

History 391-02: Historical Skills and Methods



Course Information:

History 391-02, Spring 2018 (CRN: 13395). Time: TR 12:30-1:45. Room: MHRA 2204

Professor's Information:

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Course Description

Doing history is an exciting process of discovery, analysis, and presentation. In this course we will develop the skills necessary for identifying research topics, locating appropriate sources, evaluating those sources, and organizing materials into a presentable format. Our canvas will be Europe in the long twelfth century (c. 1050-1215), a period that witnessed tremendous change in every aspect of society and a huge outpouring of written and visual material documenting those changes. This means that as we think about the process of doing history, most of our examples will be drawn from the classes of sources produced by medieval people during this period. Still, since not all history is

medieval history, we will also spend some time learning to locate and evaluate other types of source material, including digital resources, websites, and films.

Student Learning Objectives

1. Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods.
2. Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view.
3. Locate and evaluate appropriate scholarly materials to our subject matter.
4. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original written argument

Teaching Strategies

This is a seminar, which means that our time will mostly be spent in group work and in discussion of readings.

Required Texts:

1. Michael Salevouris, *The Method and Skills of History: a Practical Guide*, 4th edition (Wiley-Blackwell, 2015). ISBN: 9781118745441
2. William Chester Jordan, *Europe in the High Middle Ages*, 3rd ed. (Penguin, 2015) ISBN: 9780140166644
3. *The Twelfth-Century Renaissance: A Reader*, ed. Alex Novikoff (Univ. of Toronto Press, 2016). ISBN: 9781442605466

Course Requirements

Attendance	see below
Class participation	15%
Exercises: In Class and Homework	20%
Secondary Source Critique and Revision	15%
Primary Source Criticism and revision	15%
Film Analysis and revision	15%
Final Project	20%

Explanation of Assignments

1. Attendance

I expect regular attendance. As you already have some free days built in due to my conference schedule, you may miss only one other class meeting without penalty. For every absence beyond the first, I will reduce your cumulative course grade by 2 points (e.g., from 90 to 88).

2. Participation (SLOs 2, 4)

This is not a lecture course. You must come prepared to class, since class time will be devoted to small- and large-group discussion of readings and completion of exercises. Those who don't say much, either in the full-group setting or in small groups, will get Cs for this portion of the grade. To

get a B means participating regularly (but not in a dominating way), with useful and constructive things to say. To get an A requires regular participation, constructive response to others, and other leadership qualities.

3. Exercises (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)

You'll notice that the Salevouris book has exercises (like a workbook) at the end of each chapter. Some of these exercises are pretty simplistic, while others are quite thoughtful. We will often spend a portion of class time completing one of the Salevouris exercises (you may do it in the detachable worksheets, or write it out on a separate sheet of paper). Most weeks I'll also have a short assignment (a paragraph of writing, occasionally a page) for you to produce at home. All these exercises will be averaged (dropping the 1 or 2 lowest) for this portion of the grade.

4. Secondary Source Critique (SLOs 2, 4)

Students will write a 2-3 page evaluation of a scholarly article, using the criteria we have discussed in class (and that are explained in Salevouris). You have one week after the return of your first draft to turn in a revised draft. The first draft will have a suggested grade but the final grade will take into account revisions.

5. Film Analysis (SLOs 2, 3, 4)

While I am at a conference in France, you will watch two films about the Middle Ages (one a documentary, one a feature). You will write an analysis of both films (each analysis should be a minimum of 500 words), using criteria we discuss in class and points raised by Salevouris. The process of revision is identical to that for the secondary source critique.

6. Primary Source Critique (SLOs 2, 4)

Students will write formal analyses a primary source that we read in Novikoff. Each critique should be at least 2 pages long. The process of revision is identical to that for the other essays.

7. Final Project (SLOs 1, 2, 3, 4)

In lieu of a final exam, students will produce a 5-6 page paper that identifies a viable research topic concerning some aspect of medieval history between 1050 and 1250. You must turn in a proposed topic, question, and bibliography several weeks before the actual paper is due. The final paper must state a feasible research project, one that meets the criteria we have identified in class discussion; it must explain WHY it is indeed a good and feasible project; it must suggest a thesis or argument for a longer paper that one might write about the topic; it must discuss the primary and secondary sources that one would use to conduct the research.



Grading Standards

A = fulfills assignment entirely while demonstrating original insight and reflection

B = fulfills assignment entirely and thoughtfully

C = mostly fulfills assignment, but without originality or analysis, or with serious problems of presentation (e.g., writing)

D = partially incomplete, perfunctory, or displays fundamental lack of comprehension

F = mostly incomplete, plagiarized, never turned in

A+	97-100%	C+	77-79%	F	59% or lower
A	93-96%	C	73-76%		
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%		
B+	87-89%	D+	67-69%		
B	83-86%	D	63-66%		
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%		

Attendance Policy

See above.

Academic Honor Code

Each student is bound by the UNCG the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/complete/>.

Plagiarism, cheating, or other infractions will be reported to the Dean of Students; they will entail a significant penalty in the course and may carry implications for continued presence in the university.

Additional Requirements and Advice

1. In case later consultation should prove necessary, students are asked to keep copies of all graded assignments until at least the end of the semester.
2. All course requirements must be completed to receive a grade for the class.
3. **Late work** will be penalized by 1/3 of a letter grade (ie., A to A-) per day it is late unless previous arrangements have been made with the instructor.
4. **Plagiarism** is a serious academic offense that occurs when someone - whether knowingly or not - uses the words or ideas of someone else without giving that person credit for those words or ideas with a formal citation. I therefore expect that all written (and oral) work will be your own. Should I find evidence to the contrary, I will consider any and/or all of the punitive sanctions made available to me by the university. When in doubt, cite your source. If you are unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me in private - I'm happy to discuss it.

Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Unit I

Week 1:	January 9: Course Introduction	
	January 11: Historical Thinking	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 1-8; Jordan, 1-37 <u>In class:</u> locate passages in Jordan corresponding to points A-H in Salevouris, pp. 7-8 <u>Homework:</u> Complete Exercise 2 (Salevouris, p. 11)</p>
Week 2:	January 16: Historical Thinking	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 13-20; Jordan, 38-79. <u>Homework:</u> locate passages in Jordan corresponding to Salevouris' three characteristics of history (p. 20)</p>
	January 18: Continuity and Change	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 27-35; Jordan, 83-112 <u>In class:</u> Exercises (Salevouris, 37-42); Jordan?</p>
Week 3:	January 23: Multiple Causality	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 43-54; Jordan, 113-142 <u>In class:</u> identify 1-3 episodes from Jordan and subject them to multiple causality analysis</p>
	January 25: Context	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 65-71; Jordan, 143-176 <u>Homework:</u> Set A, exercises 1-2 (Salevouris, 71-7) <u>In class:</u> choose an episode from Jordan, conduct a context analysis of it</p>
Week 4:	January 30: History Writing	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 83-90; John Gillingham, "Conquering the Barbarians", 67-84 <u>In class:</u> outline the article <u>Homework:</u> look up any difficult words in article; bring a list</p>
	February 1: History Writing	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 241-248, 295-298; Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide (online) <u>Homework:</u> complete source location and analysis Assignment sheet on any source in article's footnotes</p>
Week 5	February 6: Reading History	<p><u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 131-139; one article on canvas <u>In-Class:</u> Thesis-Finding, Salevouris, 149-150.</p>
	February 8: Reading History	<p><u>Reading:</u> three articles on Canvas; you must read one in full, and must look at the others to try to spot the thesis (using Salevouris' methods) <u>Homework:</u> bring 1 paragraph description of thesis</p>

		of each article.
Week 6	February 13: Finding Information: the Web	<u>Reading</u> : Salevouris, 109-114; Presnell, <i>The Information-Literate Historian</i> , 168-178 <u>In Class</u> : locating web-sites; using databases Due: Secondary Source Critique
	February 15: Finding Information: the Web	<u>Reading</u> : <i>Evaluating Information</i> p. 4-7 (executive overview) Presnell, <i>The Information-Literate Historian</i> , 178-194 <u>Homework</u> : Salevouris, Set A Exercise 3 (p. 119)
Week 7	February 20: Finding Information: the Library	In Class: Library Visit with Lynda Kellam; meet in CITI on 1st floor of Jackson Library
	February 22: Finding Information: the Library	<u>Reading</u> : Salevouris, 103-109 In Class: Library Scavenger Hunt: Meet in Jackson Library, near Circulation Desk on First Floor
Week 8	February 27: Films in/of History	<u>Reading</u> : Salevouris, 152-163
	March 1: No Class (instructor at Medieval Academy meeting)	<u>None</u> : Enjoy!
Week 9	March 6: Spring Break (no class)	
	March 8: Spring Break (no class)	
Week 10	March 13: No Class (Barton in France)	<u>Assignment</u> : watch one of the medieval documentaries from the provided list.
	March 15: No Class (Barton in France)	<u>Assignment</u> : watch one of the medieval dramatic films from the provided list.
Week 11	March 20: Evidence, I	<u>Reading</u> : Salevouris, 170-177, 120-123; Novikoff, 59-68, 71-89 <u>In Class</u> : source criticism of texts in Novikoff, using questions in Salevouris, p 185 Due: Film Analysis
	March 22: Evidence, II	<u>Reading</u> : Novikoff, 205-219

Week 12	March 27: Topics	<u>Reading:</u> Presnell, 12-14; Novikoff, 147-177 In class: coming up with topics
	March 29: Topics and Questions	<u>Reading:</u> Novikoff, 9-18, 28-32, 43-45, 47, 51-53; Homework: come up with three topics, along with an analytical question derived from each
Week 13	April 3: Evidence, III	<u>Reading:</u> Novikoff, 365-401 Due: Primary Source Analysis
	April 5: Evidence, IV	<u>Reading:</u> Novikoff, 233-270
Week 14	April 10: Oral and Quantitative History	<u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 197-206; Medieval court roll Due: Topic and Bibliography
	April 12: Photographs and Visual Evidence	<u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 207-210; Presnell, 215-231; Novikoff, 337-348
Week 15	April 17: Developing Historical Interpretations	<u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 217-226; article on canvas
	April 19: Historiography	<u>Reading:</u> Salevouris, 255-268; article on canvas
Week 16	April 24: Doing History	Reading: none.
	April 26: No Class (Reading Day)	
	April 27 (Fri.): No Class	Final Project Due in my office, 12:00