

THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
Department of History

Semester I Year 78-79

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
795	Quantitative Methods for Historical Research	Peter Smith

COURSE DESCRIPTION

History 795 provides an elementary, one-semester introduction to the use of quantitative methods for historical research. Through the course students should acquire (a) a general exposure to the kinds of quantitative history which has been written, (b) an ability to utilize and evaluate appropriate statistical techniques, and, perhaps most important, (c) a concern for the logic and structure of research design.

No prior knowledge of, or facility with, mathematics is required. It is also open to undergraduates as well as graduates.\*

Class sessions will deal with historiographical surveys of quantitative literature: explanations and derivations of statistical techniques; and discussions of individual research projects. All students will make some use of the computer, however briefly.

\*(Graduate students might note, however, that History 795 can constitute one of the "two courses in the research methodology of a related discipline" for students who choose this alternative to fulfill one of their foreign language requirements.)

LECTURES

The class will meet for 75-minute seminar-type sessions twice weekly.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMINATIONS

(1) six or seven weekly homework assignments, mainly to solve basic statistical problems; and (2) a moderate-length paper on a subject of the student's choosing.

GRADING SYSTEM

Class discussion and participation = 25%; homework = 25%; paper = 50%. (Roughly.)

REQUIRED READINGS

Arthur L. Stinchcombe, CONSTRUCTING SOCIAL THEORIES  
Hubert M. Blalock, SOCIAL STATISTICS (2nd edition, 1972)  
Norman Nie, et. al., SPSS: STATISTICAL PACKAGE FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES  
William Aydelotte, et. al., DIMENSIONS OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH IN HISTORY  
Robert Swierenga, QUANTIFICATION IN AMERICAN HISTORY

795    **QUANTITATIVE METHODS FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH**  
10:00-12:00 T 3 Cr.

ARCHDEACON

Primarily for graduate students. Opened to a few advanced undergraduates who obtain my permission. Study of basic tools of quantitative analysis, as used by historians.

Assignments will involve analysis of secondary sources (through written papers) and writing of a research paper based on quantitative sources.