

Research Seminar in Recent American History (syllabus revised Sept. 7, 2009)

HIST869, Section 0101

Fall 2009

TLF2110, Tuesdays 6:00-8:30 p.m.

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**Office hours: 3:30-4:30, and by
appointment**

The purpose of this course is to support graduate students as you define, research, draft, revise, and complete an archivally-based, article-length (30 to 40-page), publishable-quality research essay on an original and important topic in late nineteenth or twentieth century U.S. history. This essay should: make a coherent and persuasive argument employing appropriate evidence, especially primary sources; engage relevant secondary literature; be written in formal English that is free of spelling, grammatical, and syntax errors; be free of jargon and accessible to a large audience of scholars; and include full scholarly apparatus including footnotes or endnotes and bibliography.

This is a challenging endeavor, especially within the constraints of a single semester. Therefore, the instructor will contact enrolled students at the beginning of the summer to work toward defining a feasible and important topic by the time the semester begins.

Requirements. Students are strongly encouraged to 1) attend all class meetings; 2) submit to the class a project proposal at the beginning of the semester and revised versions every week or two throughout the semester; 2) submit to the class an outline and revised versions; and submit for class critique drafts (at first partial) of the final paper. However, 100 percent of the course grade will be based on the quality of the final essay. Unless arranged otherwise, late essays will be penalized 5 points per day.

Class meetings. There will be two kinds of full-class meetings during the semester – “draft launch” and “draft review.” During the first five weeks, we will convene as a group to discuss common issues and challenges and to review in-depth, on a first-come, first-served basis, the proposals of and readings selected by each member of the class. Prior to the meeting in which a class member’s work is reviewed, s/he should submit 1) a two-page project proposal that describes the historical problem s/he intends to pursue (as discussed with and approved by the instructor) and the major primary sources s/he will research; and 2) one or two scholarly articles or book chapters within the historiographic domain of the research project. The class will consider two to four sets of proposals and readings per “draft launch” class meeting. In addition, at the start of each early-semester class meeting, each student will be asked to provide an update on her or his work during the previous week.

During the last five weeks of the semester (“draft review”), the class will meet to discuss drafts of portions of papers or entire papers on a first-come, first-served basis. Two

members of the class will be asked to provide written comments on each draft under consideration. In the middle of the semester, class members will meet with the instructor as needed, and will continue to send him revised proposals, outlines, reflections, and drafts to be posted to the course ELMS website.

Students with Disabilities. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester if you require any disability-related special accommodations.

Religious Observances. The University System of Maryland policy provides that students not be penalized because of observances of religious beliefs, but rather shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester if you are going to miss any assignments due to religious observances.

Academic Integrity. The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.shc.umd.edu>. To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment)."

Meeting schedule

Sept. 1 – draft launch class meeting

Sept. 8 – draft launch class meeting

Sept. 15 – draft launch class meeting

Sept. 22 – draft launch class meeting

Sept. 29 – draft launch class meeting

Oct. 30 – Nov. 9 – individual meetings with instructor

Nov. 10 – draft review class meeting

Nov. 17 – draft review class meeting

Nov. 24 – draft review class meeting

Dec. 1 – draft review class meeting

Dec. 8 – draft review class meeting

Essays are due Dec. 15, 5:00 p.m., via email to dsicilia@umd.edu.