

**Syllabus: HIST-400-01 (#1175)**  
**Senior Seminar in History**

Truman State University

Spring Semester 2016

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**Course Description:** Senior Seminar is the capstone experience for History majors at Truman State University. Combining and building on the knowledge in historiography and skills in research that you have acquired so far, it culminates in a major, independent, original research project that demonstrates rigorous academic standards. Passing this course really proves that you have earned your degree in history.

**Course Structure:** The course seeks to accomplish two tasks. The first is to offer some guidance and insight into the theoretical problematics and standards according to which professional historians work. The second task is to create an environment conducive to executing an independent research project that is consistent with those standards. As such, we begin with a brief discussion around a set of readings about the historical profession. After that, we concentrate on the research projects. We work collectively, to some extent, and in increments, recognizing landmarks in the writing process—deciding on a topic, finding appropriate mentorship, choosing sources and developing a bibliography, assessing the historiographic context, writing drafts, and revising. Throughout, each course member meets individually with instructor and mentor(s), as needed, and as a group to give progress reports and to give and receive feedback.

**Course Policies:** You will give and receive input on your work from the instructor, from another faculty mentor (not necessarily a history professor), from your peers in a smaller group, and from the seminar as a whole. Because we work together this way, respect for deadlines means respect for the others who are involved (as well as respect for your own work). Tardiness and unwarranted troubles will detract from the participation grade, and inevitably from paper grades as well. All assignments and due dates are specified in the schedule below.

A research paper brings in primary and secondary material to advance a persuasive and clear argument. A historical argument is an original and interesting claim that is at once truthful and falsifiable (meaning that it might have been otherwise). The argument needs to be your argument. Though it may build on a topic that you have begun to explore in another class, the paper must be a new project, not a recycled one. **Plagiarism** in any aspect of your work triggers an automatic F in the course, will be reported to the deans, and can be grounds for expulsion from the university. (See university policy on academic integrity, below.) On a higher, positive level, it is part of your job as a historian to demonstrate that your work is original. Good historical writing always sets its context within what has previously been written on the subject.

***Attendance policy:***

Students are expected to attend all their classes. Poor or irregular attendance will adversely affect the quality of work and the course grade. A student who has to miss class must contact the course instructor and give a clear, valid explanation. Extended absences (for example, medical) should be documented (for example, by a note from the doctor). The student has the responsibility to make up any work missed, with deadlines at the discretion of the instructor. For university guidelines on attendance:

[http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=451#Attendance\\_Policy](http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=10&navoid=451#Attendance_Policy)

***Academic Integrity:***

The Truman State University *Student Conduct Code* (8.020.01) defines the term “academic misconduct” to include: 1) cheating, defined as using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information aids in any academic exercise; 2) fabrication, defined as falsification or invention of any information or citation in an exercise; 3) facilitating academic misconduct, defined as helping or attempting to help another in an act of academic dishonesty; and /or 4) plagiarism, defined as representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in an academic exercise. Students who are caught committing acts of academic misconduct in this course will be subject to the full range of penalties, including failing the assignment and the course. In every case, the Dean of Student Affairs Office and the Vice President for Academic Affairs will be notified; these officials have the power to suspend or expel students for academic misconduct. For more information see these two websites:

[http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=491#Academic\\_Dishonesty](http://catalog.truman.edu/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=491#Academic_Dishonesty) and

<http://www.truman.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/2014-Student-Conduct-Code.pdf>

***ADA Accommodation:***

The university is committed to making every possible effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, please inform both your instructor and the Disability Services office (785-4478) as soon as possible. Also see <http://disabilityservices.truman.edu/>

***Nondiscrimination and Title IX:***

The university prohibits discrimination or harassment. For details, see

<http://eoaa.truman.edu/complaint-reporting-resolution-procedure/>

**Course requirements and grades:** The on-time completion of all assignments (detailed in the schedule below) is required to pass the course. The completion of your **university portfolio** is a graduation requirement. Even if you are not graduating at the end of this semester, you must turn in your portfolio in conjunction with your capstone course.

All grading will follow this scale: 90-100 is A; 80-89 is B; 70-79 is C; etc. This formula will determine the course grade:

Essay on Jenkins (5-8 pages)	10 %
Historiography essay (10-15 pages)	15 %
Full draft (25-35 pages)	20 %
Final research paper (25-35 pages)	35 %
Participation	20 %

Participation includes all the course activities not otherwise in the formula (first reflection-paper on writing, prospectus, all class discussion, formal presentation of research paper, peer review, meetings with instructor and mentor as needed, attendance and responsible behavior with regard to deadlines, communication, etc.)

### Course Readings:

- Jenkins, Keith. *Rethinking History*. New York: Routledge, 2003.
- The American Historical Association, "Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct." <http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm>
- *Apprentice Historian* 20 (2014), electronic copy, sold in class.

Each seminar member should own a recent copy of Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide Writing in History*; this must be supplemented by various forms of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, including websites posted on Blackboard.

### Course Schedule:

01-12: Introduction to course

01-14: Bring 2-page reflection on your strengths and weaknesses as a writer.  
Discuss writing and introduce Jenkins.

01-19: Discussion of Jenkins. **Start essay:** Jenkins has complicated opinions about what history can/might be, and definitely strong opinions about what it isn't. Pick a part or aspect of his discussion and relate it to work that you have done. What is his point, and what do you think?

01-21 Further discussion of Jenkins and ideas for the Jenkins assignment

01-26: **Jenkins paper due (5-8 pages).** State plan for senior seminar project (and maybe also the outside mentor). Divide up articles from *Apprentice Historian*, vol. 20.

01-28: Discussion of portfolios; prepare by exploring [portfolio.truman.edu](http://portfolio.truman.edu)

02-02: Discussion of information from AHA website, especially on professional standards:  
<http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/ProfessionalStandards.cfm>

02-04: Discussion of student work in *Apprentice Historian*

02-09: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES; **SRC abstract (already approved by mentor) due to Dr. Robinson (may be emailed).** With his approval submit abstract to Student Research Conference <http://src.truman.edu> (**absolute deadline: Feb. 19**)

02-11: Class meets: discussion of research topics, research strategies

**02-16 No class; professor at conference in Jefferson City**

02-18: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

02-23: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

02-25: **Class meets with reference librarian (first-floor electronic classroom in Pickler)**

03-01: Class meets to discuss citations and plagiarism;

Three websites on plagiarism: [learningtechnologies.truman.edu/AcademicIntegrity.asp](http://learningtechnologies.truman.edu/AcademicIntegrity.asp)  
[conduct.truman.edu/docs/AI%20Brochure%2009.pdf](http://conduct.truman.edu/docs/AI%20Brochure%2009.pdf)

[www.historians.org/governance/pd/Curriculum/plagiarism\\_intro.htm](http://www.historians.org/governance/pd/Curriculum/plagiarism_intro.htm)

03-03: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES; **Historiography paper due (may be emailed)**

**03-07 through 03-11 Spring break**

03-15: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

03-17: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

03-22: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

03-24: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

**Course deadline for completion of University Portfolio**

03-29: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

03-31: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES;

04-01: **University deadline for Portfolio, for May graduates.**

04-05: Class meets; **full draft of research papers are due (3 hard copies);**  
discussion of upcoming presentations and peer review

04-07: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

04-12: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

04-14: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

**04-19 Student Research Conference; PRESENTATIONS according to published schedule**

04-21 Time for more presentations, if needed; **email peer reviews to presenters and professor**

04-26: INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCES

04-28: Class meets, course evaluation;

**FINAL PAPER (one copy printed, also emailed, to professor)**

05-05: 'Exam time' Thursday, 7:30-9:20; discuss grades, etc., in instructor's office