

History 800
 Wednesday 3:30-5:30; Humanities 5345
 Leonora Neville; Leonora.neville@wisc.edu
 Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:30-3:15

This class has two main goals: for you to substantially complete an MA thesis, dissertation chapter, or article, and for you to learn processes for writing easily and efficiently. Life happens in time. Writing successfully within the constraints of a time-bound existence requires learning how to focus a naturally unruly creative process into manageable concrete steps. We will explore methods and strategies for 1) making the basics of writing simple and automatic, 2) managing large-scale research & writing projects, 3) self-regulation and self-assessment. Simultaneously we will support each other in our immediate work of producing our theses and chapters.

Date	Topic	Assignment	Reading
2-Sep	Automaticity		
9-Sep	Research Projects	Project Description	Linda Nilson "Creating Self-Regulated learners" pgs. 1-12 & Susan Ambrose "How Learning Works" pgs. 91-115
16-Sep	Project Management basics --tasks, outlines & plans	Reading speed estimates; Writing speed estimates	
23-Sep	Defining Good	Write a rubric you will use to evaluate your project	Susan Ambrose "How Learning Works" pgs. 231-243; sample rubrics on Learn@UW
30-Sep	Preliminary plans & anticipated structures	Preliminary plan	
7-Oct	Argument Templates		<i>They Say/I Say</i> , pgs. 1-138
14-Oct	Reverse Outlining--seeing structure	Outline of an article/chapter written by another	
21-Oct	Rhetoric Analysis	List of phrases/techniques for guiding argument in an article/chapter by another	
28-Oct	Critical path presentations	Oral presentation of what you need to do next	
4-Nov	Sample argumentation review	4-6 pages of argumentation text	

11-Nov	Sample argumentation review	4-6 pages of argumentation text	
18-Nov	Punch list/ Framing review	punch list & framing text	
25-Nov	Thanksgiving	Eat Turkey	
2-Dec	Framing review	Paragraph-several pages of framing text	
9-Dec	Revising	Bring everything you have	

Assignments:

- 1) Project Description:** This should provide brief answers to the following questions. It may take a question and answer format. Submit 1-2 pages. You will present your project description orally in class.

Who is the audience? What is the conversation you are entering? What is the length of the project? What is the professional purpose of the project (article, book chapter, conference presentation)? What question are you going to ask? What source base are you planning to use? If you know what basic point you are going to make, include that as well.

- 2) Reading & Writing Speed Estimates:** Time yourself reading academic prose carefully for 50 minutes. Count the number of pages you read. Use this as your page-per-hour estimate for careful reading. Similarly derive page-per-hour estimates for skim reading and foreign-language reading, if applicable. Time yourself writing an argumentative paragraph about material you know well. Double that time to get your page-per-hour estimate. Submit a list of your estimates.
- 3) Personal Rubric:** List the characteristics you value in good historical writing that you will use to evaluate your work.
- 4) Preliminary Plan:** This plan contains a 1) basic outline/template of your article, 2) list of the tasks you need do to complete the project, with time estimates, 3) an assessment of which tasks need to be done ahead of others and what order you plan to do them. The written version can vary in length. You will make an oral presentation of your plan in class.
- 5) Outline of an article/chapter written by another:** As you read an article or chapter by another historian, draw an outline of its structure. Think about what was more or less effective. Be prepared to describe its structure in class.
- 6) List of phrases/techniques for guiding argument in an article/chapter by another:** As you read an article or chapter by another historian, keep notes on the author's rhetorical

methods for guiding the argument. Add any words or phrases not already on the “Commonly Used Transitions” list from *They say / I say*. Be prepared to describe particularly good, or bad, rhetoric in class.

- 7) **Critical path presentations:** Based on the progress of your projects so far, assess what is most important for you do to in order to complete the project on time.
- 8) **Sample argumentation review:** Bring 4-6 pages of your text to class for peer review.
- 9) **Punch List:** Bring a list of the problems you need to solve and tasks you need to complete in order to finish the project.
- 10) **Framing review:** Bring a paragraph to several pages of text that introduces, concludes, or shifts the argument in your project to class for peer review.
- 11) **Revising:** Bring your project to the class for peer review.

Assessment: Successful writing requires self-assessment and evaluation. You will be responsible for assessing the quality of your work. All assignments are graded pass/fail based on whether they meet the basic specifications outlined above. All assignments are worth 6.81% of the final grade. Class participation is worth 25%. Assignment numbers 5 & 6 may be substituted with three pages of argumentation each.