**History 380: Historical Methods**

Instructor: Nat Zappia

Class Time:

Class Location:

Office Hours:

Office Hours Location: HV 201

Phone:

Email: [nzappia@whittier.edu](mailto:nzappia@whittier.edu)

**Course Description:**

This course introduces students to the multi-faceted approaches to historical research and writing. The goal is to help you produce an extensive research paper (25-30 pp.) based on primary and secondary sources. It is both an independent study course and a collaborative seminar that requires extensive discussion, presentations, writing workshops, weekly library “lab” visits, and individual archival research. Topics will include writing/research strategies and exploring research methodologies (i.e. social, cultural, intellectual, and digital history). We will also explore the application of ethnohistory and public history. By the end of the semester, you will obtain the language of historians—including how to read, write, and speak history.

**Course Goals and Learning Objectives:**

Students will have the opportunity to undertake their own research, investigate different types of evidence, entertain different types of methodologies, learn to read and critique the research of other colleagues, and learn to present their own original research in a public setting.

##### Required Text:

Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*

**Assignments:**

*Short Submissions –* You will hand in short 3-5-page drafts every other week that will build upon your historiography, research, and reflections leading to your final submission. These assignments are meant to encourage and facilitate your writing process. Each submission will have a different theme (i.e. introduction, historiography, thesis, and methodology).

*Research Paper –* You will hand in one early draft of your research and present it during the final week of class. The first draft will be at least 10 pp. and contain a brief historiography. You will present your completed topic during the last week of classes. The final paper will be due during finals week.

*Research Topics –* Your research topic must reside with the time period between 1500-1877. You are required to pick a topic revolving around the following historical themes:

Racial Identities

Immigration

Native America

Slavery

Political Parties

Gender

Civil War

Reconstruction

Religion

The Environment

This semester you are required to utilize the large archives found here on campus at the Wardman Library. You are allowed (and encouraged) to also find sources in other archives around Los Angeles. You must choose from the following collections (SEE ATTACHMENT).

Please note that you are allowed (and again—encouraged!) to use multiple collections. Many of your topics and sources will overlap, which will assist you as you research and draft your final paper.

**Library Lab:**

We will meet most Fridays in the Wardman Library (3rd floor). We will discuss various research topics but sessions will mostly include individual research and meeting with your writing group to assess your progress, provide feedback, and offering support. Every meeting, you will present a “progress report” to your group. This will be a very useful exercise keeping you on target with your writing.

**Office Hours:**

I strongly recommend that you make a weekly appointment with me over the course of the semester. While this isn’t part of your grade, it will undoubtedly benefit you and your experience during the semester. I am also available outside of my office hours if your schedule conflicts with my posted days/times. During my office hours, I can provide some extensive feedback and give you a better sense of how you’re progressing, so take advantage of this valuable time.

**Grading:**

Writing Workshops 30%

Short submissions 20%

Draft and Final Research Paper 50%

**Schedule:**

Week 1: Doing History

2/3 –– course requirements and the “process”: research, writing, and revision

2/5 – library orientation

READING: Turabian

Week 2: Finding a Topic

2/10 – brainstorming initial topic ideas

2/12 – status update

READING: Turabian

Week 3:Formulating a Hypothesis

2/17 – research topics

2/19 – library day SHORT SUBMISSION DUE

READING: Turabian

Week 4: Drafts

2/24 – draft strategies

2/26 – writing workshop

Week 5: Secondary Sources

3/3 – historiography discussion

3/5 – library day SHORT SUBMISSION DUE

READING: Turabian

Week 6: Conference Week

3/10 – individual conferences

3/12 – individual conferences

Week 7: SPRING BREAK

Week 8: Transitioning from research to writing

3/24 – status update

3/26 – writing workshop

Week 9: The Pitch

3/31 – status update/writing workshop

4/2 – library day – SHORT SUBMISSION DUE

READING: Turabian

Week 10: Presenting for an Audience

4/7 – presentation prep

4/9 – writing workshop

Week 11: Your “Raw Material”

4/14 – recap of presentations

4/16 – library day – SHORT SUBMISSION DUE

Week 12: Final Drafts

4/21 – status update

4/23 – writing workshop and last thoughts

Week 13: Conference Week

4/28 – first draft due; individual conferences

4/30 – individual conferences

Week 14: Final Essay Due 5/19 at 10:00 AM