Introduction to Themes in History
HIST 2270

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office: Social Science 4126
office hours: MW 10:00-10:45

TTh 11:00-12:00

This section of Introduction to Themes in History will emphasize several aspects of American
history, but the class should be interesting and useful to students pursuing any concentration in
the history major. This section is not recommended for History Education majors, who should
take instead a section of HIST 2270 titled Introduction to the History Profession.

Required books/readings: Kate Turabian et al., A Manual for Writers of Research Papers,
Theses, and Dissertations (7th ed.), and additional reading assignments listed on the schedule.

Grades: Grades for the course are based mostly on written assignments and quizzes. Students
must have a passing (70%) average in each of these to pass the course. See also “Attendance,”
below. A = 90s, B = 80s, C = 70s, D = 60s, F = below 60.

The various written assignments will count on a per-page basis—so-called “exercises” as
two pages, “reviews” as four pages, and the final project as ten. Together, these
assignments count 80% of the course grade.

We will have quizzes on a daily (or almost-daily) basis. The quizzes will cover readings,
discussions, assignments, anything we’ve done in the class. And they cover the whole term
(which means you need to remember everything we do—I might give you a punctuation
quiz on the last day of class, for example). Quizzes count 20% of the course grade.

I expect students to come to class prepared to participate fully in class discussions.
Especially brilliant participation can have a positive effect on the final grade; failure to
participate in an adequate and satisfactory manner will affect the grade negatively.

Attendance: Much of what I want students to learn comes from class sessions rather than
readings or written assignments. Students who miss three class sessions or more will not pass
the course. Note that absences are absences; I make no distinction between “excused” and
“unexcused.” Students who arrive late or leave early will be counted present at my discretion.
**Other course policies:** Cell phones and similar devices should be turned off and put away during class. Laptop computers are allowed for course work only.

It is possible that we will have to make changes in this syllabus, especially the schedule. Any such changes will be for good cause and will be announced in class (if possible) and through the email function of GeorgiaView.

Assignments are due as described on the syllabus. Except in truly exceptional circumstances, I will not accept late work. “In a documented coma in the hospital” will usually get you a brief extension; “I didn’t feel well,” “my family went out of town for the weekend,” “my car wouldn’t start,” “my girlfriend had a headache,” and the like won’t. If you are unable to be in class to submit work that is due that day, email or fax it to me by class time to show that you completed it as required. Also send an explanation of why you won’t be in class to turn it in. Note that you will still have to submit a paper copy as soon as possible.

Check GeorgiaView regularly for assignments and messages.

If you have any difficulties regarding this class, please make an appointment so we can talk about them. The sooner we can resolve problems, the better for all concerned.

Finally, I expect students to do their own work. “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. . . . 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.” -- KSU Senate, 3/15/99

All cases of academic misconduct in this course will be reported to the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity and will result in a lower grade (usually an F) for the class.
The following are the approved **course objectives** for History 2270.

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.
SCHEDULE

Note: Unless otherwise specified, all assignments for this course should be considered individual rather than group work.

June 1 W

Today’s session is an introduction to the course and to each other.

6 M

Read and be prepared to discuss “The Strange Death of Silas Deane” (available on WebCT). We will talk about the nature of history; the work of the historian; and the nature of historical sources.

8 W


2. Read Turabian, Part 3 (esp. Chaps. 20-25). Turabian is a nice guide to punctuation, grammar, and the like. On matters that the book addresses, it should be considered authoritative. You might also be interested in
   - Michael Harvey’s The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing, available online at http://nutsandbolts.washcoll.edu. This is quite good, and not just for punctuation (under “mechanics”) and grammar (some of which is under “style”); the section on Chicago-style formatting (which we use in history for citations) is clear and concise.
   - Purdue University’s online writing guide, at http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/grammar. Among the useful sections are those on dangling modifiers, active and passive voice, appositives, parallel structure, and subject/verb agreement. KSU’s own Writing Center uses the Purdue site for its online writing guide!
   - http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/. This is the popular Grammar Girl site. I’m a fan.

3. Find on GeorgiaView and print the grammar/punctuation/style exercise. (You might want to print two copies: one to submit, and one to use when we go over the exercise in class.) Directions are on the exercise.
June 13 M

1. more on grammar, style, punctuation, and such

2. Who was Rebecca Felton? Read the DGB and ANB entries, available on GeorgiaView.

3. We will begin looking at bibliographical databases.

15 W

1. more on bibliographical databases

2. a look at scholarly journals

20 M

book review exercise-- Read reviews of Catherine Clinton’s The Plantation Mistress in the following journals: William and Mary Quarterly; Reviews in American History; American Historical Review; and Virginia Magazine of History and Biography. Write a two-page paper describing the reviews. What do they tell the reader about the book? How do they differ? Note: For this paper, do not worry about trying to cite the reviews; refer to them using the reviewer’s name.

22 W


2. Write an article review in which you identify the specific thesis and describe the organization and evidence of the article. Reviews should be about four pages. See “A Few Writing Tips” (GeorgiaView) for citation form.
Read the following:


Today’s class assumes a survey-level knowledge of Reconstruction.

**June 29 W**


2. Read “View from the Bottom Rail” (on WebCT).

**July 4 M**

no class  Happy Fourth of July!

**6 W**

1. first primary source exercise


**11 M**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>13 W</td>
<td></td>
<td>Read Turabian, Part 2 (Chaps. 15-17 only); prepare citation exercise.</td>
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<td>18 M</td>
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<td>final article review (student’s choice—but get my approval)</td>
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<td>20 W</td>
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<td>second primary source exercise (student’s choice—use something from your big final project)</td>
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<td>25 M</td>
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<td>discussion of final projects</td>
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<td>27 W</td>
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The final course project is an annotated bibliography for a research project that touches on some aspect of the themes discussed in this course. The paper will consist of three parts:

- a three-page discussion of your topic and thesis
- an annotated bibliography of five secondary sources that you would use in the project
- an annotated bibliography of at least five primary sources that will allow you to prove your thesis

Students should begin working on this project several weeks before the end of the term. I will be happy to talk with students—several times if necessary—to ensure a good project.

Note: This class session meets during our scheduled final exam time (11:30-1:30).