

History 800

Tuesday 3:30-5:30, online via Canvas; Leonora Neville; Leonora.neville@wisc.edu
Office Hours: Fridays 9-10, online at BBCollaborate

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
8-Sep	Automaticity	Project Description	
15-Sep	Project Management basics --tasks, outlines & plans	Reading & Writing speed estimates Project Description (if not yet done)	Linda Nilsson "Creating Self-Regulated learners" pgs. 1-12 & Susan Ambrose "How Learning Works" pgs. 91-115
22-Sep	Work plans & anticipated structures	Work plan	
29-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
6-Oct	Sources	Source description & challenge assessment	
13-Oct	Argument Templates		<i>They Say/I Say</i> , pgs. 1-138
20-Oct	Reverse Outlining--seeing structure	Outline of an article/chapter written by another	
27-Oct	Rhetoric Analysis	List of phrases/techniques for guiding argument in an article/chapter by another	
3-Nov	Critical path presentations	Oral presentation of what you need to do next	
10-Nov	Sample argumentation review	4-6 pages of argumentation text	
17-Nov	Sample argumentation review	4-6 pages of argumentation text	

24-Nov	Punch list/ Framing review	punch list & framing text	
1-Dec	Framing review	Several pages of framing text	
8-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) Work 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, 4) a calendar of time blocks in which you will do each task. The written version can vary in length. You will make an oral presentation of your plan in class.

4) Personal Rubric: List the characteristics you value in good historical writing that you will use to evaluate your work.

5) Source Description & Challenge Assessment: Describe the source base that you will use for your thesis/chapter. How are you going to access this material? What difficulties do you anticipate in getting and understanding the material? Make an oral presentation to the class and submit 1-2 pages.

6) Outline of an article/chapter written by another: As you read an article or chapter by another historian, draw up an outline of its structure. Think about what was more or less effective. Be prepared to describe its structure in class. (or submit several pages of your text)

- 7) **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. (or submit several pages of your text)
- 8) **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.
- 9) **Sample argumentation review:** Bring 4-6 pages of your text to class for peer review.
- 10) **Punch List:** Bring a list of the problems you need to solve and tasks you need to complete in order to finish the project.
- 11) **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.
- 12) **Revising:** Bring your project to the class for peer review.

In addition to these formal assignments, we will discuss the progress of everyone's project each week. Come prepared to tell us how it's going. We will try to come up with possible solutions and helpful advice for the challenges each project faces.

Assessment: Successful writing requires self-assessment and evaluation. You will be responsible for assessing the quality of your work. All assignments are graded either full-credit or no credit based on whether they meet the basic specifications outlined above. Each assignment is worth 6.81% of the final grade. Class participation is worth 25%. Assignment numbers 6 & 7 may be substituted by three pages of argumentation each.

Class conduct: We are here to support each other in the completion of our projects. We succeed when we all do well. As all of our projects face different methodological and logistic challenges, and we bring diverse skills and viewpoints to our work, we will progress at different paces. We will not make cutting comparisons between our projects or belittle the problems facing others.

The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated online time, reading, writing, field trips, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

STUDENTS' RULES, [RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES](#)

During the global COVID-19 pandemic, we must prioritize our collective health and safety to keep ourselves, our campus, and our community safe. As a university community, we must work together to prevent the spread of the virus and to promote the collective health and welfare of our campus and surrounding community.

UW-MADISON [BADGER PLEDGE](#)

QUARANTINE OR ISOLATION DUE TO COVID-19

Student should continually monitor themselves for COVID-19 [symptoms](#) and get [tested](#) for the virus if they have symptoms or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. Student should reach out to instructors as soon as possible if they become ill or need to isolate or quarantine, in order to make alternate plans for how to proceed with the course. Students are strongly encouraged to communicate with their instructor concerning their illness and the anticipated extent of their absence from the course (either in-person or remote). The instructor will work with the student to provide alternative ways to complete the course work.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR & RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

- See: <https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/#religious-observances>

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.