copy onto a file onto your computer--in order to record your research activities. Turn in a hard copy of the log each week from Sept. 20-Nov. 1. Be sure to use proper bibliographic citation format when listing books and articles.

List the kind of activities in which you engaged: locating sources online or in the library; reading; taking notes. LIST THE DATE AND TIME YOU SPENT ON EACH ACTIVITY. Be specific. Then be sure to calculate the TOTAL AMOUNT OF TIME you spent working on your research paper this week.

Name:

Research topic:

TOTAL Research Time for the Week:

DATE/TIME/ACTIVITIES/SOURCES