Course Description: This course is unique because it does not concentrate upon a specific geographic region or historical era, nor upon a particular social, political, or cultural topic. Instead, the course focuses on historiography or “the history of history.” Our main goal will be to better understand the underlying theoretical and methodological questions that have informed the study and writing of history as a professional discipline from the late nineteenth century to the present. The course’s primary purpose is to introduce new graduate students to the major ideas, problems, and schools of thought in the field of history and to thereby promote a better understanding of the implications of our own and others’ choices in framing historical questions. We will examine the way that historians choose and interpret their sources, the elements that affect their interpretations, and how and why these interpretations have developed and changed over time. Students will engage with a wide variety of historical genres including: social history, economic history, labor history, micro-history, cultural history, gender history, environmental/ecological history, transnational history as well as the histories of commodities, empire, and nationalism.

Required Texts: The titles below are all available for purchase at Barnes & Noble in the Johnson Center. Titles marked by two green double asterisks (**) are available in an online edition, accessible through the library.


In addition to the titles above, readings in the schedule marked by a single blue asterisk (*) are available at the “Additional Material” page on the course website (password = historiography).


Recommended Texts:

- Strunk, William, Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. Longman, 1999. (Avoid free or cheap older editions, which are often the original, non-updated version w/out White’s contributions. These are very dated.)
Requirements & Grading: You must complete (that is, demonstrate serious engagement with) every requirement in order to receive a passing grade. The instructor reserves the final right to determine what constitutes "completion" of a requirement.

1. Participation (20%): I expect you to attend all of our scheduled meetings and to be fully prepared. This means finishing the assigned reading(s) before coming to class. Active and informed participation in discussion is the core of this seminar. Our meetings will consist almost entirely of discussion of the assigned readings, so it is essential that you do the reading and come prepared to discuss it.

   Participation is judged on quality more than quantity, but it’s difficult to discern quality without a sufficient sample size. In fact, your active, regular participation contributes to the quality of the course as a whole since the course is more enjoyable and intellectually rewarding when as many people as possible contribute consistently to our discussions, both online and in class.

   For more advice and suggestions about active discussion, please see the “Resources” page on the course website.

2. Facilitating Class Discussion (20%): For each of our meetings (except for the first one) 2-3 students will be responsible for facilitating and leading our class discussion. Each student will be required to help facilitate and lead two (2) class discussions over the course of the semester. (A sign-up sheet will be available during our 1st meeting.)

   For more detailed tips and suggestions for class discussion, please see the “Resources” page on the course website.

3. Class Blog (30%): You must post to the Class Blog a total of ten (10) times over the course of the semester (in addition to a “self-introduction”). In order to receive full credit, you contributions to the Class Blog need to be posted by 5:00 p.m. on the day of class (that is, before we meet to discuss that week’s reading).

   For more details see: https://hist610.wordpress.com/class-blog/

   In your posts to the Class Blog, you may:
   - write about some aspect of the reading(s) that you found interesting or puzzling
   - write about the primary sources the author used
   - discuss the author’s main questions and approach to history
   - summarize and comment on the reading’s main point(s) and/or central argument(s)
   - attempt to situate the work within the historical context(s) in which it was written
   - compare or connect the assigned reading to other works you’ve read in class or elsewhere
   - relate the assigned reading(s) to entries in Dictionary of Concepts in History (see essay project below)
   - read, build upon, and respond to posts by your classmates

   In general, your task is to demonstrate that you have carefully read, understood, and thought about the assigned reading(s) and that you are able to make connections to the broader themes of the class.

4. Semester-Long Essay Project (30%): This is a semester-long project that involves writing a 15-25 page essay. (For more detailed instructions and guidelines, please see the last page of this syllabus.)

   In order to help you stay on track, there are several smaller assignments due throughout the semester:
   - identify two (2) concepts (one to remove, one to add) (due by 5:00 p.m. on Mon. 2/25/19)
   - five-page essay explaining one (1) of the selected concepts (due by 5:00 p.m. on Mon. 4/8/19)

   The final version of the essay is due at 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Mon., 5/13/19. No late work will be accepted for this.
Course Policies, Reminders, and Helpful Tips

a) Class absences: Students are expected to attend all meetings of the course. In the event that you must miss class, you are responsible for the contents of the lecture or discussion. **Students are expected to come to class on time.** Late arrivals are disruptive, and late-comers may miss important information or hand-outs.

b) Cell phones: During class all phones must be switched off and put away. Neither students nor instructors should compose, read, or respond to text messages during class. If you are an emergency responder (such as an EMT) and must receive calls or messages, please notify the instructor within the first week of class.

c) Laptop computers: Students who wish to use a laptop computer for note-taking are welcome to do so. However, **students who use laptops for purposes other than taking notes (i.e., email, instant messaging, internet browsing unrelated to the course) will be asked to leave and no longer be permitted to use a computer in class.**

d) Submission of written work: All written work is due at the time(s) and on the day(s) indicated on the syllabus. All written assignments should be typed, double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and in a 12-point font. Your name should be on the paper, and all pages should be stapled and numbered. You should retain electronic copies of all written work, and your instructor may ask for an electronic copy of your paper in order to use it as an example in teaching or to submit to a plagiarism detection site like Turnitin.com.

e) Late policy: All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the deadlines for course assignments. Late work will be penalized **ONE FULL LETTER GRADE (10 pts.) per day (including weekends & holidays).** The only exceptions will be when you have explicit, advance permission from your instructor. If you anticipate a problem in completing or submitting your work on time, you must contact the instructor in a timely manner. If you do not hear back from your instructor, you should assume that your work is due on the original date. Regardless of whether or not you have been granted an extension, you must contact your instructor for how to submit late work. Late assignments will not be considered as “received” until a copy is in the instructor’s hands. **No late work will be accepted for the final assignment.**

f) Plagiarism: Don’t do it. It’s easy to spot & can result in expulsion from the University and loss of degree. **What is plagiarism?** As noted by the American Historical Association (AHA), “Writers plagiarize… when they fail to use quotation marks around borrowed material and to cite the source, use an inadequate paraphrase that makes only superficial changes to a text, or neglect to cite the source of a paraphrase.” For details see pgs. 3-4 of this document: [http://www.historians.org/Documents/Plagiarism/Curriculum_Plagiarism.pdf](http://www.historians.org/Documents/Plagiarism/Curriculum_Plagiarism.pdf)

   If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, or about when or how to properly cite a source, talk to your instructor before you write!

g) Academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented condition that warrants academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. **All academic accommodations must be arranged through ODS** ([http://ods.gmu.edu/](http://ods.gmu.edu/)). Additional support may be obtained through Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): [http://caps.gmu.edu/](http://caps.gmu.edu/)

h) Electronic communication. It is best to contact me at mchang5[at]gmu[dot]edu. I usually check email during normal business hours, namely M-F, 9 am-5 pm. Please allow 24-48 hours for a reply to an email request or inquiry (excluding weekends). Please sure to indicate your course number in your email subject line and include both your first and last name in your signature. For general advice on the best way to communicate via email, see: [http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html](http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html)

i) Academic Integrity: All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code ([http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/](http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code/))

   All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review.

j) Administrative Deadlines
   Last day to add classes: Tue. 1/29/2019
   Last day to drop (no tuition penalty): Tue. 2/5/2019

k) Final disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to revision as the semester proceeds. Announcements of changes will be made online and during class meetings. Students are responsible for being aware of any changes.
COURSE SCHEDULE

Meeting #1 (Mon. 1/28/2019): Introduction
Before Meeting #1, please read:

**“Tips for Discussion” on the “Discussion” page under the “Resources” menu on the course website.

Meeting #2 (Mon. 2/4/2019): Annales I
**“Series Forward,”** **“Preface,”** **“Feudalism,”** and **“Periodization” in Dictionary of Concepts in History [DCH],
which is on 2-hour Reserve at Fenwick Library
Due today: By 5:00 p.m., please post a self-introduction on the Class Blog.

Meeting #3 (Mon. 2/11/2019): Annales II and Global History I
Please read: Preface to the English edition; Preface to the second edition; Preface to the first edition;
Part I: The Peninsulas: Mountains, Plateaux, and Plains;
Part I:II The Heart of the Mediterranean: Seas and Coasts;
Part II:II Precious Metals, Money, and Prices.
“Historical Materialism,” “Interdisciplinary History,” “Social History” in DCH (on 2-hour Reserve at Fenwick)

Meeting #4 (Mon. 2/18/2019): Marxist History
*Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party (1848), Chapter 1 “Bourgeois and Proletarians.” Available online at the Marxist Internet Archive.
https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch01.htm
*Karl Marx, The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte (1852), Ch. 1, beginning with “Hegel says somewhere,” and ending with “Hic Rhodus. hic salta!” (about 7 pages). Available online at the Marxist Internet Archive.
https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/
-How has the definition of and approach towards “Marxist history” shifted over time? How do the writings of Marx and Engels compare to those of E.P. Thompson? [Notion of “class struggle” is constant, but Thompson introduces “culture” into his analyses.]
Suggested Reading in Dictionary of Concepts in History [DCH] (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick):
“Capitalism,” “Class,” “Ideology,” and “Radical History”

Meeting #5 (Mon. 2/25/2019): (Italian) Microhistory
-How, if at all, might this work be considered an example of “social history”? How is it similar to or different from other types of “social history” that we’ve read thus far?
“Cultural History” and “Intellectual History, History of Ideas” in DCH (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick)
Due today: By 5:00 p.m., please e-mail me one concept that you think should be removed from a 2019 version of Dictionary of Concepts in History and one concept that you think should be added to a 2019 version of this work.

Meeting #6 (Mon. 3/4/2019): History of Discursive Formations (discursive analysis)
Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish (1974).
“Enlightenment” in Dictionary of Concepts in History (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick)

Mon. 3/11/2019 – Sun. 3/17/2019 (SPRING RECESS)—work on semester-long essay project
Suggested Reading in Dictionary of Concepts in History [DCH] (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick):
“History,” “Historiography,” “Causation,” “Explanation,” “Interpretation,” and “Process.”
Meeting #7 (Mon. 3/18/2019): Environmental History  
*read back matter/20th anniversary essay first*

Meeting #8 (Mon. 3/25/2019): Nationalism(s)  
“Nation, Nationality” and “Nationalism” in *Dictionary of Concepts in History* (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick)

Meeting #9 (Mon. 4/1/2019): Commodity History and Imperial Formations (Empires)  
[Available online via Mason Library as an ACLS Humanities e-book]  
*Suggested Reading* in *Dictionary of Concepts in History* [DCH] (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick):  
“Comparative History,” “Imperialism,” and “Modernization, Modernity.”

Meeting #10 (Mon. 4/8/2019): Knowledge Production & Questions of Power  
[Available online via Mason Library as an ACLS Humanities e-book]  
*Suggested Reading* in *Dictionary of Concepts in History* [DCH] (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick):  
“Constructionism, Constitution;” “Event,” “Fact,” and “Narrative.”

**Due today:** Five-page essay explaining one of the concepts you have chosen for your final paper assignment. Discuss why this concept should be added or why it should be removed. Please support your ideas with evidence from at least three (3) readings we have done this semester. Please email it to me in Word by the beginning of class.

Meeting #11 (Mon. 4/15/2019): Gender History and Women’s History  

Meeting #12 (Mon. 4/22/2019): Slavery, Capitalism, and Economic History  
[Available online via Mason Library as an ACLS Humanities e-book]  
*Read discussion in The Economist:* for active links see “Additional Materials” page on the course website  
*Suggested Reading* in *Dictionary of Concepts in History* [DCH] (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick):  

Meeting #13 (Mon. 4/29/2019): Labor and Globalization  

Meeting #14 (Mon. 5/6/2019):  
“Historiography” in *Dictionary of Concepts in History* (2-hour Reserve at Fenwick)

**FINAL ESSAY DUE by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Mon. 5/13/2019 (via e-mail). No late work will be accepted for this assignment.**
Instructions and Guidelines for Semester-Long Essay Project

Please look at Harry Ritter, Dictionary of Concepts in History, Greenwood Press, 1986 (on 2-Hour Reserve at Fenwick Library) and discuss:

a) two (2) concepts in the 1986 text that you would remove from a revised 2019 edition of this work
b) two (2) concepts that are not in the 1986 text that you would add to an updated version

Explain your answers and tie them together with an overarching thesis that explains some aspect of the historiography we have discussed this semester.

Support your ideas with information from at least six (6) works that we have read and discussed in class.

Feel free to bring in texts and ideas from your other classes, past and present.

Your main task in this paper is to demonstrate that:

1) you understand the issues we have read about and discussed in class and
2) that you can discuss and evaluate the works we’ve read in a confident and comprehensive way.

Due dates related to this project:

Meeting #5 (Mon. 2/25/2019): Identify one (1) concept that you think should be removed from an updated 2019 version of Harry Ritter’s Dictionary of Concepts in History and one (1) concept that you think should be added to a 2019 version of this work. Please email this to me in Word by 5:00 p.m. on Mon. 2/25/2019.

Meeting #10 (Mon. 4/8/2019): Five-page essay explaining one (1) of the concepts you have chosen. Why should this concept be added or why should this term be removed from an updated 2019 version of the Dictionary of Concepts in History? Please support your ideas with evidence from at least three (3) readings we have done this semester. Please email it to me in Word by 5:00 p.m. on Mon. 4/8/2019.

Exam Week: The final paper should be between 15 and 25 pages.

Please email it to me in Word by 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Mon. 5/13/2019. No late work will be accepted for this assignment.