

HIST 400: Senior Thesis in History

Online: 3 credit hours

Fall 2020

Mary Baldwin University

Dr. Clayton McClure Brooks

About Your Professor: I received my Ph.D. in American History from the University of Virginia in 2006 and have been teaching at Mary Baldwin since 2012. In graduate school, my secondary field was West Africa 1400-1800. My primary field is the American South. I live in Staunton with my husband and three kids.

Contact: cbrooks@marybaldwin.edu or **540-449-8953**: Email is the best way to reach me. I frequently check my email, and respond as quickly as possible (and usually able to respond much quicker than phone messages). Please contact me with any concerns or questions. I believe communication is key to success in an online class and I very much want to hear from my students. Remember that even though this is an online class, do not forget to use your professor as a resource.

Office: ACA 402: I am available for office hours via Collaborate on **Tuesdays noon-2:00pm**. These are subject to change and I will send out an email announcement if it is necessary to change that week. If you need to meet and this time does not suit, just let me know and we can schedule a different time.

Goals and Objective: This course will examine the methods of historical analysis and students will learn how to apply them to a research problem. During this course, students will learn how to analyze the past from a historical perspective and to write about historical issues using evidence (both primary and secondary sources), logical analysis, clear prose, and proper documentation of sources. This course is the required capstone course in the history major and qualifies for Authentic Problem in the Major credit.

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will define a project for investigation an authentic problem based on a topic selected.
- Students will develop a basic knowledge of important theoretical concepts.
- Students will apply those theoretical concepts in the researching of primary sources.
- Students will become familiar with standard research resources and procedures in the study of History.
- Students will develop the ability to conduct research about that focused topic, including the ability to discover and identify key issues relating to the specific research project.
- Students will learn how to use secondary resources to interpret primary materials.
- Students will develop the ability to identify a focused topic for research.
- Students will write using clear, concrete, grammatical English.
- Students will understand the role of process and revision in creating a written, research-based argument.

Requirements: The student will write a 25-30 page research paper. Picking a subject early can make completion of the course on time much easier. **In order to remain a student in the class, she/he must submit their topic, thesis statement, and introductory paragraph within the first three weeks of the semester. Failure to do so will result in the student being dropped from the course.**

The paper must use correct footnote/endnote and bibliographic format. It must be typed in a 12 point font and doubled spaced. This is a writing and research intensive course that requires revision of written work. Jules R. Benjamin, [A Student's Guide to History](#) is an optional but useful guide with suggestions for conducting research, organizing ideas, and writing a research paper.

Once the student has an approved draft, she/he will discuss the paper and the research which went into it intelligently in the presence of members of two members of the history faculty.

This class “meets” electronically four times throughout the semester. **You must “attend” at least three out of four of the sessions.** If your schedule keeps you from attending, you must make other arrangements to receive the same material. Communication with the professor and self-motivation are the keys to success in this course. It is essential that regular contact take place between the student and the instructor. I would like students to email me at least once every two weeks to let me know the progress of your research. All email contact will be done using a Mary Baldwin email account or via Canvas.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0-59

ETs: Extensions (ETs) are available at the discretion of the professor, but the student **MUST** submit a first draft qualify.

Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty is an offense that will not be tolerated. All work for this course is done in accordance with the Mary Baldwin Honor Code. Academic dishonesty is an offense that will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, which is presenting the words or ideas of another person as one's own without giving credit to the original author, is a form a lying, cheating, and stealing. Do not be tempted to copy someone else’s work or paraphrase their ideas; it is wrong. All work for this course is done in accordance with the Mary Baldwin Honor Code.

Texts:

Jules R. Benjamin, *A Student’s Guide to History* ISBN: 0312446748 (Any addition published in the past 10 years)

Weekly Schedule

First week of class August 24-30	Participate in Introductory Discussion Board
Wednesday, September 2nd 7:00 P.M	Collaborate Meeting # 1
Monday, September 7th	Thesis statement and preliminary introduction paragraph due
Monday, September 14th 7:00 P.M.	Collaborate Meeting # 2
Monday, September 21st	Prospectus and bibliography due
Monday, September 28th 8:00 P.M.	Collaborate Meeting # 3
Monday, October 5th	Expanded introduction and annotated outline due
Monday, October 12th 7:00 P.M.	Collaborate Meeting # 4
Monday, October 26th	First draft due
Monday, November 23rd	Final draft due
Defense	Individually Scheduled