
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
FALL 1996

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Office Hours
T10:30a-12:00p + R3:50p-5:20p
"chat" times on First Class: M4-5p + T9-10p
or by appointment (call or email)

History 680/690
SENIOR THESIS COLLOQUIUM

Beginning in Fall 1997, this two-semester colloquium will be required of all senior thesis writers who are pursuing honors or distinction in the history major. In Fall 1996 and Spring 1997, it is offered as an option for thesis writers — an opportunity not to be missed.

Each of you must register concurrently for senior thesis credit (2 cr. In History 681/682 or 691/692) with a faculty member who serves as your *field thesis advisor*. As instructor in this course (an additional 2 cr. each semester), I will act as your *general thesis advisor*. Together, your field thesis advisor and I will compose your senior thesis committee, which has final responsibility for approving your thesis and assigning a grade.

This colloquium is designed to *enhance and support* your senior thesis work in two ways. First, it offers a forum in which you and your fellow thesis writers can address questions common to all fields of historical research: What does it mean to "do history"? How does one define a workable research topic? How does one decide what kinds of sources to use? How does the choice of sources shape one's approach to a topic--perhaps even alter the topic itself? Secondly, it offers guidance in the techniques of research and writing upon which all historians rely. As you begin to develop your topic and explore possible sources, we'll tour campus libraries and learn how to acquire information electronically. As you dig into your research and draft your thesis, the seminar will function like a workshop in which the students take their own projects through the successive stages of research — prospectus and bibliography, detailed outline, first pages of draft during fall semester; full draft and subsequent revisions during spring semester. At each stage, you will present your work to the colloquium and get valuable feedback from your peers. Meanwhile, throughout the semester, you will also consult closely and regularly with your field thesis advisor.

The following books are available for purchase at the University Bookstore and have also been placed on reserve at Helen C. White Library along with a lot of others that may interest you (see handout):

Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*
Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*
Browne and Keeley, *Asking the Right Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking*
Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing About History*

Please make every effort to buy your own copies of these essential tools of the historian. Also available at the bookstore is the first week's assigned reading:

Edward T. Linenthal and Tom Engelhardt, eds., *The History Wars: The Enola Gay and Other Battles for the American Past* (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Co., 1996).

COLLOQUIUM SCHEDULE

Note: regardless what we will be doing in colloquium each week, you should plan to spend additional hours working on your thesis (reading secondary sources, scouring around for and reading primary sources, beginning to draft the various incarnations of the thesis — statement of intention, bibliography, prospectus (more extensive statement and bibliography), outline, preliminary draft of 10 pp.)

Sept. 5 Introductions, mechanics of the course, etc.

Sept. 12 First hour: library and archive tours (Memorial Library and the Historical Society)
Second hour: discussion of assigned reading — Linenthal and Engelhardt, eds., *The History Wars*.

Sept. 19 Begin to draft your statement of intention this week in consultation with your field advisor.

The colloquium will meet in the New Media Center (2nd floor of Helen C. White Library) for a hands-on introduction to the use of the Internet for historical research.

Draft statement of intention will be due in colloquium next week. This must be prepared in close consultation with your thesis field advisor; be sure to meet with her or him at least twice before turning in your draft statement.

Sept. 23 Leave draft of statement of intention in my mailbox

Sept. 24 After 4:00 pm: pick up a packet of copies of all draft statements of intention;
read them carefully before the next colloquium and prepare questions for each.

Sept. 26 Discussion of draft statements of intention.

Oct. 3 Revised statement of intention due in my mailbox. No colloquium meeting this week; instead, sign up for an individual meeting with Prof. Dunlavy to refine your topic and discuss bibliographic strategies

Oct. 10 Workshop discussion of current issues and problems, including discussion of historians' tools:

Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*

Oct. 17 Workshop discussion of bibliographies and other current problems; discussion of Marius, *A Short Guide to Writing about History*

Draft bibliographies will be discussed in colloquium next week. These must be prepared in close consultation with your thesis field advisor; be sure to meet with her or him at least twice before turning in your draft.

Oct. 21 Leave draft bibliography in my mailbox (4th floor of our corner of Humanities, opposite the elevator)

- Oct. 22 After 4:00 pm: pick up a packet of copies of all draft bibliographies; read them carefully before the next colloquium and prepare questions for each.
- Oct. 24 Discussion of bibliography drafts
- Oct. 31 Final bibliography due in colloquium; workshop — discussion of current issues and problems.
- Nov. 4 Leave draft prospectus in my mailbox (4th floor of our corner of Humanities, opposite the elevator)
- Nov. 5 After 4:00 pm: pick up a packet of copies of all draft prospectuses; read them carefully before the next colloquium and prepare questions for each.
- Nov. 7 Discussion #1 of draft prospectuses
- Nov. 11-13 — students whose prospectuses were discussed on Nov. 7 will meet individually with me
- Nov. 14 Discussion #2 of draft prospectuses
- Nov. 18-20 — students whose prospectuses were discussed on Nov. 14 will meet individually with me
- Nov. 21 Final, revised prospectuses due (only those discussed on Nov. 7); workshop discussion of current issues and problems (esp. outlines)
- Nov. 27 Final, revised prospectuses due (those discussed on Nov. 14)
- Nov. 28 Thanksgiving — no colloquium
- Dec. 5 Detailed outlines of the thesis due in colloquium; workshop discussion of current issues and problems (esp. drafting your first ten pages of the thesis — though not necessarily pp. 1-10!)
- Dec. 12 Distribution of copies of detailed outlines in seminar — discussion optional; otherwise, regular workshop discussion of ten-page drafts in progress
- Dec. 18 Ten-page drafts due in my mailbox (by 3:00 pm)