Professor Paul Dover  
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pdover@kennesaw.edu (for questions pertaining to the content or conduct of the course, please use GeorgiaVIEW Vista mail; use the kennesaw.edu address only for personal concerns)  
Office Hours: TTh 8-9:30 or by appointment

NB: Students are responsible for the contents of this syllabus. The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any time during the semester – students are expected to keep abreast of any alterations to the syllabus and schedule announced by the instructor.

Overview

This course is the first part of a two-course sequence on the art of historical research and writing; the second of the courses is HIST 3376 (“Historiographical Debates”). Our focus this semester is the tools of historians and the differing ways in which they employ them.

You will find this course unlike any other history class that you will take at Kennesaw State University. There will be no real lectures, nor will there be any exams. Rather this course will more closely resemble a workshop, where we will examine the way in which historians ply...
their craft. This is an opportunity for you to ‘do history’ as professional historians do. It may or may not be true that history is a science (I am inclined to believe that it is, albeit an inexact one), but it is undoubtedly the case that there is a set of tools that the historian employs in her work. This toolbox contains historical methods, modes of inquiry and interpretation, historiography (the study of historical interpretation), and means of assessment and argumentation. While ultimately our aim here is to acquire historical knowledge and explain the unfolding of history, our emphasis in this class will be on process. It is essential, as history majors, that you understand how history comes to be written and that you are able to employ the requisite skills yourself. This will not only equip you to practice the art of history but also provide you with valuable expertise that you can apply to a range of problems and challenges.

One essential feature of almost all good historical writing and thinking is that it has been subject to constructive criticism. In that spirit, I want all of us to help each other to become more effective researchers and writers through the thoughtful and mutually supportive exchange of ideas. In order to accomplish this task, it is essential that each student come to our class meetings prepared to discuss readings and assignments in an informed and creative manner. I would like to see the initiative and direction for discussions coming from you the students – we are all interested enough in history to choose to major in it (or teach it), so we should be ready to approach the material with enthusiasm. A cursory reading of course materials, therefore, will probably not be sufficient. Arrive in class ready to offer your own interpretations, insights and criticisms. And don’t be afraid of taking some chances with your views.

This course has no textbook, per se; instead, it draws upon a range of readings that explore the content, meaning and purpose of what historians do. Some of our readings will emphasize the nuts and bolts of the practice of history, while others have been chosen to display the range of interpretive paradigms that historians employ. We will see that different historians read the same sources in different ways, choose to emphasize the evidence of one source over another, and bring a host of theoretical and political preconceptions to their readings of evidence. These are realities that will be examined in greater detail when you take HIST 3376 (“Historiographical Debates”), but we begin their consideration here.

In the absence of exams, your performance will be assessed by what you are able to contribute to class discussions and by a series of short written assignments that ask you to employ the historical tools that you have learned (see course requirements listed below). Be aware that this course is designed to prepare you to embark on historical research projects like those that you will encounter in upper-level history courses. It is my hope that those of you who proceed to complete a senior thesis will find yourselves well equipped by what you learn in this course.

**Course objectives**

The following are the newly-revised course objectives for History 2270, as determined by the faculty of the Department of History:

At the end of this course, students will:
- be able to articulate what is encompassed by the discipline of history.
- recognize and follow ethical conventions of the discipline.
- understand the concept of an historical argument.
- know how to read monographs and articles in a scholarly way. Specifically, students will be able to identify the author’s argument and type of evidence used; explain how the author relates his/her argument to other work in that area; analyze the organization of the piece and/or argument; and evaluate the author’s success in proving his/her argument.
- be able to identify different types of sources (primary/secondary).
- be able to locate secondary sources and book reviews using electronic and hardcopy indices.
- know how to write a scholarly review.
- have visited and become familiar with the structure and philosophy of finding aids and other research aids available in an archive.
- have become practiced in evaluating and interpreting primary resources.
- be able to develop a valid historical argument from primary sources.
- understand how academic historians locate and develop research topics, and be able to do this themselves.
- understand how historians position their research within a larger framework, and be able to do this themselves.
- know and be able to apply the Chicago Manual of Style as it is used by major journals in the history profession.
- have become practiced in giving formal presentations.
- understand the differences between academic and public history.
- have become practiced in planning, drafting, and completing formal written work. It is expected that students will have completed a total of at least 15 pages of formal written work at the conclusion of the course.

In addition, I have appended the following objectives of my own:

- to learn to display sensitivity to context in reading and writing history
- to gain an appreciation for history as a discipline
to learn to think historically

Expectations

- **Attendance at class.** This class meets 29 times in the course of the semester. I will permit you to miss four class periods without penalty. Beyond that, however, you will lose ½ grade off your final grade for each class that you miss. Please note that there is an assignment due almost every week. These should be turned in at the beginning of the class period. If you miss a day when an assignment is due, that assignment must be handed in by the end of the day. Each day an assignment is late, I will subtract a letter grade. I will not accept any assignments that are over a week late – these will be recorded as a ‘0’.

- Attendance is important, but **participation** is vital once you get to class. This is a seminar course and student contributions are essential for the course to function. I place considerable emphasis on your ability to express your ideas to me and to one another vocally, as well as in writing. I am especially interested in hearing your ideas regarding the reading and assignments but I encourage you to contribute observations that go beyond these confines as well. Be prepared to float ideas and insights to the rest of the class, and be willing to think outside the box and take intellectual chances. You will be called upon to give at least one oral presentation to the class during the course of the semester, and these will be part of the assessment of your course performance.

- I want you, at least for the extent of this semester, to think ‘historically’. I would like you to pay particularly close attention to what you see, hear and read in the media and look for stories that are of special historical interest. These might include a report on NPR about the historical sites of Iraq, a History Channel program about the Ancient Greeks, or an article from the local paper about interesting headstones in the cemetery (just to pick three completely random examples). Make note of such things and share them with me and with the rest of the class. In sum, I want you to have historically attuned ears.

- In addition to your written assignments, I would like you to read at least two book reviews of a book on a historical subject that interests you each week. These reviews might come from a professional trade journal, or they might come from the periodical press (magazines and newspapers). There are countless quality historical journals, but here are some to which the Sturgis Library holds subscriptions, and to which you will have easy access: *The Journal of American History*, *American Historical Review*, *Speculum*, *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, *The Journal of Modern History*, *The Journal of Women’s History*, *The Historian*. There are many more. Good periodical publications to consult for reviews include the following: *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The Weekly Standard*, *The New York Times Book Review*, *The Times Literary Supplement*, *The New York Review of Books*. You should be able to share your reflections on this review at any time during the course of a class meeting – and I may very well ask you to do so.

- **Be in conversation and communication with the professor.** I heartily encourage you to use the instructor as a resource. If you have questions or need clarification about anything, or you need advice on an assignment, please seek me out. I am here to help and I genuinely enjoy assisting students as they unpack historical problems.
You will be better off if I know who you are, know what your interests are, and have had an opportunity to observe the way you think. I am happy to answer questions and address concerns over the phone or via e-mail, but I find that communication on issues regarding the class are invariably more effective in person.

- Completion of all the **required assignments**. You must complete all the assignments to receive credit for this course.

### Assessment

- **Attendance, Preparation and Participation**: 30%. See the attendance policy in the previous section.
- **Oral Presentations**: 10% Each student will be asked to present material in class and/or facilitate class discussion on two occasions during the course of the semester. These dates are indicated in the syllabus – the professor will determine the dates for which you are responsible.
- **Assignments**: 60% Assignments # 1-6 are worth 5% of the final grade each; assignments #7-9 are worth 10% of the final grade each.
- **There is no final exam in this course.**

### GEORGIAVIEW VISTA

This course uses the VISTA course management software. You will find this syllabus, class assignments, and supplementary readings there. All students should familiarize themselves with the VISTA site for this course and check it regularly for updates and announcements. Please use VISTA’s e-mail capacity to ask the instructor questions regarding course content and conduct.

**Policy on late work**: Work handed in late without a medical excuse will be penalized one letter grade for each day that it is late i.e. a B essay that is a day late will receive a grade of C. I do not accept work that is more than a week late. Assignments that are not completed receive a grade of ‘0’ (not F). Missed exams will be graded as ‘0’. Make-up exams will be offered only in cases of documented family or medical emergency.

**Ethical considerations**: I take instances of academic dishonesty, cheating and plagiarism very seriously – proof of such activity will result in a failing grade for the semester and a referral to the Office of Student Affairs. The bottom line about cheating and plagiarism is this: do not do it. It is not worth it – you can seriously damage your reputation among the faculty, your academic standing at this and other universities and your viability in the professional world. Please read the discussion of academic integrity that follows this syllabus – it includes relevant definitions and discussions of applicable penalties. Ignorance of the guidelines does not excuse violations.

Research has indicated that 40-60% of American college students reported cheating on examinations in college. Over half of the students who reported cheating in college were repeat offenders who used a variety of nefarious techniques to achieve their objective. While we assume the best of all students, we are also well aware of these realities.
Please read the statement on Academic Honesty in the Kennesaw State University Undergraduate Catalog on pages 243-4. Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement.

I have questions about the integrity of your work, I will ask to meet with you. If outstanding questions remain, I will adhere to the policies above. **I reiterate: the penalty for cheating and/or plagiarism in this course is a failing grade for the semester. I will report all incidents of plagiarism to the Office of Student Affairs, and the incident will become part of your official record.**

**Accommodations for Disabled Students:** A number of services are available to aid disabled students with their academic work. In order to make arrangements for such services, students should visit the Office of Disabled Student Support Services (Student Center 286A) and arrange an individual assistance plan. This must be done at the very beginning of the semester in order for proper accommodations to be made. Please note that appropriate documentation will be required.

**Electronic equipment in class:** I do not allow the use of laptops in class, unless you have a documented medical reason to use one. I have no objection to the use of recording devices in class – just please let me know if you intend to use them. Text messaging in class is strictly *verboten* - if I catch you doing so, I will ask you to leave for the rest of the class session. Similarly, should your cell phone ring, I will ask you to leave for the remainder of the class session. If a phone is needed for emergency use, please let the instructor know before class and set it to silent or pulse.

**Student Deportment:** I want my classroom environment to be rooted in a spirit of mutual respect. In striving to create a scholarly, collegial and efficient classroom environment for my students, I cannot and will not tolerate rude and obnoxious behavior such as social chatting, use of cell phones, pagers and Blackberries, reading of extraneous material such as newspapers, sleeping, and other antisocial activities. Please do not continue in this course if you intend to do any of these.

**Privacy**

The Family Educational and Privacy Act protects the confidentiality of educational records. Grades will not be given out over the phone, through a fellow student or over Zimbra e-mail in this course.
Texts

The following texts are available for purchase at the KSU Bookstore:

Agatha Christie, *Murder on the Orient Express*. Feel free to use any edition of this text.

There are a number of readings in addition to these texts. Some of these will be available on the VISTA site for this course – these are marked with (V). Other readings, articles from historical journals, are available through databases accessible on GALILEO.

I may also hand out other readings, from time to time.

**NB** At no time during the course of this semester do I want to see a reference to Wikipedia. Thank you.

Schedule

Thursday, 7 January – Introduction & Introductions

Tuesday, 12 January – History as Detective Work
Reading: Agatha Christie, *Murder on the Orient Express*

Thursday, 14 January – History as Detective Work
Reading: Agatha Christie, *Murder on the Orient Express*

Tuesday, 19 January – What is History?
Reading: Trevelyan, “Clio, a Muse” (V)

Thursday, 21 January – What is History?
Reading: Thucydides, Selections from *The History of the Peloponnesian War*: “Preface” & “The Plague in Athens” (V).

Tuesday, 26 January – What Use is History?

**Assignment #1 Due: Defining History**

Thursday, 28 January – History and Histories

Tuesday, 2 February – Primary and Secondary Sources
Reading: *From Reliable Sources*, Chapter 1

Thursday, 4 February – Interpreting Documents
Reading: *From Reliable Sources*, Chapter 2

Tuesday, 9 February – Interpreting Documents
Reading: *From Reliable Sources*, Chapter 3; *Writing History*, Chapters 1&2

**Student presentations**

Thursday, 11 February – Writing from Documents
Reading: Laslett, “Births, Marriages and Deaths” from *The World We Have Lost*, 81-106 (V); Hannawalt, “Childhood” from *The Ties that Bound*, vii-viii, 171-87 (V).

**Assignment #2 Due: Interpretation of Primary Document**

Tuesday, 16 February – Writing from Documents

**Student presentations**

Thursday, 18 February – Writing from Documents
Reading: Schama, “The Many Deaths of General Wolfe,” and “A Note on Sources” from *Dead Certainties*, 3-70 (V)

**Assignment #3 Due: Determining Topics**

Tuesday, 23 February – Books and How to Read Them
Reading: Peruse the Research Bibliography in *From Reliable Sources*

Thursday, 25 February – Journals and Periodicals
**Assignment #4 Due: Book Reviews**

Tuesday, 2 March – Journals and Periodicals

**Student presentations**

Thursday, 4 March – Non-written sources
Reading: Examine the National Gallery’s feature on John Singleton Copley’s *Watson and the Shark* (1777) at [http://www.nga.gov/feature/watson/watsonhome.shtm](http://www.nga.gov/feature/watson/watsonhome.shtm)

**Assignment #5 Due: Journal and Periodical Search**

Friday, 5 March – last day to withdraw without academic penalty

*** SPRING BREAK ***

Tuesday, 16 March – Using (and not Abusing) the Internet
Reading: “Wikipedia Celebrates 750 Years of American Independence” in *The Onion*, July 26, 2006 at [http://www.theonion.com/content/node/50902](http://www.theonion.com/content/node/50902); Frank Ahrens, “Its on Wikipedia,

Thursday, 18 March – Constructing a Bibliography
**Assignment #6 Due: Using Internet Sources**

Tuesday, 23 March – Citation and the Proper Use of Sources
Reading: *Writing History*, Chapters 3&4

Thursday, 25 March – Citation and the Proper Use of Sources
Reading: Himmelfarb, “Where Have All the Footnotes Gone?” in *On Looking Into the Abyss*, 122-130 (V)

**Student presentations**

Tuesday, 30 March – Historians not following their rules

**Assignment #7 Due: Your Book Review**

Thursday, 1 April – Schools of Historical Writing and Theory

Tuesday, 6 April - Schools of Historical Writing and Theory
**Student presentations**

Thursday, 8 April – NO CLASS

Tuesday, 13 April – The Historian’s Craft
Reading: *The Historian’s Craft*, 3-47 (V)

Thursday, 15 April – The Historian’s Craft
Reading: *The Historian’s Craft*, 138-189 (V)

**Student presentations**

Tuesday, 20 April - The Landscape of History
Reading: *The Landscape of History*, Chapters 1-4

**Assignment #8 Due: Write-up of an Archive Visit**

Thursday, 22 April – The Landscape of History
Reading: *The Landscape of History*, Chapters 5-8

Tuesday, 27 April – Writing Well: Structure
Reading: *Writing History*, Chapters 5-7
Thursday, 29 April - Writing Well: Style, Syntax and Flair
Reading: Writing History, Chapters 8-10
Assignment #9 Due: Bibliography