

FD99  
PM

**Instructor:** Frank Bailey  
**Course:** History 494  
**Place:** Henry 121  
**Semester:** Fall, Day, 1999

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### **History Research Methods**

**Texts:** Furay, Conal and Michael J. Salevouris. *The Methods and Skills of History*. Illinois: Harlan Davidson Inc., 1988.

#### **Scope of Course:**

History, by nature, is an inherently subjective creature subject to the presumptions and consequent assumptions of the historian who *constructs* that history. Consequently, the production of history is a uniquely personal yet public act that does not seek to map out the "continent of truth" in regards to the past but instead tries to bring into focus and with that focus deliver some clarity of understanding to those events that have contributed to the present from which the historian writes. In essence, all history is, to some degree, an autobiography, informing the readers as much, if not more, of the author and his times as it does of the subject covered. There is no "truth" in history in regards to the past as "it really happened," simply interpretations based on historical fact. This course will allow you to comprehend the subjective nature of history and in the process teach you the value and use of the mental and physical skills and talents required of "good history." Many have argued that History is a dead subject that remains on life support so as to provide income for decrepit old men lost in stuffy old libraries. Nothing can be farther from the truth. History is a vital field that not only is necessary for society as a whole, but it is a discipline that teaches valuable skills demanded daily in life by all, regardless of the profession.

#### **Course Objectives:**

It is the goal of this course to examine History as a subject, a profession, and as a tool for self-betterment while comprehending the ideologies that shape interpretations within that academic field. By examining how history is produced this course will *develop and hone basic skills in historical research and writing*. In the process you will learn how to *fully utilize library facilities and newly introduced technological research aids*. These skills are vital not only for history but for everyday life. The ability to communicate through words or orally is fundamental for success in our society as is it within the field of history. As such, this course will teach you how to *read critically, think analytically, and write persuasively*. These are the tools that make a good historian and these are the tools demanded by the world in and out of college.

Throughout the course you will develop a better understanding of the forces that have shaped historical interpretation as a means of coming to terms on your own perspective on what has transpired in the past. We are nothing if we are not the

sum of our experiences. Societies, cultures, and History are no different. If you remain ignorant of your past you cannot help but be lost within your present. As such, History is a field whose product is intended to benefit the community at large. In accordance with aim this is a service learning course where we will take the skills and knowledge you have learned and be sharing it with our community. Throughout the course we will be visiting several high schools as we help those students with their History Day projects.

### **Requirements:**

There are several requirements for this course. In addition to keeping up with the background reading in the text and the weekly assignment from that text, you are required to research and write a major *paper of six to eight pages*. While writing this paper you are required to develop and maintain an *annotated bibliography*. Also, there will be three reading handouts. You will be required to react to each of these *handouts in two to three pages*. There will also be a *group presentation* project. Each of these requirements will be further discussed in class. Finally this is a seminar class. Although there will be some lecture I expect you to discuss the material and *participate* in class. Also, this course is a service-learning course. At the end of the semester we will be taking what you have learned and sharing it with the community. We will be visiting several high schools on the island and helping the students with their History Day Projects. This is mandatory and will directly affect your grade if neglected.

Major Paper:	30%
Group Presentation:	30%
Four Minor Papers:	20%
Annotated Bibliography:	10%
Class Participation:	10%

### **Grading:**

This course follows the standard grading practice:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = anything below 59%

Please note that all assignments are to be handed in on time! Those not done so shall receive a 10-point deduction per day late. For any assignment not handed in there shall be a penalty of double the face value of the assignment.

### **Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory. We only meet once a week making each class that much more vital to the course. Absences will result in a 5% reduction in your grade.

## Class Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>In-Class</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
September 1	Introduction Pretest	Chapter 2
September 8	Historical Mindedness Discuss topics	Chapter 3
September 15	The Search For Information	Chapter 4 <b>Topic Due</b>
September 22	Reading History	Chapter 5
September 29	Managing Information	Chapter 6
October 6	Context	Chapter 7 Handout 1
October 13	Frame of Reference	Chapter 8 <b>Handout 1 Due</b>
October 20	Evidence	Chapter 9 <b>Annotated Bib Due</b> Handout 2
October 27	Interpretation	Chapter 10 <b>Handout 2 Due</b>
November 3	The Written Report	Chapter 11 Handout 3
November 10	Writing: Exposition & Narration	Chapter 12 <b>Handout 3 Due</b>
November 17	Service Learning <i>Pre-registration</i>	Work on Papers <b>Presentation Assigned</b>
November 24	Service Learning	Work on Papers & Pres.
December 1	Service Learning	Work on Papers & Pres.
December 8	<b>Presentations &amp; Pa'ina</b>	Work on Paper
December 15	<b>Paper Due!</b>	