

History 4990
Credits 03
10:00-10:50 am, MWF
Spring 2010

Dr. Ping

SEMINAR IN HISTORICAL RESEARCH

"Research is the process of going up alleys to see if they are blind." -- *Marston Bates*

"Enough research will tend to support your conclusions." -- *Arthur Bloch*

"Research is what I'm doing when I don't know what I'm doing." -- *Wernher Von Braun*

If we knew what we were doing it wouldn't be research." -- *Albert Einstein*

"By seeking and blundering we learn." -- *Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe*

"Just as the largest library, badly arranged, is not so useful as a very moderate one that is well arranged, so the greatest amount of knowledge, if not elaborated by our own thoughts, is worth much less than a far smaller volume that has been abundantly and repeatedly thought over." – *Arthur Schopenhauer*

History 4990 is a capstone senior thesis course for history majors. The purpose of the course will be to introduce seniors to the problems involved in choosing a topic, researching that topic, and preparing a bibliography for a senior thesis. The final step of course, will be the actual writing of a well organized, clearly written research paper of approximately 20 to 25 pages. The course is also intended to assist you in acquiring writing and research skills that will serve you well in your future educational development and, at the very least, help you write a project that you can be proud of.

Prerequisites for History 4990 include senior status and a minimum of 12 upper division credit hours in history. (Please see page 231 of the SUU General Catalog) I will not allow anyone who does not meet these pre-requisites to take this course.

Required Texts:

William Strunk and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Pearson, 2009)

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. University of Chicago Press.

Please Note: We require the University of Chicago format for this research project. I will not accept any papers written according to any other style. Please do not come to me and ask to submit your paper in MLA, APA or any other format!

Course Objectives:

After completing this course, students should be able to demonstrate the following historical skills:

- To conceptualize a topic for independent research and limit that topic to an appropriate size for a 20-25 page paper.
- To research that topic making use of primary and secondary sources.
- To discuss your findings in consultation with the professor.
- To write an original research paper in University of Chicago format and demonstrate skills in writing making use of the proper footnote and bibliographic formats as found in Turabian..

Class Procedure:

History 4990 will be organized according to the graduate school model of independent work between each individual student and the professor. We will meet as a class for the first week, but the real essence of the course is your independent research and writing under my direction. It will be your responsibility to meet with me at least once every two weeks; more frequently if necessary, to discuss your research, solve bibliographic or conceptual problems, and generally proceed to complete your senior theses. There will be no formal paper presentations.

Grading:

History 4990 is an important capstone for the career of history majors here at SUU. Please be aware that the relative infrequency of class meeting does not mean that the faculty of the Department of Social Sciences regards this course as unimportant. Quite the opposite is true. Your grade will be based upon my evaluation of your Senior Project. The actual paper will account for 80% of your grade. History 4990 is also a process of consultation involving the professor and student. I will reserve 20% of your grade to reflect my evaluation of your participation in consultations with me. Students who disappear and then turn in a paper at the last moment will not pass History 4990. Students are required to pass History 4990 with a grade of B or better.

Class Deadlines:

Monday February 1: I will require a one-page written paper proposal stating your topic and you method of approaching the basic research for the project.

Friday February 12: I will require a formal written bibliography in U. of Chicago format of course. Your bibliography should contain 20 secondary sources and five primary sources.

Friday April 16: Please turn in your completed senior paper in hard copy form. *Please do not send me email attachments of the paper!* I will not accept any late papers in this class! Students who do not complete the paper by the deadline date will receive a grade of UW for the course.

Statement on Plagiarism:

Plagiarism means that you are passing off someone else's work as your own. You should not submit a paper that someone else wrote for you. You should not buy a paper from a company, download a paper from the Internet, or submit a paper from a fraternity file. If you do any of these things, you are committing the greatest of academic sins, plagiarism. In ancient Rome, *plagiarii* were pirates who kidnapped children for ransom; academic plagiarists steal another person's thoughts. I would infinitely prefer to read *your* work. It is far more interesting than anything you might find out there in cyberspace. Please be aware that I will employ *Turn it in* to check for possible cases of plagiarism.

ADA DISCLAIMER:

Students with medical, psychological, learning or other disabilities desiring academic adjustments, accommodations or auxiliary aids will need to contact the Southern Utah University Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities (SDD), in Room 205C of the Sharwan Smith Center or phone (435) 865-8022. SDD determines eligibility for and authorizes the provision of services.