

UCSB Hist 194AH, Fall 2017
SENIOR HONORS SEMINAR
Thu. 2-4:50 HSSB 4041

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HIST 194AH: HISTORY SENIOR HONORS SEMINAR **SYLLABUS**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This two-quarter course provides history majors the opportunity to conduct advanced research and writing at a level comparable to first-year graduate work. Participants will form working groups of 3-4 students who will be guided by the seminar director and their individual mentors in producing a senior honors thesis of substantial depth and complexity. These theses, usually 50-65 pages in length, will be archived in the department seminar room, with abstracts posted on the department website.

Students are expected to have identified a research topic with the input of their faculty mentor and to have begun reading relevant secondary literature and identifying primary sources over the summer. During fall quarter students compile and work through a comprehensive bibliography of primary sources and secondary literature, refine their topics, formulate a research question, and write a grant proposal to secure funding for their work. (UCSB's Undergraduate Research and Creative Activities--[URCA](#)--grant program is the funding source.) Finally, students write an introductory chapter/section that poses their research question, presents background material, and includes a review of the relevant literature (ca. 10-15 pages).

In winter quarter participants continue their research and writing, while submitting successive drafts for group discussion and peer review. The complete final thesis is due at the end of winter quarter, when it will be presented orally to the seminar as well. Students who received URCA grants will create posters to present their work at the University's annual research showcase in Corwin Pavilion in May.

In Spring quarter all students must present their work orally at the Department's senior honors colloquium in the second half of May. Students who have successfully completed this seminar are eligible to graduate with distinction in the major. The [History Associates' Board Prize](#) is awarded to the best senior honors thesis each year.

REQUIREMENTS & POLICIES

- a) **Attendance** is essential. Some days the entire seminar will meet as a group; other times each working group will meet with the professor at assigned times during the class period. You should always come well prepared to class meetings, with the materials, ideas, questions and problems you want to discuss.
Send the professor an e-mail *in advance* of the class meeting should an emergency situation arise. Otherwise you must provide written documentation in order for an absence to be excused.
- b) **Peer reviewing:** the members of each working group will read and comment on each other's bibliographies and drafts. The quality of the final thesis is closely linked to the intensive process of reading and re-reading, discussion and reflection, polishing and repolishing your work. You must be willing to engage with unfamiliar topics, and write so that non-experts can follow your arguments.
- c) **Mid-course review.** At the end of fall quarter students in good standing in the seminar will receive an "in progress" grade. Students who have not submitted a prospectus and the first installment, or who have consistently failed to meet the seminar deadlines will be dropped from the seminar and may be eligible to receive a grade for an independent study course from their mentor.

Grading: The final two-quarter grade will be based on: seminar participation, timely submission of assignments, quality of peer feedback, and the final thesis. The mentor's grade of the final thesis will be factored in as well.

RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- Stanley Chodorow, *Writing a Successful Research Paper: A Simple Approach* (Hackett, 2011). A concise but incisive guide to the process we will work through in this seminar..
- Diana Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual* (Boston: Bedford, 6th ed. 2011). A concise and handy guide explaining common mistakes and rules of good usage.
- Kate Turabian, *Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* (8th ed.)
- Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (Boston: Bedford, 8th ed. 2015). Similar to Chodorow, but more general, less research-oriented.

COURSE SCHEDULE

1. Sept. 28: Introductory meeting, getting acquainted; topics & working groups
Oct. 2, 6, 10 etc: URCA workshops (see [URCA website](#))
2. Oct. 5: Formulating research questions; bibliographic management with Zotero
Word processing workshop (bring your laptop).
3. Oct. 12: **Library session**, Database workshop.
Abstracts (ca. 150 words) with research questions and keyword lists due.
4. Oct. 19: *Annotated* bibliographies and draft URCA grant proposals due
Discussion of budgets, research trips, working with sources/in archives
5. Oct. 26: Research and reading break (no class--individual meetings)
Oct. 22 Email URCA proposal draft to professor by Sunday, 5pm.
6. Nov. 2: Working group meetings: Discussion of revised proposal drafts
Nov. 5 (Sunday midnight): **URCA proposal submission deadline.**
7. Nov. 9: Full **prospectus due** (includes title, abstract, description, outline, and bibliographies of primary and secondary sources).
Select one scholarly article to analyze as a model.
8. Nov. 16: Discuss prospectuses & sample scholarly articles
9. Nov. 23 (Thanksgiving): no class
10. Nov. 30: 10-15 pages due--outline, introduction, background material and review of literature exchange for peer review
11. Dec. 7: Polished draft of introduction due with full bibliography

Winter Quarter (tentative)

- January: research reports, outline/table of contents, sample source analysis
- February: rough draft with full bibliography, the full draft due
- March: editing and polishing, more peer feedback, posters, indexes, oral presentations

Spring Quarter (tentative)

- May (2nd half): URCA poster presentation; Department Senior Honors Colloquium