Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: HIST 494

Course Title: Historical Research and Methods

Number of Credit Hours: 3  Lecture Hours: 3  Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Historical Research and Methods is a seminar dedicated to the research and writing of a senior thesis. All participants are expected to apply the techniques of scholarship as generally accepted by the historical profession. The seminar is the culminating experience for graduation as a history major. Completion with grade of “C” or higher is required. Prerequisite: HIST 490. Offered Spring.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): HIST 490.

Text(s): Choose at least one of the following reference manuals:

Choose at least one of the following guidebooks:

Additional monographs or readers may be assigned as appropriate.

Course Objectives:
- To appreciate the significance of cause and effect relationships in American and world history.
- To analyze a broad range of source materials that provide evidence about significant historical topics.
- To express themselves clearly and persuasively both orally and in writing about the past.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:
- Demonstrate knowledge of events in American and world history.
- Articulate a philosophy and theory of history that aligns with current historical research practices.
• Differentiate primary from secondary sources used in historical research.
• Detect assumptions, bias, and opinions in primary source materials.
• Produce an original thesis using the Chicago Style.
• Criticize the research methodology of a peer after reviewing a thesis draft.
• Defend the evidence and argument of a thesis.
• Understand the ethical and professional code of conduct approved by the American Historical Association.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

Instructors should mentor participants, who will develop a senior thesis of at least 5000 words on an appropriate topic of history. The research must be original and based upon primary sources. The writing must be in compliance with the Chicago Manual of Style for bibliography, outline, notetaking, drafts, and documentation. Theses will be distributed to the participants in the seminar and will be critiqued and defended. In addition, instructors are to assess learning outcomes for the major and report these outcomes to the Vice President and Dean for Academic Affairs office and department chairs on an electronic form to be provided. The Major Field Test for the discipline is administered during this course. The Academic Profile test of general education learning is administered during this course. Topics should include, but not be limited to, the following:

• The ethics of the historical profession.
• Implementing a research proposal.
• Bibliographies and references.
• Archival and online resources.
• Journals and monographs.
• Styles and conventions in historical writing.
• Plagiarism and proper citations.
• Notetaking.
• Writing the first draft.
• Revisions.
• Presentation.
• Seminar critiques and defenses.
• Careers in history.
• Assessment activities.

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 15

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Brad D. Lookingbill

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The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

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