

International History

Academic year 2020-2021

Doctoral Seminar II

HI014 - Printemps - 6 ECTS

Tuesday 14h15 - 16h00

Course Description

This semester focuses on the craft of developing and carrying through a historical research project. We will explore how to design research questions and situate one's work, archival research methods and dilemmas, oral history planning and interpretation, writing effectively, oral presentations, funding, and the history profession more broadly.

> PROFESSOR

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Syllabus

Below please find the course requirements, schedule, and assignments. In the first half of the semester, we will dissect the core elements of a research project and explore how different historians approach research and writing. Students are expected to come each week prepared, having completed the required readings and weekly assignments. You will also complete three short papers aimed at building the different elements of your research project. The second half of the semester will allow you more time to concentrate on writing your final paper (a research proposal for your dissertation project, or "mini-MPT"), which you will present to the class in the final weeks. Details on assignments can be found under the relevant weeks.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Class Participation and Weekly Assignments = 30%

Three Short Papers (due March 5, March 26, April 16, see below) = 25% (5 + 10 + 10)

Oral Presentation, May 11- June 1 (see Weeks 11-14 below) = 10%

Final Paper, due June 8 at 23:59 (see end of syllabus) = 35%

Weekly assignments must be submitted at least two days before class (ie. By 23:59 on the Sunday before class) as a post in that week's Discussion Forum. **Papers** (including the 3 short papers and the final paper) must be submitted to the course Moodle page as a **Word document, double-spaced, 12 pt Times New Roman font, with standard 2.5cm (1") margins**. Papers should use **footnotes in the**

Chicago citation style. Please see Purdue OWL's [Chicago Manual of Style](#) and the sample paper provided on Moodle for guidelines on how to use this format, with sample citations.

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1, Feb 23: Questions

This week we will ask: what is the point of writing a PhD dissertation? What is the point of writing *your* PhD dissertation? What are the central characteristics of a good research question/set of research questions? What types of research questions do historians ask, and how does this shape their methodology?

Required Readings:

- Patrick Dunleavy, "Chapter 2: Envisioning the thesis as a whole," pgs 18-42. *Authoring a PhD: How to plan, draft, write and finish a doctoral thesis or dissertation*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Assignment #1, via Moodle Discussion Forum by Feb 21 at 23:59:

Select an academic book that you enjoy: preferably one that is clearly written, engaging, and makes a valuable intervention that you think is understandable to someone outside of your field. You will use this text for the weekly assignments throughout the first half of the course, focusing not on *what* the author argues, but rather on *how* they do it. Each week, we will compare across the different texts to explore the different types of questions/interventions/methods/writing styles historians use and consider which we find most appealing and why.

For this week, please post in the discussion forum:

(1) The text's title and author

(2) The research question(s) the author seeks to answer. Sometimes, they will state these clearly and you can quote directly; if not, you may have to deduce the question(s) based on the introduction/outline of the text.

Please also read the entries of the other students before class.

Week 2, Mar 2: Literature

This week we will think in more depth about how historians use and seek to intervene in academic literature. How do we identify and relate to relevant fields? What language can we use to mark the originality of our work without overstating or understating the contribution? Why do our references matter and what do they say about our work?

Required Readings:

- "Reviewing the Literature: A Rough Guide," p1-9

Assignment #2, via Moodle Discussion Forum by Feb 28 at 23:59:

Using the text you selected last week, quote the key sentences (usually in the introduction) where the author outlines what they see as their central intervention in/contribution to the existing academic literature (maximum 8 sentences). In bullet form, list the different fields you see their work contributing to, both narrow (ex. "histories of international organizations in the mid-20th century") and broad (ex. "environmental history" or "cultural history").

Short Paper #1, due Friday, March 5 by 23:59:

For this assignment, you will provide:

(1) A brief description of your project, providing some background on the topic, identifying a clear set of research questions, and indicating why it is important/what you hope to contribute through it (max 500 words)

(2) A list of 5 journals that are relevant to your research, with a brief (3-4 sentence) description of each (what is the scope of the journal, what do they publish...etc)

(3) A bibliography of literature (not included in the word count) in the different fields, broad and narrow, important to your research.

Week 3, Mar 9: Archival Research Basics

In this class we will explore how to identify archives, plan an archival visit, scope collections, take notes, make decisions about photographing and note-taking, and organize research notes.

Required Readings:

- Samuel J. Redman, *Historical Research in Archives: A Practical Guide*, American Historical Association, 2013.

Additional Resources:

Software for organizing notes/storage

- Endnote: <https://endnote.com/>
- Zotero: <https://www.zotero.org/>
- Mendeley: https://www.mendeley.com/?interaction_required=true
- Dropbox: <https://www.dropbox.com/?landing=dbv2>

Archival research during Covid-19

- Tycho van der Hoog, "[Three ways to conduct historical research on Africa in times of corona](#)," *Africa at LSE* blog, June 3, 2020.
- Israeli Alec, "[Archival Research in the Age of Covid-19: Requesting Document Scans from Libraries](#)," *Princeton Correspondents on Undergraduate Research Blog*, September 25, 2020.

Assignment #3, via Moodle Discussion Forum by March 7 at 23:59:

Use your selected book's bibliography and/or notes to identify the key archival collections they consulted. You don't need to list individual sources, but rather the archival institution (ex. "Rockefeller Archive Center" or "National Archives of Mali") and any specific collection (ex. "Colonial Office Records" or "Ford Foundation Records.")

Week 4, March 16: Archival Research Practice

This week, if possible (depending on pandemic restrictions), we will go on a guided tour of a local archive. Students should also take this week to visit an archive in the area or, if not possible, a digital archive, with an eye towards completing Assignment 2 (see description under Week 5). No required readings.

Additional Resources:

Archives located in Geneva:

- IHEID Archival Collections: <https://graduateinstitute.ch/library/find-resources>
- League of Nations: <https://libraryresources.unog.ch/leagueofnationsarchives>
- UNOG archives: <https://www.unog.ch/library>
- WHO archives: <https://www.who.int/archives/en/>
- Red Cross Archives: <https://www.icrc.org/en/archives>

Online Archives:

- IHEID Databases: https://libguides.graduateinstitute.ch/az.php?_ga=2.233853150.195504359.1608188794-88166797.1603789008
- Institute of Historical Research's Guide to Open and Free Access materials for research: <https://www.history.ac.uk/library/collections/online-resources/open-access-resources>

Week 5, Mar 23: Archival Problems and Possibilities

This week we will think more critically about how the structure, content, and form of archival collections shape the type of information we can access and analysis we can do. What is an archive? How does it "produce as much as record an event" (in the words of Derrida)? What is the goal of archival research? How does materiality shape the experience/outcome of archival research? What are some of the opportunities and problems created by digitization? Students should come prepared to discuss both the

readings and their experiences working with physical or digital archives from last week (no short assignment this week).

Required Readings:

- Marlene Manoff, "Theories of the Archives from Across the Disciplines," *portal: Libraries and the Academy*, 4.1 (2004): 9-25.
- Arlette Farge, "Traces by the Thousands," and "Gathering and Handling Documents," pgs 1-17 and pg 53-78 in *The Allure of the Archives*. Yale University Press, 2013,
- Lara Putnam, "The Transnational and the Text-Searchable: Digitized Sources and the Shadows They Cast," *The American Historical Review*, Volume 121, Issue 2, April 2016, Pages 377-402

Short Paper 2 Due March 26 at 23:59

In this assignment students will:

- (1) Provide a "map"/description of an archive (either physical or digital). What is the organizing principle of the archive? What kinds of collections/sources does it include (government? Institutional? Personal papers?)? What key themes/subjects can you identify based on the finding aids or search categories? (max 500 words)
- (2) Write a reflection on the nature, problems and possibilities of using this archive, based on the readings from Week 5. How might the structure/principles of the archive shape the types of research that are possible, and create particular challenges? (max 1000 words).
- (3) Provide an annotated bibliography of potential archives you might use for your PhD research, with a 3-5 sentence description of each (what kind of archive is it, how might it contribute to your research, what types of sources do you expect/hope to find).

Week 6, Mar 30: Oral History Basics

This week will introduce the practice of oral history. What makes oral history different from written sources? Is it as reliable as other sources? What types of oral history can be done? What makes for a good interview? Students should also plan their own oral history for Assignment 3 (due Week 6).

Required Readings:

- Alessandro Portelli, "What Makes Oral History Different" in Robert Perks and Alistair Thomson (eds.), *The Oral History Reader*, Chapter 4, pp. 48-58.
- Mary A. Larson, "Research Design and Strategies," p105-134 in Charlton, et al. eds. *Handbook of Oral History*. AltaMira Press, 2006.
- Baylor University Institute for Oral History, *Introduction to Oral History*, (Baylor, 2016).
- Oral History Association (OHA) "Principles and Best Practices," (OHA, 2018)

Additional Resources:

- <http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/askdoug/> (oral history in a digital age)
- Graduate Institute Ethics Guidelines: <https://graduateinstitute.ch/research-support/research-ethics>

Assignment #4, via Moodle Discussion Forum by March 28 at 23:59

If your selected book uses oral histories, provide a few sentences describing what type of oral history was conducted (ex life history, subject-oriented...etc) and what groups of informants (ex. refugees from a particular place, policymakers within a particular government, working class women within a particular age group...etc). If oral histories were not conducted in your chosen academic text, you can list who they *might* have interviewed and with what type of oral history.

April 6 – No class, Easter Break.

Week 7, Apr 13: Oral History Interpretation

This week will focus in more depth on some of the dilemmas that shape oral history. How are oral histories shaped by narrative structures, myths, and ideology? How does intersubjectivity shape oral

history interviewing? What ethical dilemmas arise from interviewing and how can they be addressed? Students should also come prepared to discuss the oral histories they conducted for Short Paper 3 (see below).

Required Readings:

- Ronald J. Grele, "Oral History as Evidence," p43-101, in *Handbook of Oral History*.
- Alessandro Portelli, "Tryin' to Gather a Little Knowledge: Some Thoughts on the Ethics of Oral History," p55-71 in *The Battle of Valle Giulia: Oral History and the Art of Dialogue*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1997.
- Daniel James, "Tales Told Out on the Borderlands: Dona Maria's Story, Oral History, and Issues of Gender," p31-52 in John D. French and Daniel James, eds. *The Gendered Worlds of Latin American Women Workers* (2006).

Short Paper 3 due April 16 at 23:59: Oral History Reflection

In this assignment, students will:

- (1) Conduct an oral history interview with a person of your choice and write a reflection on the process. This may or may not be related to the dissertation: the point is to practice the skill of interviewing, rather than to collect material per se. You might consider some of the following questions: How did your research design shape the results? What information about historical events/meaning did you acquire? How did intersubjectivity shape the interview? Did your interviewee draw on particular narratives, myths, or ideologies? Were there any points of interpretive conflict? How does this experience compare/contrast to archival research? (Max 1000 words).
- (2) Provide an annotated list of potential people (ex. specific actors) or groups (ex "former American diplomats stationed in Libya") you could potentially interview for your dissertation, and describe in 2-3 sentences what you think they might contribute. (If your historical actors are all dead, you can list who you would have *liked* to interview if they were alive, as a means of reflecting on the limits of your written sources).

Week 8, Apr 20: Writing

The readings for this week provide guidance on managing the writing process and writing the dissertation in an academic yet accessible manner. How can we structure the writing process? What does it mean to "write for humanity"? How can we write clearly and efficiently?

Required readings:

- Dunleavy, "Writing clearly: style and referencing issues," and "Developing your text and managing the writing process," p103-156, in *Authoring a PhD*.
- Umberto Eco, "Writing the Thesis," p145-184 in *How to Write a Thesis*. MIT Press, 2015.
- Helen Sword, *The Writer's Diet: A Guide to Fit Prose*. University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Additional Resources (Academic Writing):

- The Writer's Diet: online tool and resources: <https://writersdiet.com/>
- Purdue Online Writing Lab: Academic Writing
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/general_writing/academic_writing/index.html
- Academic Writing in English:
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learningenglish/gothedistance/academicwriting>
- Helen Sword, *Stylish Academic Writing*. Harvard University Press, 2012.

Assignment #4, via Moodle Discussion Forum by March 28 at 23:59

Students should submit, the day before class (ie. April 19 by 14:15) a short structural "map" of your chosen book. This would describe:

- (1) The introduction – how does the author open the book: what is the hook? What is the primary argument and at what point in the introduction is it stated? What other elements appear in the

introduction and in what order (ex. review of the literature, statement of intervention, outline of the structure of the book).

(2) Body – how is the book organized? What are the key sections or chapter headings? How do they relate to the introduction?

(3) Conclusion – what type of conclusion does the text have? Does it restate the argument? Ask a question? Do something else?

*You should also select/quote one particularly well-written/engaging sentence and one particularly difficult/unclear sentence from the text to include in your submission.

Week 9, Apr 27: Presenting Research and Conferences

This session will focus on techniques for presenting research orally: planning a presentation, use of powerpoint/visuals, listening to the audience, and answering questions. We will also explore the purpose and structure of academic conferences. No required readings or assignments.

Additional Resources:

- [Guide to Academic Conferences](#)
- <https://competences.cuso.ch/en/activities/> (includes sessions on presenting, conferences...etc)

Week 10, May 4 – History as a Profession

In this session we will explore different funding sources, approaches to publishing, and career trajectories of history PhDs, while also having an open discussion about any remaining concerns/questions you might have about the PhD process/history as a profession. No required readings.

Additional Resources:

- [H-Net Humanities and Social Sciences Online](#)
- [AHA: Data on the History Profession](#)
- [Coordinating Council for Women in History](#)
- [AHA: Career Resources](#)
- [Career Diversity \(beyond Academia\)](#)

Week 11, 12, 13, and 14 (May 11, 18, 25, June 1): Oral Presentations

During these weeks, students will present their research proposals to the class. Two students will present each week; each student will have maximum 20min to present, with roughly 20-30min each for questions from the audience and discussion. The presentation should clearly outline the central questions, fields, and methodology of your project while also illustrating the exciting and valuable aspects of the study, how you hope to make an intervention, and the parts you are still unsure of/challenges you foresee. Presentation weeks will be assigned randomly in the first week of class.

****Final Paper: Research Proposal due June 8 at 23:59, maximum 5000 words**

The research proposal should focus on your planned PhD dissertation project and should include the following sections:

- An introduction providing some basic background information on your subject and providing a brief overview of the proposed project
- A preliminary literature review outlining some of the key works/academic fields you hope to contribute to through your study (what has been done, and how do your questions build on/hope to contribute to this existing body of knowledge?)
- A methodology section outlining your key questions/problematic (what do you want to know?), how you intend to answer them (what methods/sources you intend to use, what archives/other collections you hope to access), and an honest reflection on some of the strengths and limitations of your approach

- A bibliography of additional sources to consult (not included in the word count)

The idea is for the research proposal to serve as an early, shorter draft of what will eventually become the MPT, which you will submit/defend by the beginning of the third semester. More details on the MPT requirements are available [here](#). You will receive feedback on the proposal from us in June, and it is also recommended that you forward it to your PhD supervisor.

COURSE POLICIES

Students may choose to submit their work in either English or French. **Late submissions** of assignments will be penalized at a rate of -0.25 per day. Students seeking an extension due to physical or mental health issues or emergency must contact the professor as soon as possible and provide documentation indicating the impacted time period.

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please see the Institute's ["Internal Guidelines"](#) for further information.