The Writing of History

HIST 3903 • Fall 2024

PROFESSOR:	Dr. Mary Draper
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OFFICE:	O'Donohoe 220
OFFICE HOURS:	MWF – 11:00am to 12:00pm MW – 1:00pm to 2:00pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What is history, and how does one write it? This course introduces students to the methods and skills historians use to write history. Throughout the semester, we will break down the steps of researching and writing a formal academic paper paper. We will discuss how to choose a paper topic, develop thesis statements, assess primary and secondary sources, outline papers, and write a polished paper. At the end of the semester, students will submit a 10-12 page paper (on a topic of their choice) based on original research.

By the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Develop an approach for researching and writing history papers
- Interpret a wide range of sources (both secondary and primary) that historians use to write history
- Critique secondary sources and the perspectives of primary sources.
- Conduct original research, synthesize that research into academic papers, and make an argument based on primary source evidence

READINGS:

Over the course of the semester, you will read five books (all of which are available as e-books via Moffett) in addition to other shorter readings (PDFs available on D2L). The books are as follows:

- William Kelleher Storey, Writing History: A Guide for Students (Oxford, 2021)
- Matt Upson, et al., *Information Now: A Graphic Guide to Student Research and Web Literacy* (University of Chicago Press, 2021)
- Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge* (37 Ink, 2017): <u>Amazon Link</u>

Other readings, such as faculty articles and the accompanying primary sources, will be posted on D2L.

ASSIGNMENTS & GRADING:

Your grade for this course is based on the following percentages:

Class Participation (30%):		
Attendance and Participation:	10%	
Faculty Research Responses:	10%	
Never Caught Book Review:	10%	
Research Paper (70%):		
Two topics memo*	5%	
Topic Proposal:	5%	
Primary Source Analysis #1:	10%	
Primary Source Analysis #2:	10%	
Book Review:	10%	
Annotated Bibliography:	5%	
4-6 page Excerpt:	10%	
Peer Review of Excerpt*	0%	
Revision Plan*	0%	
First & Final Drafts (10-12 pgs):	15%	

* These assignments are ungraded by required. Failure to complete them will result in a 5 point deduction from the final grade for each assignment.

Grading Scale: A = 100-90; B = 89-80; C = 79-70; D = 69-60, F = 59 and below

Class Participation and Readings (30%):

- Attendance and Participation (10%): All of our classes will be discussion-based. To succeed in this class, you need to prepare for and participate in-class discussion. Come ready to talk about the practice of history and the questions in *Information Now*. If you have perfect attendance but never speak, your discussion grade cannot be higher than a C. Likewise, if you do not attend class, your discussion grade will suffer. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. You will be given three unexcused absences. This grade will drop one letter grade with subsequent absences.
- Faculty Research Responses (10%): Five times during the semester, a faculty member from the history department will circulate their own research. You will read the article/chapter and primary source(s) that the faculty members circulates and write a one-paragraph response to the readings. In these responses, you're welcome to think through questions that you have about the research and writing process. *This is due before class on the day we discuss these readings. Please submit it via D2L.*
- *Never Caught* Book Review (10%): You will write a three-page book review of *Never Caught*. (Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, double-spaced). More information about how to write a book review can be found on D2L. *This is due Sunday, October 13*.

Research Paper (70%):

The following assignments will help you research and write a 10-12 page paper on a topic of your choice.

• **Two Topics Memo (5%):** (~200-250 words for each topic): Propose two potential research topics. In your proposal, explain what (or who) you are interested in studying. Moreover, you

should answer the following questions for each possible topic: What questions are driving your research? What sources do you plan to use? Why does this research project matter? What does this research project reveal about your topic? *This is due Wednesday, September 9 (Week 3).*

- **Topic Proposal (5%):** (2-3 pages): Write a 2-3 page essay that outlines your research topic, identifies the questions you hope to answer, and explains why this research is important. Unlike the Two Topics Memo, your proposal should also include an overview of the primary and secondary sources your plan to use. See the instruction sheet on D2L for more information. *This is due Monday, September 23 (Week 5).*
- **Primary Source Analysis #1 (10%):** Write a 2-3 page analysis of a primary source relating to your research project. See the instruction sheet on D2L for more information. *This is due Sunday, October 6 (Week 6).*
- **Primary Source Analysis #2 (10%):** Write a 2-3 page analysis of a primary source relating to your research project. See the instruction sheet on D2L for more information. *This is due Sunday, October 20 (Week 8).*
- Annotated Bibliography (5%): Write an annotated bibliography that includes 10-15 secondary sources. These sources must be peer-reviewed publications (academic books or journal articles) that are not assigned in this course. *This is due Wednesday, October 27 (Week 9).*
- **Book Review** (10%): Write a three-page review of a book relating to your topic. This should assess the book's argument and evidence. The book should be published since 2010. See the instruction sheet on D2L for more information. *This is due Sunday, November 3 (Week 10).*
- **4-6 page Excerpt of Final Paper (10%):** You will circulate a 4-6 page excerpt of your final paper for peer review. This will allow you to receive feedback from me as well as a partner before completing your final draft. See the instruction sheet on D2L for more information. *This is due Sunday, November 10 (Week 11).*
- **Peer Review of Excerpt (0%):** You will provide feedback on another class member's excerpt. See the instruction sheet on D2L for more information. *This due Wednesday, November 13 (Week 12).*
- **Revision Plan (0%):** You will submit a one-page revision plan that outlines what you will do to complete the final draft of your paper. This plan will take into account feedback from me and your peer reviewer. *This is due during your meeting with Dr. Draper on Thursday, Nov. 14 or Friday, Nov. 15.*
- **First Draft:** You will submit a polished ten- to twelve-page draft of a paper based on original research. It should include footnotes as well as a bibliography. *This is due Sunday, November 24 (Week 13).*
- **Final Draft**: You will submit a polished ten- to twelve-page paper based on original research that takes into account feedback from our meeting. It should include footnotes as well as a bibliography. *This is due Wednesday, December 11 (Finals Week)*.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT & GENERATIVE AI: "*As an MSU Student, I pledge not to lie, cheat, steal, or help anyone else do so.*" Academic misconduct—cheating, collusion, plagiarism, etc.— will not be tolerated and will receive an F. For example, "cutting and pasting" from any internet source or poorly paraphrasing (i.e. changing a few words with the synonym function) without citing that source is plagiarism. Moreover, generating text via AI and citing it as your own is academic misconduct, and the instructor reserves the right to give that assignment an F.

When can I use Generative AI like ChatGPT in this course?

- The use of Generative AI **is allowed** in this course for the following: brainstorming your ideas and checking grammar.

When must I avoid Generative AI like ChatGPT in this course?

- The use of generative AI **is not permitted** for the following: Writing a draft of an assignment; and writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete assignments.

Why can't I use Generative AI to write my papers?

- Learning happens as we read, think, organize, summarize, respond, and engage. We don't want machines to do that for us.

DROP DATE: Last Day to drop with a grade of "**W**" is November 25. You will have the majority of your grade by that point, so you will be able to assess your standing in the class. It is the student's responsibility to visit with their academic advisor prior to withdrawing from a class.

ACCOMMODATIONS: In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. Students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. For more details, please go to <u>Disability Support Services</u>.

COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS: This class uses D2L. You will find readings, take reading quizzes, and submit papers through D2L. It is your responsibility to have access to a working computer in this class. Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings.

TUTORING & ACADEMIC SUPPORT:

TASP offers tutoring assistance. Please contact the TASP, (940) 397-4684, or visit the <u>TASP homepage</u> for more information.

E-MAIL RESPONSES: I will make every attempt to respond to e-mails sent during the week within one business day. That said, on weekends and evenings, please be patient if I do not respond immediately. If you e-mail me over the weekend, I might not respond until Monday.

NOTICE: Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor. Look on D2L for any relevant announcements.

E-mail me (mary.draper@msutexas.edu) or visit me during office hours if you have any questions.

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WEEKS 1-5	Faculty Research
Aug. 26 thru Sept. 27	Welcome to the first third of this course! During these five weeks, we'll read about "doing" history and see how some of the history department faculty research and write history. We'll also work on developing your own research topics.
WEEK 1	Monday: Reading for class:
Aug. 26 Aug. 28	• Syllabus & Schedule
Aug. 30	In-Class Activities:
C	• Introductions
	Review Syllabus and Schedule
	Due in class: N/A
	Wednesday:
	 <i>Reading for class:</i> W. Caleb McDaniel, "How to Read for History": <u>https://wcaleb.org/blog/how-to-read#</u> W. Caleb McDaniel, "How to Discuss a Book for History": <u>http://wcaleb.org/blog/how-to-discuss</u>
	In-Class Activities:
	• Writing a History of 2024
	• How to read for history classes (and how to read an article)
	Due in class: N/A
	Friday: Reading for class:
	• Mary Draper, "Timbering and Turtling: The Maritime Hinterlands of the Early Modern British Caribbean," <i>Early American Studies</i> Vol. 15, No. 4 (Fall 2017) 769-800.
	• PDF of primary sources from Dr. Draper
	In-Class Activities

	Discussion of Draper, "Timbering and Turtling"
	Due in class:
	 Response to Dr. Draper's primary sources and article
WEEK 2	Monday: No class
	Tionauy. 110 Clubb
Sep. 2	Wednesday:
Sep. 4 Sep. 6	 <i>Reading for class:</i> Storey, <i>Writing History</i>, pgs. 1-33 (Pt. 1: Getting Started)
Sept 6	Storey, <i>mung history</i> , pgs. 1 35 (1 t. 1. Getting Stated)
	In-Class Activities:
	 Discussion of <i>Writing History</i> Writing the Two-Topics Memo (due next Monday, Sept. 9)
	• Writing the Two-Topics Menio (due next Monday, Sept. 9)
	Due in class: N/A
	Friday:
	Reading for class:
	• Dr. Snow's article and primary source
	In-Class Activities
	Discussion of Dr. Snow's primary sources and article
	Due in class:
	Response to Dr. Snow's primary sources and article
WEEK 3	Monday:
	Reading for class:
Sep. 9	• Upson, <i>Information Now</i> , 1-24 (Intro and Ch. 1: The Process)
Sep. 11 Sep. 13	In-Class Activities:
Sep. 15	Two Topics Brainstorming
	 Due in class: Two Topics Memo (submit to D2L and bring copy to class)
	• Two Topics Menio (sublinit to D2L and bring copy to class)
	Wednesday:
	 <i>Reading for class:</i> Storey, <i>Writing History</i>, pgs. 34-41 (Pt. 2: Interpreting Source Materials)
	• Storey, writing mistory, pgs. 34-41 (1 t. 2. interpreting Source Materials)
	In-Class Activities:
	 Writing a Proposal (due Monday, Sept. 23) Digital Databases (bring computer if you have it)
	• Digital Databases (bring computer, if you have it)
	Due in class: N/A

	 Friday: <i>Reading for class:</i> Tiffany A. Ziegler, "Women, Seals, and Charters: Gendered Affirmation and Legitimation at the Hospital of St. John in Brussels" in <i>Gender, Memory and Documentary Culture, c. 900-1300</i>, edited by Laura L. Gathagan and Charles Insley (The Boydell Press, 2025), 52-69. PDF of sources from Dr. Ziegler <i>In-Class Activities</i> Discussion of Dr. Ziegler's "Women, Seals, and Charters" and primary sources <i>Due in class:</i> Response to Dr. Ziegler's primary sources and article
WEEK 4 Sep. 16 Sep. 18 Sep. 20	 Monday: Reading for class: Upson, Information Now, 25-38 (Ch. 2: How Information is Organized and Found) In-Class Activities: Library Visit Due in class: N/A Wednesday: Reading for class: Storey, Writing History, 42-63 (Pt. 3: Writing History Faithfully) In-Class Activities: Citation activity Work on Topic Proposal Due in class: N/A Friday: Reading for class: Dr. Blakeslee's article and primary source In-Class Activities Discussion of Dr. Blakeslee's primary sources and article

WEEK 5	Monday:
	Reading for class:
Sep. 23	• Storey, <i>Writing History</i> , 64-81 (Pt. 4: Using Sources to Make Inferences)
Sep. 25	Storey, writing mistory, or of (i.e. i. esing bources to make interences)
Sep. 27	In-Class Activities:
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	Finding Primary Sources
	How to Write a Primary Source Analysis
	Schedule meeting with Dr. Draper
	Due in class:
	Topic Proposal (submit to D2L)
	Wednesday: No class. Schedule meeting with Dr. Draper between Tuesday and Friday to review topic proposal.
	Evident
	Friday:
	Reading for class:
	• Dr. Rattanasengchanh's article and primary source
	In-Class Activities:
	Discussion of Dr. Rattanasengchanh's article
	Due in class:
	Response to Dr. Rattanasengchanh's primary sources and article
WEEKS 6-7	Ona Judge
Sept. 30	For the next two weeks, we'll read a book about Ona Judge, a woman enslaved by the
thru	Washington family. Historian Erica Armstrong Dunbar creatively recreated Judge's
Oct. 11	world, using fleeting references in the archive. You'll also work on identifying and
	analyzing primary sources for your own research project during these weeks.
WEEK 6	**Next Monday is the last day to register to vote**
Sep. 30	Monday:
Oct. 2	Reading for class:
Oct. 4	• Dunbar, Never Caught, 1-48
	In-Class Activities:
	Discussion of Never Caught
	Dunbar's Primary Sources
	• How to write a Book Review (due Wednesday, October 9)
	Due in class: N/A
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	Wednesday: Reading for class:

	• Dunbar, <i>Never Caught</i> , 49-98
	 In-Class Activities: Discussion of Never Caught Dunbar's Primary Sources Due in class: N/A Friday: Reading for class: N/A In-Class Activities: Primary Source Palooza Due in class: Bring a copy of a primary source related to your research. Primary Sources Analysis #1 due on Sunday, October 6.
WEEK 7	**Monday is the last day to register to vote for the November election**
Oct. 7 Oct. 9 Oct. 11	 Monday: Reading for class: Dunbar, Never Caught, 99-154 In-Class Activities: Discussion of Never Caught Dunbar's Primary Sources Due in class: N/A Wednesday: Reading for class: Dunbar, Never Caught, 155-198 In-Class Activities: Discussion of Never Caught Dunbar's Primary Sources Due in class: N/A Wednesday: Reading for class: Dunbar, Never Caught, 155-198 In-Class Activities: Discussion of Never Caught Dunbar's Primary Sources Due in class: N/A Friday: Reading for class: N/A In-Class Activities: Special Collections Library Visit

	Due in class: N/A
	Book Review of Dunbar due Sunday, October 13.
WEEKS 8-15	Working on your own research project
Oct. 14 thru Dec. 6	For the last half of this course, you'll dive into your own project. You've now seen many models about how to "do" history. Let's get to writing!
WEEK 8 Oct. 14 Oct. 16 Oct. 18	 Monday: Reading for class: Upson, Information Now, 39-54 (Ch. 3: Searching for Library Resources) In-Class Activities: Primary Source Palooza Due in class: Bring a copy of a primary source related to your research. Wednesday: Reading for class: Storey, Writing History, 82-101 (Pt. 5: Get Writing! Get Organized!) In-Class Activities: Organizing your Research Drafting a Research Plan Schedule meetings with Dr. Draper re: Research Plan Due in class: N/A Friday: No class. Work on Primary Source Analysis #2, due Sunday October 20. Schedule individual meetings with Dr. Draper to discuss research plan.
WEEK 9 Oct. 21 Oct. 23 Oct. 25	 Monday: Reading for class: Upson, Information Now, 55-70 (Ch. 4: Journals and Databases) In-Class Activities: What is Historiography? Due in class: N/A Wednesday: Reading for class: Upson, Information Now, 71-84 (Ch. 5: Searching the Open Web)

	 In-Class Activities: In-class research for Annotated Bibliography. Bring laptop and book related to your research topic. Chasing the Footnote exercise.
	Due in class: N/A
	Friday: No class. Work on Annotated Bibliography, due Sunday, October 27.
WEEK 10	Monday: Reading for class:
Oct. 28 Oct. 30	 Upson, <i>Information Now</i>, 85-94 (Ch. 6: Evaluating your Sources)
Nov. 1	In-Class Activities:
	What to do with an Annotated Bibliography?Drafting a paragraph about Historiography
	Due in class: N/A
	 Wednesday: Reading for class: Storey, Writing History, 102-109 (Pt. 6: Narrative Techniques for Historians) Storey, Writing History, 110-117 (Pt. 7: Writing Sentences in History) Storey, Writing History, 118-125 (Pt. 8: Choosing Precise Words)
	<i>In-Class Activities:</i>Editing your sentences.Writing your Excerpt.
	Due in class: N/A
	Friday: No class. Work on Book Review, due Sunday, November 3.
WEEK 11	**Election day is November 5. Go exercise your right to vote!**
Nov. 4	No class this week.
Nov. 6	
Nov. 8	Work on writing your 4-6 page excerpt. It is due Sunday, November 10.
WEEK 12	Monday: Reading for class:
Nov. 11	• Upson, <i>Information Now</i> , 95-116 (Ch. 7: Using Information Ethically and
Nov. 13 Nov. 15	Conclusion)
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	In-Class Activities:
	Peer Review of Excerpts
	Due in class: N/A
	Wednesday:
	Reading for class:
	 Storey, <i>Writing History</i>, 130-135 (Pt. 9: Revising and Editing) Schedule meeting with Dr. Draper to review Revision Plan.
	In-Class Activities:
	Drafting a Revision Plan
	Due in class:
	Peer Review due before class.
	Friday: No class. Meet with Dr. Draper to review Revision Plan.
WEEK 13	No class this week.
Nov. 18 Nov. 20 Nov. 22	Work on drafting your first draft. It is due Sunday, November 24.
WEEK 14	**Last day to drop classes with a "W" is November 25**
Nov. 25	Monday: No class.
Nov. 27 Nov. 29	Wednesday: Happy Thanksgiving!
	Friday: Happy Thanksgiving!
WEEK 15	Meet with Dr. Draper to discuss first draft and discuss revisions.
Dec. 2	Monday:
Dec. 4	Reading for class: N/A
Dec. 6	
	In-Class Activities: TBD
	Due in class: N/A
	Wednesday:
	Reading for class: N/A
	In-Class Activities: TBD
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	Due in class: N/A
	Friday: Reading for class: N/A
	In-Class Activities: TBD
	Due in class: N/A
FINALS WEEK	Final Paper due (Wednesday, December 11)