

History 499 Fall 2018 "Mason's Legacies" Meets in Fenwick Library-3001 7:20-10:00 p.m.
Dr. Oberle Office: Fenwick Library 2211
Email: goberle@gmu.edu Office Hours: 4:00-6:00

This course is the capstone of the History major. Students are required to produce a substantial research paper based on their reading of primary and secondary sources focused on the ongoing legacy of our University's namesake, George Mason, to the region and our nation. As such, the course is broadly defined to allow students to select topics from the colonial era through the modern era. Students may focus on local history, political or military topics of their choice or on subjects relating to women, slavery, education, religion, or culture more generally. After completing some readings about George Mason and the generation of the "Founders," students, with the assistance of the instructor, will focus their attention on the various stages of researching and writing the research paper.

This course meets the Synthesis requirement of the University General Education program, which aims to encourage students to draw on knowledge and skills they have attained through their General Education courses and to demonstrate advanced skills in their written work and oral presentations. In other words, this seminar offers you the opportunity to pull together the results of your educational experience by demonstrating mastery of research, analytical, and communication skills by applying those skills to a particular historical project. This course also counts toward the writing-intensive requirement for the History major.

I love to see your work develop and to read/discuss your work as it develops. Please do not hesitate to contact me to make an appointment. By the end of the course students will demonstrate their competence in the following skills:

- Plan and execute a major project.
- Articulate and refine a research question.
- Justify that their project intends to be engaging and novel to a particular audience.
- Gather evidence appropriate to the question.
- Analyze sources to assess the validity of key assumptions and evidence.
- Present their findings in writing using the conventions of historical scholarship.
- Demonstrate awareness of broader implications.
- Follow ethical principles.

Course Requirements: Students are expected to adhere to the course schedule, below. As the schedule indicates, sometimes the class will meet as a group, while other days are set aside for self-directed research or individual meetings with the instructor.

Written work: Each student will write a major research paper (20-25 pages, double-spaced, plus endnotes and bibliography), which will be the end product of a multi-stage process that includes several graded written assignments, all of which are detailed in the course schedule below. Research papers will be graded according to the following criteria:

- Clarity and originality of the paper's research question and thesis
- Use of primary sources in support of thesis statement
- The degree to which the work is situated appropriately in the existing literature of secondary sources (i.e., historiography)
- Use of diverse sources
- Sophistication of historical analysis

- Organization and quality of writing

Students must submit all written work electronically via Blackboard. Additionally, we will be using the Online Journal System (an open source journal tool) which will provide students the experience of the scholarly peer review process and the opportunity to have their scholarship published in an online journal. Late submissions will be penalized a minimum of one letter-grade.

Oral work: Students will do one formal oral report, besides participating regularly in class workshops and discussions. Because discussion and in-class work are integral to this course, attendance will be taken. At the last two class meetings, students will do oral presentations (10 minutes) on their research projects, using the poster format that is sometimes featured at scholarly conferences

<https://oscar.gmu.edu/students/poster-info/>

Templates for making posters are posted in the Course Content section of this course's Blackboard site. Students will be graded on their oral presentations according to the following criteria:

- Clarity and organization
- Ability to respond to questions from the audience
- Completion of presentation's essential elements within the allotted time
- Ability to engage and maintain the audience's attention
- Quality and completeness of the poster

Grading: Course grades will be determined as follows:

Research Logs	10%
Topic proposal and Bibliography	5%
Historiography	10%
Participation (peer-review and discussions)	10%
Oral poster presentation	10%
Complete draft of final paper	30%
Final research paper	25%

Finally, please note that all students are subject to the George Mason University Honor Code (see <http://jju.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies/honor.htm>). The penalty for cheating or plagiarism on any assignment will be—at a minimum—a grade of F for this course.

Required Books: Also available on Reserve at Fenwick Information Desk

Robert A. Rutland, *George Mason : Reluctant Statesman*, Revised edition (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1980).

Lorri Glover, *Founders as Fathers: The Private Lives and Politics of the American Revolutionaries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014).

Cynthia A. Kierner, *Scandal at Bizarre: Rumor and Reputation in Jefferson's America* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

Optional Helpful Books:

Gerald Graff, Cathy Birkenstein, and Russel K. Durst, *"They Say / I Say": The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing, with Readings*, Third edition (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2017).

William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*, 5 edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).

Useful resources:

Chicago Manual of Style <http://mutex.gmu.edu/login?URL=http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org>

GMU Library History and Primary Sources Research Guides

Schedule and Assignments

Thursday, 30 August 2018

Syllabus and discussion of the meaning of Legacy

Read H.W. Brand, "Founders Chic: Our Reverence for the Fathers has Gotten Out of Hand," *The Atlantic*, Sept. 2003 (pre-circulated link; link also available via course Blackboard site).

Reading Wills (in class)

Research and Methods

Thursday, 6 September 2018

Who was George Mason? How do we know? Also, Finding sources: George Mason and a refresher in using Mason Library Resources

Everyone Read Rutland *George Mason: Reluctant Statesman*

Group 1 Read

Peter Wallenstein, "Flawed Keepers of the Flame," *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography* 102, no. 2 (April 1994): 229-260.

Group 2 Read

Peter R. Henriques, "An Uneven Friendship: The Relationship Between George Washington and George Mason," *Virginia Magazine of History & Biography* 97, no. 2 (March 1989): 185–204.

Group 3 Read

Joseph Horrell, "George Mason and the Fairfax Court," *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 91, no. 4 (1983): 418–39.

Listen to Podcast Ben Franklin's World Episode 066 Simon P. Newman, "How Historians Choose Their Topics."

<https://www.benfranklinworld.com/episode-066-simon-p-newman-how-historians-find-their-research-topics/>

Make sure you take notes for our discussion.

Thursday, 13 September 2018

Discussion of Founders and Fathers and group work on topics/sources.

Everyone read Lorri Glover, *Founders as Fathers...*

Listen to the Podcast (available in many places) Ben Franklin's World episode 97 Billy Smith Organize Research

<https://www.benfranklinworld.com/episode-097-billy-smith-organize-research/>

Make sure you take notes for our discussion.

Bring in two draft topic ideas and preliminary sources. At least 2 books and 4 articles for each one (secondary sources). Also, identify at potential primary sources which will be useful for your project. If you have already identified your topic, and I have approved the topic, do not bring two topics in.

Your written draft statement should be one paragraph and include the following

- A title.
- A specific question you will address in your research.
- Why you are interested in this question and what have other scholars already addressed? (Secondary Sources)
- Why does this topic matter?
- What primary sources will you use to answer your research question and how will you use those primary sources?

Thursday, 20 September 2018

Everyone read Cynthia Kierner, *Scandal at Bizarre...*

Topic Proposal and Bibliography Due

Turn in a short description (a single paragraph of your proposed paper topic. Discuss what you hope to discover in the course of your research. Discuss what kind of primary sources will be the basis for your research.) This is a refined version of what you did the week before.

Turn in Research Log 1: YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO TURN IN A RESEARCH LOG AT EACH CLASS FOR EACH OF THE NEXT SEVEN WEEKS. THIS IS NOT AN OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT. YOU MUST TURN IN ALL THE LOGS IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE.

Thursday, 27 September 2018

Individual Meetings in my office Fenwick Library 2211

Turn in Research Log 2

Thursday, 4 October 2018

Peer Review and the Process Andrew K. Description of Online Journal System

Listen to Podcast Ben Franklin's World episode 105-Joshua Piker "How Historians Publish History."

<https://www.benfranklinworld.com/episode-105-joshua-piker-historians-publish-history/>

Make sure you take notes for our discussion.

Turn in Research Log 3

Thursday, 11 October 2018

Writing and Organization (Handouts)

Turn in Research Log 4

Thursday, 18 October 2018

Turn in Research Log 5

Thursday, 25 October 2018

Turn in Research Log 6

Submit the Historiography assignment

Thursday, 1 November 2018

Turn in Research Log 7

Individual Meetings in my office Fenwick Library 2211

Be prepared to discuss where you are in your research and where you need to go.

Monday, 5 November 2018

Extra Credit-5:00 pm History Lecture Robert Parkinson-Fenwick Library Main Reading Room 2001

Thursday, 8 November 2018

No Class-Research and Writing Time

Thursday, 15 November 2018

Peer Evaluation Submit your paper in OJS for peer evaluation.

PAPERS DUE- This is not a draft. This is the first version of the entire paper complete with proper footnotes (though you need not include a formal bibliography in this version). Submit this via blackboard.

Thursday, 22 November 2018 THANKSGIVING RECESS NO CLASS

Thursday, 29 November 2018

Oral Presentation Report Group A 8 Students will need to Sign Up

Thursday, 6 December 2018

Oral Presentation Report Group B 7 Students will need to Sign Up

also

Historical Research and Life Long Learning.

Final Paper Due by Noon Friday, 14 December 2018

Papers should be 20-25 pages in length, plus Bibliography and footnotes, typed, double-spaced. In the Bibliography sources need to be divided in the following three headings: *Primary Sources*; *Secondary Source Books* (at least ten); *Secondary Source Articles* (at least three). Online resources must be listed in appropriate category listed above. Papers MUST use Chicago Manual of Style citation format or points will be deducted from the grade.

Suggested Topics

- Mason Family and Education in late 18th-century early 19th century Virginia.
- Mason, Marriage, and Family Life in late 18th-century early 19th century Virginia.
- Mason's Role as a Member of the Virginia Gentry and early American democracy.
- The Influence of Mason's Declaration of Rights on other state constitutions
- Religion in early American life—(A Study of the religious life on a plantation would be very interesting.)
- Mason's Reasons for Opposing the US Constitution compared with those of antifederalist Mercy Otis Warren
- Mason/Mason Family relationships with indigenous peoples.
- Comparative Biography

- Comparative analysis of enslaved populations at Gunston Hall and Mount Vernon (Monticello)
- Gunston Hall compared with another eighteenth-century English (and/or Virginia) mansion of the time
- Comparison of ports of Colchester and Alexandria Virginia.
- Transportation (Canals, Railroads, roads) and political arguments over internal improvements in Virginia/Maryland etc.
- Mason family and the War of 1812 Service
- Armistead Mason
- Revolutionary War Service
- Mexican American War
- George Thompson Mason
- Mason's Views on Slavery compared with those George Washington
- Mason's Success as a Businessman, Land Speculator, and Planter
- Plantation Management in late eighteenth early nineteenth century Chesapeake
- Food-ways/Dining in Plantations (Lots of sources at Gunston Hall and Mount Vernon)
- Taverns and Social life
- Women and Reading
- Haitian Revolution
- Partisanship in early America
- Ideas amongst Virginians.
- Members of the Mason Family
- Confederate Masons
- James Murray Mason
- George Mason 16 April 1830 – 3 February 1895
- Thomson Mason Family (Loudoun County)
- Comparative analysis between Mason family figure and comparable figure such as John Mason and Bushrod Washington.
- Specific Explorations of Enslaved people at Mason Homes and Plantations.
- Study of slavery in Fairfax/Loudoun etc. Comparative analysis.
- Owners of Gunston Hall (Colonial Dames) or similar institution: <http://www.mountvernon.org/the-estate-gardens/the-mansion/owners-of-mount-vernon/>
- Heritage Tourism and/or Monuments and Memorials
- The duel and dueling
- County court as community center in early America
- Medical Knowledge
- Specific programs of study-“Legacies of George Mason” program of the 1980s at George Mason University.
- Civil Rights movement at George Mason University in the 60s and 70s.
- Kate Mason Rowland (early George Mason collector and family member—United Daughters of the Confederacy.)
- Robert Rutland (Editor of the Papers of George Mason—and others)
- History of Gunston Hall and Historical sites
- Other ideas...Please ask. There are many comparative biographical projects as well as projects on slavery, enslaved people, women, military, education, economics/trade in region.