

HISTORY 450W: The Writing of History
Fall Semester, 2004
T TH 12:30-1:45, AH 3179

Dr. De Vos
Office: 4213 Adams Humanities
Office Phone: 594-4893
Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday 10-11 and by appointment
Email: pdevos@mail.sdsu.edu

Goals and Format of the Course:

History 450W is the capstone course for the major in history at San Diego State University. The primary goal of this course is to complete a 20-page primary source-based research paper on a topic in San Diego history during the nineteenth and/or twentieth centuries. There are a number of "byproducts" of writing this paper, which are also course goals: learning to exploit the library and archival resources available to students in the San Diego area, locating appropriate reference materials, and meeting local librarians and archivists who will provide suggestions for your topic. You will learn to delineate a realistic research topic; to construct a thesis and with a consistent and believable argument; to improve writing skills and to write in a clear and articulate manner; to edit your own and each other's work; and to use and decipher information from primary source material in such a way that you will be constructing an argument that is important and provides new insights into the history of San Diego.

We will read two books and several articles pertaining to this topic over the first few weeks of the semester. In each reading, we will pay special attention to the themes and questions presented by historians of San Diego, the primary sources they use and how they use them, and the ways that historians use this evidence to build an argument. We will also read research guides to historical writing and the use of historical evidence that will serve to outline the steps and techniques necessary for writing a research paper. During this time, we will become familiar with local archival collections and secondary-source holdings of Love Library. By the end of these weeks, you will be expected to have a clearly delineated research topic. After that, we will meet periodically to discuss research progress and work that has been assigned along the way (bibliography, outline, proposal, short papers, etc.) During the weeks we do not meet as a group, I will be available for individual meetings, and I expect a "check-in" from you at least one time during this period, either in person or by email.

One final note: This will probably one of the most challenging courses you will take at SDSU. Although I am fully committed to supporting your efforts and helping you throughout the research and writing process, keep in mind that **your success in this course depends largely on your own initiative**. I suggest you come to see me outside of class on a regular basis, and that you get started as soon as possible in the research process (choosing and defining a topic, conducting preliminary research, etc).

Course Requirements and Grading:

1. **Attendance:** You need to come to every class. **Important:** Because of the format of this course, attendance is especially crucial. Therefore, for every unexcused absence you have at the end of the semester, I will lower your final grade by one full point. That means if you missed one class, your final grade will be lowered by one full point (for example, from a B+ to a C+). If you missed two classes, it will be lowered by two full points (for example, from a B+ to a D+), etc. I will accept written proof for legitimate reasons for missing class, and if you have special circumstances, come and meet with me to discuss them. Also, if you are absent it is your responsibility to find out from classmates what you missed in class. Handouts that you missed or lose are also your responsibility to photocopy.
2. **Participation(10%):** Participation is a key part of this course, and it does not simply mean showing up for class. I will assume that you will be at every class meeting, and that you will come prepared. Being prepared means the following:
 - that you do not come late to class
 - that you are alert and paying attention throughout the entire class period
 - that you listen attentively to your colleagues' presentations and offer helpful suggestions
 - that you prepare adequately for class presentations

- that you have done the reading(s) we are to discuss and bring them to class
- that you are prepared to participate in class discussion
- that you add meaningful and knowledgeable comments to class discussion.

More general behavior guidelines are listed in the *California Code of Regulations*, Section 4101, included in the San Diego State University General Catalogue. Also take into account that **I will call on you at random** to answer questions in class. This means that you need to be prepared at all times. **Your diligence and regular communication with me during the weeks that we do not meet formally will also count toward your participation grade for the course.** The degree to which you fulfill these requirements will determine your participation grade.

3. Presentation of primary and secondary source (5%), September 30: For this assignment, you will locate one primary and one secondary source that are pertinent to your research topic and prepare to present them to the class. In your 3-4-minute presentation, you should first describe each source to the class – where it comes from and what it contains – and how you will use it in your paper. What kind of information do you find useful in each source? How will these sources help you to build your argument?
4. Paper proposal and bibliography (10%), due October 5: Before you start your research project, you will turn in a 2-3-page proposal and preliminary bibliography. The bibliography needs to list **at least** 10 secondary and 10 primary sources (be sure to separate them into two separate lists). Be aware that these are sources that will get you started in your research and may or may not appear in your final bibliography. More detailed description of the requirements of this assignment can be found in the “Description of Written Assignments.”
5. Written Evaluation of Previous 450W Papers (5%), due October 12: For this assignment, you will read two 450W papers from previous semesters and fill out the worksheet included at the back of the syllabus (though you may type your answers if you wish).
6. Paper outline and thesis statement (5%), due October 26: You will need to turn in a **detailed** outline of the paper as well as a statement of the paper’s overall argument. You must have both components of this assignment (thesis and outline) in order to receive full credit. The outline must be a **sentence** outline, meaning that each topic heading must be a sentence, not simply a word or phrase. I will expect the outline to be between 3 and 5 pages long. Keep in mind, however, that both thesis and outline will still be preliminary and may very well change as you write the paper. More detailed description of the requirements of this assignment can be found in the “Description of Written Assignments.”
7. Introduction to paper (10%), due November 9: Approximately one month before the paper is due, you will be expected to write and turn in the introduction to the paper. In order to receive credit, the introduction has to be **at least 3 pages**. More detailed description of the requirements of this assignment can be found in the “Description of Written Assignments.”
8. One 3-4-page analysis of a primary source (10%), due November 16: In this paper, you will do an analysis of a primary source that you will use in your paper (and that you will be able to include as part of the final paper). More detailed description of the requirements of this assignment can be found in the “Description of Written Assignments.”
9. Rough draft of paper (20%), due November 30: Rough drafts of at least 20 pages are to be turned in at this time so that you will have enough time to make necessary revisions. Although these drafts are called “rough,” they must be as complete as possible and represent your very best effort – as you can see, it represents a substantial portion of your grade. Similarly, a “rough” draft does not mean that typographical and grammatical errors are permissible. On the contrary, they are not, and if there are too many errors or careless mistakes in the draft, I will hand it back to you without grading it. It might help to think of the paper as a final draft that you can still improve upon. The paper’s grade will be based on: selection and use of primary sources, structure and development of an argument, and writing style. I will grade the drafts and turn them back to you within a week.
10. Oral Presentations (5%): During week 14 or 15 you will make a 10-15-minute oral presentation on your findings. Both the content and format of the presentation will be taken into consideration for grading purposes. Visual aids are highly encouraged.
11. Final draft of paper (20%), due December 16: The final draft of at least 20 pages will be graded on a similar set of criteria as the rough draft, but I will pay closest attention to the revisions you have done and the overall improvement of the paper. If you do not revise the

paper in any way, you will receive a 0 on the final draft, so pay close attention to my comments and implement any changes I suggest and any improvements that you think of as well.

Note: You must turn in the rough draft – the original, with my comments on it – with the final copy of the paper.

Note: Assignments are normally to be turned in during class time. If we are not meeting that week, however, you are to turn them in to my office (slide them under the door if I am not there) by 12:30pm. **I will not accept late assignments.** If you have extenuating circumstances, you must notify me ahead of time.

Books, Readings, and Resources:

The following book is required reading and is available at KB Books or in the Aztec bookstore. If you run into problems with availability, please let me know.

- Boothe, Wayne C., et al. *The Craft of Research*. 2nd Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- Brundage, Anthony.. *Going to the Sources: A Guide to Historical Research and Writing*. 3rd Edition. Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson; 2002.

For citations – bibliography and footnotes – you will need to follow the guidelines set forth in Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). This book is available in the reference section of Love Library, though it is probably more convenient to check the following web pages, which give examples of how to do citations in the Turabian style.

- <http://juno.concordia.ca/faqs/turabian.html>
- <http://www.lib.usm.edu/~instruct/guides/turabian.html>
- <http://www.bridgew.edu/Library/turabian.htm>
- <http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocChicago.html>

The other readings are all available on-line at the website for the San Diego Historical Society. The web addresses are provided so that you can download them. If you have any trouble locating the articles, go to the San Diego Historical Website journal page at www.sandiegohistory.org, click on “Journal” at the list on the left, then use the journals search engine to locate the article. This website will be a vital resource for you in your research, so be sure to familiarize yourself with it right away.

- Mills, James R. *San Diego: Where California Began*. San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1976. <http://sandiegohistory.org/publications/mills.htm>
- Alexander D. Bevil. “From Grecian Columns to Spanish Towers: The Development of San Diego State College, 1922-1953” *Journal of San Diego History* Winter 1995, Volume 41, Number 1. <http://sandiegohistory.org/journal/95winter/sdsc.htm>
- Clare V. McKanna, Jr. “Prostitutes, Progressives, and Police: The Viability of Vice in San Diego 1900-1930” *Journal of San Diego History* Winter 1989, Volume 35, Number 1. <http://sandiegohistory.org/journal/89winter/prostitutes.htm>
- Richard W. Crawford. “Local Public Records and San Diego History” *Journal of San Diego History* Winter/Spring 2001, Volume 47, Number 1. <http://sandiegohistory.org/journal/2001-1/local.htm>
- Geoffrey B. Wexler, “A Few More Pieces of the Puzzle: Collections Documenting San Diego History at the University of California, San Diego” *Journal of San Diego History* Winter 1991, Volume 37, Number 1. <http://sandiegohistory.org/journal/91winter/ucsd.htm>
- Mary Allely, “Local History Materials in the California Room of the San Diego Public Library” *Journal of San Diego History* Summer 1991, Volume 37, Number 3. <http://sandiegohistory.org/journal/91summer/library.htm>

- Michael E. Dillinger. "Hillcrest: From Haven to Home" *Journal of San Diego History* Fall 2000, Volume 46, Number 4. <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/2000-4/hillcrest.htm>
- Clare V. McKanna, Jr. "The Challenge Saloon Murder in San Diego, 1872: Augustin Castro's Fight for Clemency" *Journal of San Diego History* Fall 2001, Volume 47, Number 4. <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/2001-4/castro.htm>

There are several reference articles and websites that are designed to help you locate and use archival sources in the area, listed as follows.

- Dennis G. Sharp, "Local Public Records and San Diego History: An Examination of Additional Uses" *Journal of San Diego History* Winter/Spring 2001, Volume 47, Number 1. <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/2001-1/sharp.htm>
- Dennis G. Sharp, "Guide to the Public Records Collection of the San Diego Historical Society" *Journal of San Diego History* Winter/Spring 2001, Volume 47, Number 1. <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/2001-1/guide.htm>
- James D. Newland, "A Preliminary Checklist of Masters' Theses and Doctoral Dissertations on the History of San Diego" *Journal of San Diego History* Summer 1993, Volume 39, Number 3. <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/93summer/theses2.htm>
- The web page <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/repositories.htm> has links to excellent descriptions of holdings in local archives (some of which are included in Week 3's readings), including the special collections at SDSU and UCSD, the San Diego Maritime Museum, the California Room of the San Diego Public Library, and the Pacific Northwest National Archives.

Course Schedule:

Week 1

Tuesday, 8/31

- Introduction to the course and discussion about primary sources

Thursday, 9/2

- No class. Use this time to complete Assignment #1.

Assignment: Take an hour or two to explore the San Diego Historical Society website at <http://sandieghistory.org>. Be sure to read about the oral history program at <http://sandieghistory.org/audio/index.htm> and to consult the list of local archives, libraries and societies at <http://sandieghistory.org/links/societies.htm>. Choose an archive or library that interests you which also has a website and explore that website as well. Also, go to the descriptions of local archives at <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/repositories.htm> and look over a few of them, especially those pertaining to SDSU's Special Collections, since we will be visiting it.

Week 2: San Diego History

Tuesday, 9/7

- Discussion of readings
- Discussion of Assignment from Week 1

Readings: Mills, James R. *San Diego: Where California Began*. San Diego: San Diego Historical Society, 1976.
<http://sandieghistory.org/publications/mills.htm>

Clare V. McKanna, Jr. "Prostitutes, Progressives, and Police: The Viability of Vice in San Diego 1900-1930" *Journal of San Diego History* Winter 1989, Volume 35, Number 1.
<http://sandieghistory.org/journal/89winter/prostitutes.htm>

Alexander D. Bevil. "From Grecian Columns to Spanish Towers: The Development of San Diego State College, 1922-1953" *Journal of San Diego History* Winter 1995, Volume 41, Number 1.
<http://sandieghistory.org/journal/95winter/sdsc.htm>

Thursday, 9/9

- Orientation to secondary source holdings at SDSU.
-

Week 3: Historical Sources and Local Archival Collections

Tuesday, 9/14

- Discuss historical research methodology and historical sources as outlined in *Going to the Sources*
- Discuss local public records and local archives as described in articles
- BRING BOOK AND ARTICLES WITH YOU

Readings: Brundage, Anthony. *Going to the Sources: A Guide to Historical Research and Writing*, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 (everything except Chapter 4).

Richard W. Crawford. "Local Public Records and San Diego History" *Journal of San Diego History* Winter/Spring 2001, Volume 47, Number 1.
<http://sandieghistory.org/journal/2001-1/local.htm>

Geoffrey B. Wexler, "A Few More Pieces of the Puzzle: Collections Documenting San

Diego History at the University of California, San Diego” *Journal of San Diego History* Winter 1991, Volume 37, Number 1.

<http://sandieghistory.org/journal/91winter/ucsd.htm>

Mary Allely, “Local History Materials in the California Room of the San Diego Public Library” *Journal of San Diego History* Summer 1991, Volume 37, Number 3.

<http://sandieghistory.org/journal/91summer/library.htm>

Thursday, 9/16

- Orientation to SDSU’s Special Collections with Archivist Jennifer Martinez. Special Collections is located on the 4th Floor of the Library Addition to Love Library.

Week 4: Historical Research Methods

Tuesday, 9/21

- Discussion of *Craft of Research* reading
- Work on narrowing the topics you have chosen
- BRING BOOK WITH YOU

Reading: Boothe, Wayne C., et al. *The Craft of Research*, Parts I and II

Thursday, 9/23

- No class meeting; pursue individual research.

Week 5: Using Historical Evidence

Tuesday, 9/28

- Discussion of *Craft of Research* reading
- Work on evidence and how to construct an argument from primary source materials
- BRING BOOK AND ARTICLES WITH YOU

Readings: Boothe, Wayne C., et al. *The Craft of Research*, Part III, skim Part IV
Michael E. Dillinger. “Hillcrest: From Haven to Home” *Journal of San Diego History* Fall 2000, Volume 46, Number 4.
<http://sandieghistory.org/journal/2000-4/hillcrest.htm>
Clare V. McKanna, Jr. “The Challenge Saloon Murder in San Diego, 1872: Augustin Castro’s Fight for Clemency” *Journal of San Diego History* Fall 2001, Volume 47, Number 4. <http://sandieghistory.org/journal/2001-4/castro.htm>

Thursday, 9/30

- Presentation of primary and secondary sources.

Assignment: Using the research tools you have learned for finding primary and secondary sources, locate one of each and prepare to present them to the class. In your 3-4-minute presentation, you should first describe each source to the class – where it comes from and what it contains – and how you will use it in your paper. What kind of information do you find useful in each source? How will these sources help you to build your argument?

Week 6, 10/5 and 10/7: Proposal Due

- No class meeting for the week– pursue individual research.

Assignment: On Tuesday, 10/5 turn in a 2-3-page proposal for your paper and a preliminary bibliographical list (at least 10 secondary sources and 10 primary sources, listed separately).

Week 7: Evaluating Previous 450W Papers

Tuesday, 10/12

Assignment: Read two papers written by former History 450W students. Fill out the worksheet in your syllabus in order to help guide your reading and to aid in preparing your comments for class.

Thursday, 10/14

- No class meeting – pursue individual research.
-

Week 8, 10/19 and 10/21: Individual Research

- No class meeting this week – pursue individual research
-

Week 9: Outline and Thesis Statement Due

Tuesday, 10/26

- Discussion of outlines, theses, and progress on research and writing.

Assignment: Turn in outline of paper and thesis statement.

Thursday, 10/28

- No class meeting – pursue individual research
-

Week 10, 11/2 and 11/4: Individual Research

- No class meeting – pursue individual research. Be sure to check in with me regularly.
-

Week 11: Introductions Due

Tuesday, 11/9

- Discussion of Introductions, and any problems or questions you might have.
- Discussion of *The Craft of Research* on drafting and revising research papers

Reading: Boothe, Wayne C., et al. *The Craft of Research*, Part IV

Assignment: Turn in Introduction to your paper (no less than 3 pages).

Thursday, 11/11

- No class meeting – pursue individual research
-

Week 12: Primary Source Papers Due

Tuesday, 11/16

- Discussion of Primary Source Papers.
- Discussion of expectations for rough draft and suggestions for how to go about writing draft.

Assignment: Turn in Primary Source Paper.

Thursday, 11/18

No class meeting – pursue individual research.

Week 13, 11/23 and 11/25 (Thanksgiving)

- No class meeting – pursue individual research and writing.
 - Be sure to pick up comments for Primary Source Papers before you leave for Thanksgiving.
-

Week 14

Tuesday, 11/30

- Oral presentations of paper

Assignment: **ROUGH DRAFTS DUE TUESDAY, 11/30 AT 12:30PM**

Thursday, 12/2

- Oral presentations of paper
-

Week 15

Tuesday, 12/7

- Rough drafts handed back
- Discussion of rough drafts and expectations for final drafts
- Oral presentations of paper

Thursday, 12/9

- Oral presentations of paper
-

FINAL PAPERS DUE THURSDAY 12/16 AT 3:00 PM

Note: Turn in rough draft with final copy.

History 450W – Description of Written Assignments

The following is a description of the assignments you will turn in throughout the semester prior to writing your final paper. Keep in mind that all assignments must be typed and double-spaced, and will be graded on grammar and style as well as organization and content. Bibliographic entries and footnotes must follow the Chicago Style as described in the syllabus. If you have further questions about these assignments, do not hesitate to contact me.

Paper proposal and bibliography (10%): This assignment consists of two parts: a 2-3 page proposal and a bibliography. The proposal should be written in the form of an essay and should include the following information. **First**, you need to introduce your topic. Begin broadly, describing the wider context of the topic. Then you will narrow down to the specific subject(s) that you will discuss in the paper – identify the subject, the place, and the time period. Most importantly, conclude this section of your proposal by stating what your major research question is, and the tentative hypothesis. **Next**, you need to describe the significance of your topic and your hypothesis. This aspect of your proposal requires that you discuss what other authors have written that is related to your topic. What are their conclusions? How are your conclusions different from theirs? What new information or new perspective does your work bring to the field? **Finally**, you will describe the “methodology” you will employ in your research. Methodology, or the methods you will use to write your paper, includes two aspects: the sources you will use and the questions you will ask of those sources in order to investigate the validity of your hypothesis.

The bibliography needs to list **at least** 10 secondary and 10 primary sources, and be sure to list them separately, under separate headings. Be aware that these are sources that will get you started in your research and may or may not appear in your final bibliography. Primary sources should be specific – do not simply cite the name of a newspaper or magazine, but rather the specific article(s) you will use. Internet sources are only acceptable if they contain primary sources and if they come from an academic or government website.

Paper outline and thesis statement (5%): This assignment consists of two components: a detailed outline of your paper and a specific thesis statement. You must have both components of this assignment (thesis and outline) in order to receive full credit. Keep in mind that both thesis and outline will still be preliminary and may very well change as you write the paper. The outline must be a **detailed sentence outline**, meaning that each topic heading must be a sentence, not simply a word or phrase. I will expect the outline to be between 3 and 5 pages long. Refer to *The Craft of Research* for help with turning a topic outline into a “point” outline, but be aware that you must take one more step in turning the “points” into full sentences. Your thesis statement, in which you describe your paper’s main claim and the way you will prove it, should be related to your original hypothesis, but by now it should be more complex. The thesis may be more than one sentence long, and should reflect the research you have done. In other words, the research you have been doing has served to test your hypothesis. Your thesis statement should reflect conclusions you have drawn from the research, so that your hypothesis has now turned into an argument.

Introduction to paper (10%).: Approximately one month before the paper is due, you will be expected to write and turn in the introduction to the paper. In order to receive credit, the

introduction it has to be **at least 3 pages**. As with all introductions, it should begin with background context, lead into your specific topic, tell why that topic is important, and conclude by stating your thesis (your main claim) and the points (sub-claims) you will make in order to prove it. Reread *The Craft of Research* chapter on writing introductions before you begin writing.

3-4-page analysis of a primary source (10%): For this paper, choose one (or more) of your primary sources and analyze it in a 3-4-page paper. There are two purposes for writing this paper: first, it will give you practice in working with primary sources, and second, the idea is that it will be incorporated (with some revision) into your final paper. As stated above, this paper needs to be an **analysis** of the source(s), not a description. Simple descriptions will be handed back to you for revision. The difference between an analysis and a description is that in an analysis, you have a specific argument, or claim, that you are using your source(s) to prove. In this way, the descriptions you do are serving a particular purpose in the paper. You are not writing this paper, in other words, to let someone know what information your source provides; rather, you are writing it in order to prove a claim you are making, and you are using that source in order to do so.

In order to write the paper, therefore, you need to have a specific claim, or argument, in mind. This should be the argument you stated in your Introduction, though this paper may address only one aspect of it. **First**, begin your paper as you did the proposal, by giving background context to the source and then identifying the source – where it comes from, when it was produced, etc. Then state your claim and how the source is going to prove that claim. **Next**, the heart of the paper will consist of the evidence you use to prove the claim. The different paragraphs in this section will make up your “sub-claims”: they must begin with a topic sentence that relates to the paper’s main claim, and will then go into the specific evidence gathered from the source that supports the sub-claim. **Finally**, conclude the paper by reiterating the claim you have proven and how it related to the larger argument of your topic (i.e., your final paper). If you find this confusing, refer to Section III of *The Craft of Research* and/or talk to me about it.

*Note on Citations and Quoting: In order to be a responsible researcher, you always need to identify the sources of your information. This does not mean, however, that when you use information or ideas presented by other authors, that you necessarily have to quote from them. Ideally, you will only quote from primary sources in your paper. When using information from secondary sources, summarize the information in your own words, tailored to the needs of your own paper, and then include a footnote indicating where you find this information. Trust your own words and your own understanding of the material. When using primary sources, however, quotes can be very useful to illustrate points. But be careful in your use of quotes. Limit quotes to several lines at the most, and indent and single-space any quote that is longer than three lines. Most importantly, do not use quotes to make your points for you. You need to make your own points, and then use quotes to illustrate them. In this way, you must first make a point, then introduce the quote (who said it, when, and perhaps where). Make sure the quote flows smoothly from your introduction, in a way that is grammatically correct. After stating the quote, furthermore, be sure to conclude with a sentence in which you reiterate what the quote was supposed to illustrate. Refer to *The Craft of Research*, Section 12.4 and the “Quick Tip: Using Quotation and Paraphrase” for an excellent description of plagiarism, citations, and quotations.

Reading Questions for History 450W

These questions represent the basic issues that we will discuss in class and in this way are designed to help you know how to read the assigned material and to help you better participate in class discussion. Though you are not required to turn in written responses, I strongly suggest that you read the questions over **before** you do the reading and write down your answers afterwards

Questions for Week 2: San Diego History

For the Mills reading:

- Who wrote this book? Why do you think he wrote it?
- What are the main periods of San Diego history? Which period(s) interest you the most and why?
- Do you think it's fair to say that California's history "began" with San Diego? Why or why not?

For the McKanna and Bevil articles:

- What is the article about? What is the author's main argument?
- What sources did the author use to write this article? How are the sources used?
- What kind of evidence does the author present to support his/her argument? Do you think they used the evidence fairly? Did the author succeed at convincing you that his/her argument is valid?
- Based on what you've seen so far, how would you define the field of San Diego history? What are historians of San Diego interested in studying? What are you interested in studying?

Questions for Week 3: Historical Sources and Local Archival Collections

For the Brundage reading:

- What is the "history of history," or the path that the historical profession has followed over the last two centuries?
- What is a source? What is the difference between a primary and secondary source?
- How are primary and secondary sources used in writing a research paper?
- In what way is history "open-ended?"

For the articles on local archives:

- What are the archive's main collections? What kinds of sources does it have? Is there a catalogue or listing and description of the archive's collections?
- What kinds of projects could be done using the archive's holdings?
- Do any of the collections in this archive interest you? Have any topics/subjects mentioned caught your attention? If so, what are they?

Questions for Week 4: Historical Research Methods

- What are the main steps of writing a research paper?
- Who is your audience? For what kind of audience are you writing this paper?
- What is the difference between a "topic" and a "problem?" How can you turn a topic into a problem? Why is a problem, in this case, a good thing?
- Why are you writing this research paper? What kinds of problems are you trying to solve? Are they practice problems or theoretical, intellectual problems? Why is it worth trying to solve them?

Questions for Week 5: Using Historical Evidence

For *The Craft of Research*:

- What is a claim or an argument? What is a sub-claim or a reason? What is evidence? What is a warrant? Give an example of each.
- What information is supposed to be footnoted? What is the purpose of a footnote/citation?
- When is it appropriate to use quotations? What is the purpose of a quotation?
- In reading the book, what did you find helped you the most? Highlight a few sections and/or page numbers that made the most sense to you to share them with others in the class.

For the articles:

- What is this article about? What is the main argument?
- How does the author use quotations? What information does the author footnote? What information is contained in the footnotes?
- What sources does the author use (differentiate between secondary, published primary, and archival material)? Where do the primary sources come from?
- What kinds of evidence come from the primary sources used? How is the evidence used to prove the arguments? Does the evidence support the argument? How? Why? In what ways?

WRITING HANDOUT

ABBREVIATIONS

When grading your papers, I will make use of a number of abbreviations. Here is the legend to my abbreviation “code.”

DMS:	Doesn't make sense
UC:	Unclear
RW:	Reword/find another, more appropriate word
AWK:	Awkward
FR:	Sentence fragment
TRANS:	Insert a transition
TS:	Topic sentence needed
CS:	Concluding sentence needed
AGR:	Subject-verb agreement; verb does not match subject
DF:	Doesn't follow; sentence or idea does not logically follow from previous one

I will circle all simple grammatical errors (typos, spelling mistakes, wrong word choice, inappropriate use or lack of apostrophes, etc.). It is up to you to correct these. Below I have listed several mistakes that I see **far** too commonly. They are elements of grammar that should have been mastered in elementary school and have no place in university-level writing. Be aware that such mistakes will bring your grade down. If there are an excessive amount of grammatical errors in your paper, I reserve the right to hand it back to you without grading it. Some of these mistakes are (but are not limited to) the following::

- use of its versus it's
- use of two, to, and too
- use of their, there, and they're
- when to use an apostrophe (plurals versus possession)
- use of commas versus semicolons versus colons
- use of accept versus except
- use of affect versus effect
- use of throne versus thrown
- use of traitor versus trader
- spelling mistakes
- sentence fragments (will also be marked with an “FR”)

Also be sure to indent and single-space quotes that are longer than 3 lines. When you do this, you do not need to use quotation marks.

PLAGIARISM

What is plagiarism? Here is an explanation (and a warning):

Definition: Plagiarism means presenting the ideas and words of others as if they were your own. Building an argument of your own using the (acknowledged) ideas and research of others is not plagiarism. This is a creative activity and is the normal activity of working historians.

How to avoid the charge of plagiarism:

1. If you take a **fact** or **idea** directly from someone else, you **must** give a footnote reference. (Use your common sense about this. You do not need to footnote everything. The basic rule is to give a footnote for any information which is not easily available, or is controversial, or is particularly important for your argument. The purpose of the footnote is to allow the reader to assess the strength of the materials from which your argument is constructed.)
2. If you also use the exact words of your source (if you quote) then you must enclose the whole quotation in quotation marks (unless it has been indented and single-spaced; see above).
3. Take information from your sources, but **use your own words**.

Why not plagiarize?

1. Plagiarism of facts: If you do not explain where your information comes from, your reader cannot assess the reliability of your argument and will rightly distrust your conclusions. Plagiarism is a sign that you did not bother to check the evidence on which your argument is based.
2. Plagiarism of words. This is dishonest. It also stunts your intellectual development by encouraging habits of mechanical, imitative thinking. It encourages you to write without engaging your own mind, thoughts, and ideas. Finding the right language is an essential stage in building a historical argument, while using the language of others prevents you from developing an independent approach to intellectual problems. If you rely on the ideas and arguments of others, you will never develop the capacity to think through problems independently. Nor will you learn to express the results of your own thinking in the only proper language: your own.

The Penalty

For these reasons, any work that contains **any plagiarism at all** will be regarded as valueless. I reserve the right to give **zero credit** to plagiarized work. There will be no right of resubmission for work that contains any plagiarism (in line with University policy; see the University Catalog), and I will take the disciplinary action that is appropriate according to University policy.

History 450W-Guidelines for Writing Formal Papers

Your paper grade is based on how well you fulfill the following aspects of what constitutes a well-written paper. These aspects fall under three categories: organization, content (context, argument and evidence), and style and grammar. As I read your paper, I ask the following questions of it. I recommend that you do the same before you turn it in to me.

Organization

- Is the paper well organized? Does the reader know at all times exactly **what** he or she is reading about and **why** he or she is reading it?
- Does the paper have each of the necessary components? How well has the author done in writing each of these components
 - Introduction:
 - Does the paper start broadly and narrow to the specific topic of the paper?
 - Does it provide sufficient background for an intelligent non-expert to understand the topic that is addressed? (This is necessary throughout the paper).
 - Thesis statement (may be more than one sentence):
 - Does the introduction end with a clear statement of the paper's thesis (claim)?
 - Does the thesis statement have a clear and specific argument?
 - Does the thesis take a stand that the author will prove throughout the paper?
 - Does the thesis include the subclaims that will be supported with evidence?
 - Support paragraphs or sections:
 - Does the number of support sections correspond to the number of sub-claims identified in the thesis? Do they go in the same order as they were written in the thesis?
 - Do the paragraphs specifically relate to the argument stated in the thesis? Do they adequately and logically prove what they are supposed to?
 - Do the paragraphs begin with a topic sentence that relates directly to the thesis statement?
 - Do the paragraphs include specific evidence that supports the argument being made?
 - Do the paragraphs have a concluding sentence (or sentences) that sum up what that section has proven?
 - Conclusion:
 - Does the conclusion restate the argument?
 - Does it then go on to make broader, more sweeping statements about the larger meaning of the thesis?

Content: Context, Argument, and Evidence

- How well does this paper fulfill the general spirit of the assignment?
- How well does the author demonstrate his or her understanding of the historical context?
- Is the argument sound? Is it original, creative, and thoughtful?
- What kinds of sources did the author use? Are there sufficient primary sources? Is the argument based on the primary sources. Does the majority of evidence come from primary sources?
- How well did the author make use of materials used? How well does evidence fit the argument? Are quotations used appropriately?
- Are works cited in an appropriate and uniform manner? Does the bibliography fulfill the requirements of the assignment?

Style and Grammar

- Are there grammatical errors? Spelling mistakes? Typographical errors? Has the author proofread his or her work carefully?
- Is the language appropriate to a formal paper?
- Does the writing flow well? Is there too much passive voice or too many unnecessary words?
- Are sentences clear and complete? Does one sentence flow from the next in a logical, smooth manner?
- Does the author make use of transitions statements (however, although, therefore, nevertheless, etc.) at appropriate places in the paper?

Some final notes:

- Always type and double-space your papers, using standard margins and font size.
- Keep a copy of your paper as well.
- I strongly recommend that you obtain, read and refer regularly to one or more of the following books:
 - Boothe, et. al. *The Craft of Research*.
 - Strunk, and White. *Elements of Style*. (highly recommended)
 - Turabian, Kate. *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Thesis, and Dissertations*.
 - Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Ten Lessons in Clarity and Grace*.

Suggestions for First Draft:

- 1) Don't panic! Remember that you've already done several bits of the paper, including the:
 - a. Introduction
 - b. Primary source paper
 - c. And you have an outline to follow.
- 2) Start writing sooner than later
 - a. There's never a good time to start writing
 - b. Start writing before you feel ready to
 - c. You can continue researching while you write
 - d. Write the paper in any order you want – start with the section that seems easiest or clearest to you
- 3) Determine which style of writing is yours
 - a. "Quick and Dirty:" I recommend this style: when writing, don't worry about grammar, punctuation, perfect footnotes, etc. Don't try to make every sentence perfect. When you get stuck, then go back and revise what you have already written.
 - b. "Slow and Clean:" This is a style in which the writer tries to make every sentence perfectly polished before going on to the next one. If this is your style, try to limit your perfectionism – it makes writing very difficult, and it makes revisions harder to do as well.
- 4) What to avoid:
 - a. Don't use the first person (I/me/my) in the paper – otherwise the paper can turn into "the story of your research," something to be avoided.
 - b. Don't go through and summarize your primary sources one after another, strung together with a few sentences. Be sure that your descriptions of primary sources are serving a purpose in supporting a particular point of your argument, and make sure that you tell the reader what it supports specifically, and how and why it does so.
 - c. Along a similar line, try to be as analytical as possible: make a list of your evidence and see what it has in common – how can evidence be organized into larger categories and themes? How can these categories and themes be arranged to support your argument?
- 5) Order of the paper
 - a. Divide the paper into sections with "subtitles" in each section.
 - b. Begin with an introduction in which you state your argument.
 - c. The next section of your paper will probably be a "background" section in which you give the reader just enough information about the context of your topic so that he/she can understand your paper and the significance of your argument. There will be a temptation to let this section take over the paper, since it relies mainly on secondary sources and thus will feel "safer." But don't let it take over! The section should be no more than 4 pages, 5 if absolutely necessary.
 - d. The following sections of your paper will be the "heart" of your paper, and there is no specific number for these – you'll probably have between two and four of these sections.
 - e. The last section of the paper will be the conclusion. The conclusion should be no more than 1 to 2 pages.
- 6) Remember that though this is a first draft, it is worth 20% of your grade. That means that you should do your very best to produce the most polished piece of work you can. At the same time, I understand fully that most writers do not fully understand or truly realize what their argument is until they have finished writing a first draft – so you don't have to do it perfectly the first time around.

Good luck!

WORKSHEET FOR EVALUATING PREVIOUS 450W PAPERS

I. Read each paper and evaluate them according to the following criteria.

Organization:

- Does the introduction to this paper give a clear idea of its content and organization? Does it give you adequate historical background so that you can understand the subject and why it is important?
- Is the paper organized in clearly marked sections so that you know why you are reading each section? Do you understand clearly how each section supports the main argument?
- Does each paragraph begin with a topic sentence so that you understand the direction or “flow” of the paper?

Argument:

- Do you know what the argument of the paper is? Does the author state the argument clearly? Do you understand how the author has supported the argument?
- What evidence does the author use? Is there sufficient evidence to support the argument? What sources, primary and secondary, does the author use?
- Did the author use footnotes and quotations appropriately? Do you see any risk of plagiarism in this paper?

Style:

- Is the paper easy to read or is it hard to follow? Does it flow nicely, using transitions, varying sentence structure, and employing a sophisticated vocabulary? Or are there a number of grammatical errors and awkward sentences that hinder your ability to read the paper?
- Do you find the paper interesting?

II. Based on these criteria, answer the following questions for each paper:

1. What grade would you give this paper?
Paper 1: _____ Paper 2: _____
2. Explain in detail why you gave the paper this grade. In doing so, think about how you answered the above questions on organization, argument, and style.

Paper 1:

Paper 2:

3. On the back of this sheet, write down suggestions as to how the student could improve the paper. If you were this student’s instructor, what comments would you make? What would you tell this student to do – again basing your suggestions on organization, argument, and style – in order to improve? Be detailed in your comments: this is the most effective way for the student to do better next time (and the best way for you to learn as well).