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**Texts:** William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style* (Longman; 4th edition, 1999). ISBN-13: 978-0205309023

Kate L. Turabian, et al, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (University Of Chicago Press; Seventh Edition, 2007). ISBN-13: 978-0226823379

**Class Description:** A seminar for History majors requiring the completion of an extensive thesis project. Prerequisite: HIST SI3000.

**Grading Policies:** Grades will be determined on the following basis:

Prospectus	10%
Class participation	10%
Senior thesis	80%

Grades: A: 90 - 100% B: 80 - 89% C: 70 - 79% D: 60 - 69% E: 0 - 59%  
(Grades at the high or low ends of these ranges will earn plus and minus grades.)

**Cheating Policy:** Cheating and deceit are not accepted Weber State University. Cheating on an exam or assignment, or turning in someone else's work as your own, will result in an E for the class. You may work together on your assignments and papers, but you must turn in your own work. If you quote from a book, article, or web site, you must properly quote and cite your work. Avoid even the appearance of cheating or plagiarism.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in Room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

**Learning Goals:**

Students should be able to:

- Apply the historical method in the critical evaluation and interpretation of primary source material.
- Have some proficiency in the categories, concepts, and forms of argumentation that professional historians used to derive meaning from complex historical events;
- Evaluate and critique the work of your fellow historians in a respectful and constructive manner;
- Be fluent with the conventions of the writing process including drafting, critique, revision, proofreading, and copy editing.

**Class Process:**

Papers will always be turned in digitally.

**Paper Prospectus:**

This is a one page statement in which you state the question you are asking of the past. Why are you asking this research question or pursuing this research hypothesis? What has prepared you to answer this question? Give an overview of your sources and methods for answering the question. Suggest possible research strategies, such as the types of sources you will be using. This prospectus should not be considered binding in either your topic or your historical approach.

**Oral Presentations on Research Sources:**

You must meet with a research librarian: such as Dr. Kathy Payne (KLPayne@weber.edu, 801-626-6511), Sarah Langsdon, Curator of Special Collections & Archives (local topics, SLangsdon@weber.edu, 801-626-6337), or Dr. Wade Kotter (wkotter@weber.edu, 801-626-7458). You will give a five minute oral presentation describing their research suggestions. This is also a resource that you need to review: <<http://library.weber.edu/cm/hist/history4990.cfm>>.

**Rough Draft of Senior Thesis:**

Your rough draft should have at least half of your total expected words in it. Parts of the paper that have not been written should exist in an outline form inside your paper. A preliminary bibliography should be included. My feedback to you will include a preliminary grade in order that you can gauge your progress towards the final grade for the paper.

## Second Draft of Senior Thesis:

The second draft of your paper should have reached close to its final length, conclusions should be included, and no outlines within the paper will remain. A bibliography should be included. My feedback to you will include a preliminary grade in order that you can gauge your progress towards the final grade for the paper.

## Senior Thesis Paper:

Your Senior Thesis will meet the following criteria:

- 25-30 pages long, typed, double-spaced, in a twelve-point font, with one inch margins.
- It is a unique contribution to your chosen area of historical research. This requirement can be fulfilled by
  - using under-utilized or unutilized primary source materials;
  - identifying and addressing an unacknowledged problem of historical sourcing or interpretation;
  - applying conceptual categories in a way that offers new insight into established areas of historical scholarship;
  - making innovative use of interpretive theory in the analysis of your sources.
- In short, your paper must offer something in its interpretations or in its presentation of the evidence that cannot be found elsewhere.
- You need to have an *argument* that you are trying to *prove*. This is more than just retelling events that occurred; you must analyze those events and support a specific thesis.
- All of your citations need to be either footnotes or endnotes in Rampolla/Turabian form. (Chicago Manual of Style). The Online Chicago Manual of Style can be found at [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)
- You need to have at least 12 primary sources, and at least 12 secondary sources.
  - At least 3 of the primary sources must not be from a digital source.
  - At least 6 of the secondary documents must be monographs not articles.
- You will have to have a bibliography also in Rampolla/Turabian form. The bibliography will be divided between primary and secondary sources.
- You will also need a cover sheet for the final draft. You should not bind the paper. Just staple it in the corner
- The grading rubric for your paper is located here: [http://faculty.weber.edu/eswedin/Site/standards\\_for\\_senior\\_thesis.htm](http://faculty.weber.edu/eswedin/Site/standards_for_senior_thesis.htm)

**Schedule:**

Date	Activities
May 5	Introduction to class. Lecture/discussion on what is good writing?
May 12	Lecture/discussion on getting to the sources. You need to read these two articles for this class session: < <a href="http://courseweb.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/10commnd.htm">http://courseweb.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/10commnd.htm</a> > < <a href="http://personal.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/courses/sense.htm">http://personal.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/courses/sense.htm</a> > <b>Paper Prospectus to be handed in.</b>
May 19	Each student will make a five minute oral presentation on research sources for their project.
May 26	No class will be held.
June 2	No class will be held.
June 9	Lecture/discussion on historiography. <b>Rough Draft of Senior Thesis to be handed in.</b>
June 16	Individual appointments (Last names beginning with A-L)
June 23	Individual appointments (Last names beginning with M-Z)
June 30	Each student will make a five minute oral presentation of their paper's conclusions. Copies of papers distributed to peer group, so everyone should bring five copies of their senior thesis papers.
July 7	Peer group discussions.
July 14	Lecture/discussion on careers for historians. <b>Second Draft of Senior Thesis to be handed in.</b>
July 21	Individual appointments (Last names beginning with M-Z)
July 28	Individual appointments (Last names beginning with A-L)
August 4	NO FINAL EXAM; <b>Senior Thesis Due</b>

## Standards for Senior Thesis

### **The Superior Paper (A/A-)**

**Thesis:** Easily identifiable, plausible, novel, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear. Connects well with paper title.

**Structure:** Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point. Paragraphs support solid topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Primary source information used to buttress every point with at least one example. Examples support mini-thesis and fit within paragraph. Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences. Demonstrates an in depth understanding of the ideas in the assigned reading and critically evaluates/responds to those ideas in an analytical, persuasive manner.

**Analysis:** Author clearly relates evidence to "mini-thesis" (topic sentence); analysis is fresh and exciting, posing new ways to think of the material. Work displays critical thinking and avoids simplistic description or summary of information.

**Logic and argumentation:** All ideas in the paper flow logically; the argument is identifiable, reasonable, and sound. Author anticipates and successfully defuses counter-arguments; makes novel connections to outside material (from other parts of the class, or other classes), which illuminate thesis. Creates appropriate college level, academic tone.

**Mechanics:** Sentence structure, grammar, and diction excellent; correct use of punctuation and citation style; minimal to no spelling errors; absolutely no run-on sentences or comma splices. Conforms in every way to format requirements.

### **The Good Paper (B+/B)**

**Thesis:** Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking in insight or originality. Paper title does not connect as well with thesis or is not as interesting.

**Structure:** Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally. May have a few unclear transitions, or a few paragraphs without strong topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point, or may appear where inappropriate. Quotes well integrated into sentences. Demonstrates a solid understanding of the ideas in the assigned reading and critically evaluates/responds to those ideas in an analytical, persuasive manner.

**Analysis:** Evidence often related to mini-thesis, though links perhaps not very clear. Some description, but more critical thinking.

**Logic and argumentation:** Argument of paper is clear, usually flows logically and makes sense. Some evidence that counter-arguments acknowledged, though perhaps not addressed. Occasional insightful connections to outside material made. Mostly creates appropriate college level, academic tone.

**Mechanics:** Sentence structure, grammar, and diction strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some (minor) spelling errors; may have one run-on sentence or comma splice. Conforms in every way to format requirements.

### **The Borderline Paper (B-/C+)**

**Thesis:** May be unclear (contain many vague terms), appear unoriginal, or offer relatively little that is new; provides little around which to structure the paper. Paper title and thesis do not connect well or title is unimaginative.

**Structure:** Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around. Few or weak transitions, many paragraphs without topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Examples used to support some points. Points often lack supporting evidence, or evidence used where inappropriate (often because there may be no clear point). Quotes may be poorly integrated into sentences. Demonstrates a general understanding of the ideas in the assigned reading and only occasionally critically evaluates/responds to those ideas in an analytical, persuasive manner.

**Analysis:** Quotes appear often without analysis relating them to mini-thesis (or there is a weak mini-thesis to support), or analysis offers nothing beyond the quote. Even balance between

critical thinking and description.

**Logic and argumentation:** Logic may often fail, or argument may often be unclear. May not address counter-arguments or make any outside connections. Occasionally creates appropriate college level, academic tone, but has some informal language or inappropriate slang.

**Mechanics:** Problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction (usually not major). Some errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have some run-on sentences or comma splices. Conforms in almost every way to format requirements.

### **The "Needs Help" Paper (C/C-)**

**Thesis:** Difficult to identify at all, may be bland restatement of obvious point.

**Structure:** Unclear, often because thesis is weak or non-existent. Transitions confusing and unclear. Few topic sentences.

**Use of evidence:** Very few or very weak examples. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no statement. Quotes not integrated into sentences; "plopped in" in improper manner. Demonstrates a little understanding of (or occasionally misreads) the ideas in the assigned reading and does not critically evaluate/responds to those ideas in an analytical, persuasive manner.

**Analysis:** Very little or very weak attempt to relate evidence to argument; may be no identifiable argument, or no evidence to relate it to. More description than critical thinking.

**Logic and argumentation:** Ideas do not flow at all, usually because there is no argument to support. Simplistic view of topic; no effort to grasp possible alternative views. Does not create appropriate college level, academic tone, and has informal language or inappropriate slang.

**Mechanics:** Big problems in sentence structure, grammar, and diction. Frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many run-on sentences and comma splices. Does not conform to format requirements.

### **The "Really Needs Help" Paper (D+/D)**

Is like **The "Needs Help" Paper** but the problems are more serious or more frequent.

### **The Failing Paper**

Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment. Very difficult to understand owing to major problems with mechanics, structure, and analysis. Has no identifiable thesis, or utterly incompetent thesis. Does not follow paper guidelines for length and format. Plagiarizes.

(These guidelines are based on: <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/rubric.html> )  
A simpler rubric will be used for the rough draft.

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**Scale: 0 failing (E); 1 poor (D); 2 fair (C); 3 good (B); 4 superior (A)**

#### ***Central Argument 1 2 3 4***

- *Central argument is easily identifiable*
- *Takes advantage of new insights and perspectives or approaches*
- *Central idea is original and sophisticated*

#### ***Evidence 1 2 3 4***

- *Primary sources are used to support arguments, giving specific examples*
- *Excellent integration of quoted material into sentences*
- *References and citations are correct, complete and responsible*

#### ***Structure 1 2 3 4***

- *Argument is developed logically, leading to conclusion*
- *Parts are clearly related to the whole*
- *Integration of research materials is effective*

#### ***Analysis 1 2 3 4***

- *Analysis is fresh and exciting*
- *Thesis poses new ways to think of material*
- *The conclusion answers questions posed in the introduction*

#### ***Writing 1 2 3 4***

- *Sentence structure, grammar and diction excellent*
- *Correct use of punctuation and citation style*
- *Prose style is sophisticated*