



## Introductory Research Seminar

HIS 709

Spring 2023

Prof. L. Tolbert (a.k.a. drt)  
Email: [lctolber@uncg.edu](mailto:lctolber@uncg.edu)

Office: Zoom  
Hours: by appointment

**History Department Facebook page:** <https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/>

**History Department Website:** <https://his.uncg.edu/>

*\*Note that this syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Any necessary changes in the syllabus or course schedule will prioritize effectiveness for student learning.*

### Support

For technical assistance, please reach out to the helpdesk at 336-256-8324. You can also use the ITS website for assistance - <https://its.uncg.edu/Help/>

For questions about your work in the course you can reach me by email: [lctolber@uncg.edu](mailto:lctolber@uncg.edu). I will happily schedule Zoom consultation sessions with you by appointment.

### Scope and Purpose of the Course

This course is designed as an advanced introduction to professional research practice. You will develop your own research project based on your individual interests. But this course will not operate as if you were pursuing a set of unrelated independent studies. Though your topics will differ widely, you will all be facing similar research and writing problems: finding primary sources, understanding what your evidence means, presenting your findings in an interesting and compelling interpretation. Thus, the subject of this course is not based on any particular historical period or topic, rather it is the historical method—the process of historical investigation, and particularly the role of writing in the research process. We will follow the approach of Booth, Colomb, and Williams, who explained in *The Craft of Research* that “writing is not just the last stage of a research project but from its beginning a guide to critical thinking.”

Your primary goal in this course is to write a compelling, evidence-based paper for an original research project. You will develop the paper in stages and, as in any professional context, peer review will be an important part of the research process in the course.

## Writing Groups

As your topics develop you will have opportunities to work in writing groups that share common topic content, but you will not be assigned to a permanent writing group based on topic. Instead, we will use writing groups in different ways as a research tool at different stages of project development. Sometimes we will work as a whole class, sometimes you will work in teams of three or four, or in pairs. Beyond basic peer review of assignment drafts, writing groups will work on such project development processes as weekly goal setting, concept mapping, and bibliographic development.

## Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester you should be able to:

- Recognize and explain the [AHA Standards of Professional Conduct](#) related to research practice.
- Construct a meaningful original research problem with clearly defined research goals.
- Construct a well-designed research bibliography that contains the most relevant primary and secondary sources for your project.
- Demonstrate your mastery of historiography by explaining the significance and contribution of your research to the appropriate historical field(s) of scholarship.
- Identify and apply the best methodologies for effective source analysis to successfully address your research problem.

## Evaluation and Grading

Discussion Board and Class Participation	20%
Module 1. Methodology and Primary Source Analysis	20%
Module 2. Historiography and Significance	20%
Module 3. Final Paper	40%

Parameters for the research project:

- You can research any topic but you must have access to the most important primary sources for your topic either physically or digitally
- Your final bibliography will contain different types of primary sources (consider different formats and perspectives in your research design) and 15-20 scholarly sources (books, journal articles, scholarly internet resources) carefully selected to craft and refine the project, including appropriate methodologies for interpreting primary sources with respect to the research problem.

**Course Grade Scale:** A 94-100 / A- 90-93 / B+ 87-89 / B 84-86 / B- 80-83 / C+ 77-79 / C 74-76 / F 72 and below.

## Required Text

There is no required textbook for this course. All assigned readings will be provided in Canvas.

## Course Structure

The course is organized into four multi-week Canvas modules. At the end of each module, you will submit an assignment that applies the reading and methods we studied in the module. The Discussion Board will offer different kinds of opportunities to practice the skills and concepts that are the focus of each module.

## Course Facilitator Expectations

- The course facilitator will provide timely and constructive feedback on all graded assignments.
- The course facilitator monitors all discussion posts and provides feedback when appropriate.
- The course facilitator will answer all emails from students within 24 business hours.
- Any course updates and new information will be sent via course announcement in Canvas as early in the week as possible.

## Participant Expectations

- Plan to spend significant time outside of class completing the research for this course in addition to the 3-5 hours per week for reviewing the module, submitting your assessments, and participating in the class discussions.
- If you are unable to meet a deadline or experience a personal issue, please notify the course facilitator immediately.
- Be respectful of others in your discussion posts and replies. Your feedback should be constructive and sensitive. Think about the replies that you would want to receive.
- If you have a specific question about your course, email the course instructor.

# COURSE POLICIES

## LATE WORK POLICY

You will do best in this course if you work on schedule. If something gets in the way of this, please reach out immediately to develop a plan for catching up.

## ACCESSIBILITY/ACCOMMODATIONS

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, [ods.uncg.edu](https://ods.uncg.edu) ([Links to an external site.](#))

## ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

Each student is required to adhere to the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to the following URL: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/> (Links to an external site.)

## COVID-19

As we return for spring 2023, please uphold UNCG's culture of care to limit the spread of covid-19 and other airborne illnesses. These actions include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of covid-19
- Staying home when ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to isolate if ill
- Completing a [self-report](#) when experiencing covid-19 symptoms or testing positive for covid-19
- Following the CDC's [exposure guidelines](#) when exposed to someone who has tested positive for covid-19
- Staying informed about the University's policies and announcements via the [covid-19](#) website

## HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience.

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/> (Links to an external site.), 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> (Links to an external site.) or reaching out to [recovery@uncg.edu](mailto:recovery@uncg.edu)

## CONTRA POWER STATEMENT

!! As your instructor, I am committed to creating a productive and non-discriminatory learning environment of mutual respect. Title IX and UNCG's school policy prohibit gender-based harassment, sexual harassment, and sex discrimination for all members of the University community. Harassment can come in many forms - both direct and indirect - and can occur in subtle or overt ways. Traditionally, harassment is seen from formal power-over structure. However, harassment can occur without a formal power structure. Contrapower, when a student harasses an instructor or peer, is a type of behavior that can create an intimidating environment in and outside of the classroom. Either form of harassment can include direct or indirect comments, physical intimidation, emails, anonymous notes and course evaluations. Both Contrapower and traditional forms of harassment are prohibited and subject to the same kinds of accountability applied to offenses against protected categories, such as race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

If you experience or witness such instances of harassment, please seek out the following resources:

- UNCG Counseling Center (non-reporting agency/confidential): 336.334.5874

- Murphie Chappell, Title IX Coordinator (reporting agent) 336.256.0362 or [mechappe@uncg.edu](mailto:mechappe@uncg.edu)
- University Police (reporting agent) 336.334.4444

For more information on UNCG's policies regarding harassment, visit [http://policy.uncg.edu/university-policies/sex\\_gender\\_harrassment/sex-gender-harrassment.pdf](http://policy.uncg.edu/university-policies/sex_gender_harrassment/sex-gender-harrassment.pdf) (Links to an external site.)

## RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

It is expected that instructors will make reasonable accommodations for students who have conflicts due to religious obligations. Please make arrangements with the instructor in advance of any conflict. For more information on UNCG's Religious Obligations policy, visit: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3\\_J3Uix1B4UeTV4Nk1vVFJoVFE/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B3_J3Uix1B4UeTV4Nk1vVFJoVFE/view?usp=sharing) (Links to an external site.)

## ELASTICITY STATEMENT

It is the intention of the instructor that this syllabus and course calendar will be followed as outlined, however, as the need arises there may be adjustments to the syllabus and calendar. In such cases, the instructor will notify the students in class and via e-mail with an updated syllabus and calendar within a reasonable timeframe to allow students to adjust as needed.

## ADVERSE WEATHER

In cases of inclement weather that impact this course and course schedule, details can be found:

- In your University email: UNCG sends out Adverse Weather updates
- In the UNCG Mobile App: You can even set it to provide you alerts
- Via television announcements: UNCG makes weather announcements available on five local stations (WFMY-2, WGHP-V, WXII-TV, WXLV-TV, and Spectrum News)
- Visit [Spartanalert.uncg.edu](http://Spartanalert.uncg.edu) or the UNCG homepage: UNCG posts up-to-date information on the main University web site ([uncg.edu](http://uncg.edu)) and on the main Spartan Alert page ([spartanalert.uncg.edu](http://spartanalert.uncg.edu)).

## FINAL EXAMINATION

There is no final exam in this course.

## TOPICAL OUTLINE/CALENDAR

Week 1. January 9 Introductions

Check the Modules in Canvas for any assigned readings each week.

---

### *Module 1: Primary Sources and Methodology*

---

Week 2. January 16 MLK Holiday/No Class  
complete the goal setting discussion board assignment by midnight on Jan 17

Week 3. January 23 Primary Sources are the Foundation of Effective Research Design

Week 4. January 30 Crafting a Manageable Research Focus

Week 5. February 6 Asking Effective Research Questions

Week 6. February 13 Peer Review: Primary Source Analysis Drafts

Feb 13. Module 1 Assignment due

---

### *Module 2: Defining the Research Problem*

---

Week 7. February 20 What is a Historical Problem?

Week 8. February 27 Historiography as a Research Tool

**Week 9. March 6 Spring Break**

Week 10. March 13 Refining the Research Problem

Week 11. March 20 Historiography Draft/Peer Review

March 26. Module 2 Assignment due

---

### *Module 3: Historical Writing and the Research Process*

---

Week 12. March 27 Paper Drafting: Explaining the Historical Significance of the Research Problem

Week 13. April 3 Writing Workshop: Thesis Statements and Research Design

Week 14. April 10 Revision and Peer Review

Week 15. April 17 Writing Workshop

Week 16. April 24 Final Paper due (with complete bibliography)