

**HIS 709-01 INTRODUCTORY RESEARCH SEMINAR:
THE NINETEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH EMPIRE
Thursdays, 2:00-4:50 pm, via Zoom**

PROFESSOR: Dr. Jill Bender

OFFICE: MHRA 2111

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays, 1:30-3:00pm, and by appointment (All office hours will be held via Zoom, please see the link on Canvas)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Historians have acknowledged the nineteenth century to be Britain's "imperial century," when the island country emerged as the world's preeminent imperial power. This position of dominance was neither static nor assumed, however. In this introductory research seminar, we will examine how other historians have explained this expansion and its impact on both Britain and its colonies. In particular, we will explore questions of power and resistance, as students prepare their own research projects based on primary source analysis.

Student Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify an appropriate research topic and relevant primary and secondary sources.
2. Critically analyze various primary sources within their historical context.
3. Evaluate historiographical debates within the field of imperial history.
4. Conduct independent historical research and communicate the findings.
5. Develop and support an original written argument.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Participation: The basic format of this course will consist of four weeks of group meetings during which we will discuss assigned readings on the British Empire. After these first few weeks, students will meet individually (and sometimes collectively) with the professor to discuss their progress on independent research projects. Attendance at and participation in both class and individual meetings is essential.

All meetings will take place via Zoom—please see Canvas for the appropriate links. As a result, students must have access to a strong internet connection, a computer or tablet with audio and microphone capabilities, and the latest Chrome browser (Canvas works the best with Chrome). Should you need technical assistance at any point, please contact the university's Information Technology Services (ITS) at 336/256-8324 or 6-TECH@uncg.edu. See the ITS website, <https://its.uncg.edu/help/>, for more information and hours of service.

Required Readings: There is one required book, Ashley Jackson's *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2013). In addition, I strongly recommend Kate Turabian's *A*

Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. I have requested that both books be available for purchase at the UNCG Bookstore. Most other readings are available through Jackson Library's database. Those that are not available online have been scanned and uploaded to this Canvas site.

Writing Assignments: The primary purpose of this course is to guide students as they write a 25-30 page, research paper. Writing a solid research paper takes time, planning, and rewriting (among other things). This is not a project that can be completed the night before it is due. In order to emphasize the importance of planning and editing, I have developed a number of short assignments that will walk you through the many steps involved in producing a research paper. Below I have identified these steps and provided brief descriptions of each assignment. These steps are not uncommon, and I have uploaded examples from my own work to Canvas. More information will be provided as the semester progresses.

Step 1: Identify a research question

Identifying a research topic often begins with a question. Not a question that can be answered with a short yes or no or even a simple sentence. Instead, you want to ask a question that will provide deeper insight into the past. As you read the assigned readings during the first weeks of the semester, think about the questions that historians are asking about Britain and its nineteenth-century empire. How do they answer these questions? What sources do they use to answer these questions? What is their argument? What questions are left unanswered? This final question—what questions are left unanswered—will point you in the direction of your own research question.

Assignment #1 Paragraph: Write a short paragraph (4-5 sentences) explaining your proposed topic and include a related research question. (SLO 1)

Step 2: Building a research topic

Once you have a question in mind, you will want to start to find answers. The first step is to identify possible sources. What have historians already written about this topic? What sources have they used? What sources would allow you to find answers to your own question and are these sources available at Jackson Library, through appropriate internet archives or online databases, or via Interlibrary Loan?

Assignment #2 Historiography Paper: Historiography is the history of history – the way in which history has been interpreted and written about over time. Your historiographical essay should provide a critical overview of a variety of historical perspectives and scholarly interpretations of your proposed topic. Please include a bibliography of secondary sources. (SLO 1, 3)

Assignment #3 Research Proposal: Your research proposal should identify 1) your topic and its significance 2) the historiographical discussion with which you plan to engage and how you position yourself in the discussion 3) the primary sources most relevant to your research. (SLO 1, 3)

Step 3: Conducting Research

Once you have identified possible primary sources, you need to read and analyze them.

Assignment #4 Primary Source Analysis: Write a 1-2 page analysis of a primary source document related to your research paper. Please identify, contextualize, and analyze the source. In particular, explain how this source advances your argument. Include a copy of or provide a link to the primary source with your analysis. (SLO 2)

Step 4: Creating an argument

Once you begin your primary research, what answers do you find? What patterns can you detect in the sources? And what is the best way to present this argument? Often, this step involves significant outlining and writing as you think about and reconsider the best ways to organize your evidence so that it makes sense to a larger audience.

Assignment #5 Outline: Your outline should include an introduction that 1) introduces the topic in an engaging manner 2) sets out the argument (including historiographical contribution) and 3) prepares the reader. Your full outline should then include detailed bullet points and section paragraphs that make the development of the argument clear. (SLO 1, 3, 4, and 5)

Step 5: Writing and writing and writing

Writing a research paper rarely (never?) occurs in one go. Rather, you will want to write a draft, receive peer reviews, and rewrite (editing in response to feedback). Furthermore, reviewing each other's work will strengthen your own writing by providing you with an opportunity to consider other arguments and how to present your questions and critiques in a helpful and constructive manner.

Assignment #6 Polished Rough Draft: Your polished rough draft should be as close to a final draft as you can produce without formal feedback (minimum length of 20 pages), and should include endnotes/footnotes and a bibliography. (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

Assignment #7 Peer Review: Please provide a one-page, typed review of your peers' papers and provide copies to me as well. Be kind, but also offer constructive feedback—What are the paper's strengths? Where is there room for improvement? Can the argument be clearer or better supported in places?

Final Papers (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5): Students will produce a 25-30 page research paper based on primary and secondary sources. Although paper topics will vary according to individual student interests, all papers must relate to the course theme of the nineteenth-century British Empire. **The final paper with bibliography and notes must be uploaded to Canvas by 11:59pm, Friday, April 30th.**

Due Dates: The assignments for this class are designed to build upon each other and guide students toward the production of an original research paper. As a result, it is essential that students turn in all assignments, on time.

Academic Integrity Policy: All work must be your own and sources should be appropriately cited using footnotes or endnotes. Plagiarism is a breach of the university's academic integrity policy. For more information on this policy, see <https://osrr.uncg.edu/academic-integrity/>. If you have further questions regarding this policy, please consult me.

Final Grades will be calculated according to the following:

Participation, Presentations, and Attendance (both in class and during individual meetings):	15%
Writing Assignments:	35%
#1 Paragraph and Research Question	2.5%
#2 Historiography Paper	5%
#3 Research Proposal	5%
#4 Primary Source Analysis	2.5%
#5 Outline	5%
#6 Polished Rough Draft	10%
#7 Peer Reviews	5%
Final Paper:	50%

Letter grades for PhD students will be assigned as follows:

93-100 A	87-89 B+	<82 F
90-92 A-	82-86 B	

Letter grades for MA students assigned as follows:

93-100 A	87-89 B+	77-79 C+
90-92 A-	83-86 B	73-76 C
	80-82 B-	<72 F

ACCESSIBILITY & ACCOMMODATIONS

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

UNCG seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of

Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS). If you wish to request accommodations, please start the process by contacting OARS at 215 Elliott University Center, 336-334-5440, oars@uncg.edu.

Health and Wellness

Although this course will be held remotely, I am fully aware that we all face a number of outside pressures right now. Certainly, the coronavirus pandemic has had an impact, but so, too, has the recent social and political unrest. Please realize that UNCG has resources available to help combat stress and anxiety—and really to offer support for any range of emotions.

You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu.

CLASS SCHEDULE & WEEKLY CALENDAR:

*This schedule is subject to change at the professor's discretion

UNIT I: EXAMPLES

Week 1: Jan 21 Getting our Bearings: The Nineteenth-Century British Empire

Reading: Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2013).

Week 2: Jan 28 Writing about Britain and its Empire: The Metropole

Reading:

Catherine Hall, "The nation within and without," *Defining the Victorian Nation: Class, Race, Gender and the Reform Act of 1867* (Cambridge: CUP, 2000): 179-233.

Laura Tabili, "A homogeneous society? Britain's internal 'others', 1800-present." *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World*, eds. Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006): 53-76.

In-class presentations on Primary Source databases.

Week 3: Feb 4 Writing about Britain and its Empire: The Periphery

Reading: Historiography

Alan, Lester, "Imperial Circuits and Networks: Geographies of the British Empire," *History Compass* 4, 1 (2006): 124-141.

Reading: Examples (Choose 1 of the following to read)

Alan Lester, "British Settler Discourse and the Circuits of Empire," *History Workshop Journal* 54 (2002): 24-48.

Mark Doyle, "Those The Empire Washed Ashore: Uncovering Ireland's Multiracial Past," *Ireland in an Imperial World: Citizenship, Opportunism, and Subversion*, eds. Timothy G. McMahon, Michael de Nie, and Paul Townend (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 49-68.

Aidan Forth, "Britain's Archipelago of Camps: Labor and Detention in a Liberal Empire, 1871-1903." *Kritika: Explorations in Russian and Eurasian History*, vol. 16, No. 3 (Summer 2015): 651-680.

Zoe Laidlaw, "Indigenous Interlocutors: Networks of Imperial Protest and Humanitarianism in the Mid-Nineteenth Century," *Indigenous Networks: Mobility, Connections and Exchange*, eds. Jane Carey and Jane Lydon (New York and London: Routledge, 2014): 114-139.

In-class presentations on Primary Source databases.

Feb 8 **Due:** Assignment #1 Paragraph (Please upload to course Canvas site by 11:59pm, Monday, February 8th)

Week 4: Feb 11 Walking Through the Process

Reading: Jill C. Bender, "Mutiny or freedom fight? The 1857 Indian Mutiny and the Irish press," *Newspapers and Empire in Ireland and Britain: Reporting the British Empire, c. 1857-1921*, ed. Simon J. Potter (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004): 92-108.

Feb 15 **Due:** Assignment #2 Historiography Paper (Please upload to course Canvas site by 11:59pm, Monday, February 15th).

Week 5: Feb 18 Individual Meetings

Feb 22 **Due:** Assignment #3 Research Proposal (Please upload to course Canvas site by 11:59pm, Monday, February 22nd).

Week 6: Feb 25 Class Meeting

UNIT II: RESEARCHING, WRITING, AND MORE RESEARCHING, WRITING

Week 7: Mar 4 **Class Meeting: Project Update**

Mar 5 **Due:** Assignment #4 Primary Source Analysis (Please upload to course Canvas site by 11:59pm, Friday, March 5th)

Week 8: Mar 11 **No Class: *Individual Research***

Week 9: Mar 18 **Individual Meetings**

Mar 22 **Due:** Assignment #5 Outline (Please upload to Canvas by 11:59pm, Monday, March 22nd)

Week 10: Mar 25 **Individual Meetings**

Week 11: Apr 1 **Presentations**

UNIT III: REVIEWING, REVISING, AND POLISHING

Week 12: Apr 8 **Individual Meetings**

Apr 12 **Due:** Assignment #6 Polished Rough Draft (complete with notes and bibliography). Please upload your draft to the course Canvas site by 11:59pm on Monday, April 12th.

Week 13: Apr 15 **Discussion of Rough Drafts**

Due: Assignment #7 Peer Review (Please upload to Canvas in advance of class—by 1:45pm.)

Week 14: Apr 22 **Final Comments & Conclusions**

Apr 30 *****FINAL PAPERS are due. Please upload to Canvas by 11:59pm on Friday, April 30*****