

HIST 299H UR Research: History and Your Project Spring 2023

Classroom Location: Douglass 302
Mondays & Wednesdays, 9:00-10:15 am
Prof. Pablo Sierra

Email: pablo.sierra@rochester.edu

Office Location: Rush Rhees 461
Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-4:00 pm

This seminar introduces students to grant-writing techniques, primary source identification and prospectus preparation in History. HIST 299H is mandatory for students interested in completing the History Honors program next year. (Please note: completing this course does not guarantee admission to Honors.) Students who are planning on developing an independent study or a self-initiated project separate from Honors are also welcome. Throughout the course, we will analyze select readings on questions of memory, power, archives and our motivations as writers. All specializations, time periods and historical research interests are welcome. *As a two-credit course, we will only meet the first eight weeks of the semester (January 11-March 1).*



The main reading room at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.

(Where you could be soon...)

Your course objective will be to produce a grant proposal and a prospectus for a larger research project of your choice. Whether you are interested in researching Soviet Gulags, the 1950s Chilean workers' movement, the struggle for women's suffrage in France, race relations in South African football or anything else, your prospectus will serve as a guiding document to future research. What has already been written about your topic? What kinds of sources have historians used to craft these narratives? How have certain methods, archives and voices shaped the particular topic you hope to investigate? And, most importantly, how will you advance the field?

This is a discussion-intensive course that will require considerable engagement with your peers' proposed projects and vantage points. You are expected to contribute productively to their research ideas. This is largely a course on constructive criticism. You will be required to reflect critically and adapt to the feedback that others will offer on your research abstract, grant proposal, and prospectus. Your participation in the course is worth a full 25% of your research grade for the semester. The remainder of your grade will be awarded to three prospectus submissions (see grading structure below).

The course is also meant to amplify your access to research funding and to a community of researchers and scholars in and outside of the University of Rochester. As a result, we will also prepare proposals for undergraduate conferences and the Discover Grant program. The former will allow you to meet students and faculty at neighboring institutions of higher education and to receive feedback and suggestions on the current state of your research. This year, the Discover Grant Program for Undergraduate Summer Research will award \$5,000 for individual research projects. Students in HIST 299H are uniquely positioned to compete for this funding given that this is a course on research practices and preparation. Whether or not your proposals are accepted, the practice of preparing materials for a wider readership is integral to our work as researchers and historians. If you are competing or thinking of applying for a different opportunity, please let me know as soon as possible so I can support your project or point you to other resources.

Required Books

Farge, Arlette. *The Allure of the Archives*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

- also available as e-book via UofR Library website

Maza, Sarah. *Thinking about History*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017.

Tortorici, Zeb. *Sins Against Nature: Sex and Archives in Colonial New Spain*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2018.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1995 (or 2015 edition).

- also available as e-book via UofR Library website

Kelly Book Fund

If you are an undergraduate student facing financial hardship in acquiring the books listed above, you may apply to the Kelly Book Fund. These funds are for undergraduate students in need to purchase books for their history courses; preference will be given to those majoring in history. Students may apply for these funds using this link:

<https://forms.gle/c2WArDa5g696oKeU6>

Grading Structure

- Prospectus first section (Introduction, Historiography sections), 25%
- Prospectus second section (Research Methods, Writing Plan sections) 25%
- Prospectus full submission (four elements above and full bibliography), 25%
- Participation and Attendance, 25%

Grading scale

A 100-93%	A- 92.9-90%	
B+ 89.9-87%	B 86.9-83%	B- 82.9-80%
C+ 79.9-77%	C 76.9-73%	C- 72.9-70%
D+ 69.9-67%	D 66.9-63%	D- 62.9-60%
E Below 60%		

A Note on Leading Discussion

Our discussions will mostly take place on Mondays. In this course, you and a partner will be assigned as discussion leaders once, although you will actively participate every session. Leading discussion is a crucial component of your participation grade for the course. To begin class, you will present a ten-minute summary for that day's assigned readings. At a minimum, you will establish the author's key arguments and methods. You must also situate the book or article in relation to the author's intellectual trajectory (current academic institution, previous studies, current or future projects, etc.).

After your 10-minute presentation, you and your partner will lead discussion. To do this, you must produce a list of 10 questions to stimulate class discussion. You are welcome to praise the author's methods, advance your own criticisms of the text, identify sections that could have been approached differently or that left you uncertain of the author's intent. Ultimately, however, your task is to encourage scholarly dialogue with your peers. (Week 8 will follow a different format.)

Course Policies

The College's credit hour policy on undergraduate courses is to award 2 credit hours for courses that require 340 minutes of average course work per week. Students enrolled in this course are expected to devote 265 minutes each week outside of class to identifying the main lines of argument in course readings, working alone or in groups, and to researching in depth their topics for their research projects.

The University of Rochester respects and welcomes students of all backgrounds and abilities. In the event you encounter any barrier(s) to full participation in this course due to the impact of disability, please contact the Office of Disability Resources. The access coordinators in the Office of Disability Resources can meet with you to discuss the barriers you are experiencing and explain the eligibility process for establishing academic accommodations. You can reach the Office of Disability Resources at: disability@rochester.edu; (585) 276-5075; Taylor Hall.

All assignments and activities associated with this course must be performed in accordance with the University of Rochester's Academic Honesty Policy. Cheating and plagiarism are serious offenses and will be treated as such. Anyone who engages in such activities will be turned over to the College Board on Academic Honesty for disciplinary action, as outlined here (<http://www.rochester.edu/College/honesty/>.) For a helpful discussion of plagiarism (including subtle instances), see the American Historical Association's 'Defining Plagiarism,' <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/teaching-resources-for-historians/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism>

Course Schedule

Module I

Week 1 – Welcome!

Wednesday, Jan. 11

- Introductions, syllabus, and motivations
- Why are you here at 9 am???

Week 2 – The Archive

Monday, Jan. 16 (No Class – MLK Day observed)

Wednesday, Jan. 18

- Farge, *The Allure of the Archives*, Traces by the Thousands-Notes, 1-124
 - o discussion led by Prof. Sierra, come with prepared w. notes (page numbers)
- 500-word statement on two possible research projects (establish a clear date range)
 - o what intrigues you about them? what is missing? what could be done?
 - o print two copies, bring to class

Week 3 - Paper, Power and Silences

Monday, Jan. 23

- Trouillot, *Silencing the Past*, Preface-Notes, xxi-186
 - o discussion led by Max C. and Amelia K.

Wednesday, Jan. 25

- Top 5 and the G.O.A.T.
 - o produce the list of the Top 5 most influential *scholarly articles* on your topic
 - o format in alphabetical order as a Chicago-style bibliography, full reference
 - o 250-word statement on the G.O.A.T., the most influential article of the list
 - how will your research engage or dialogue with this particular article?

Module II

Week 4 - Positioning Your Project, pt. I

Monday, Jan. 30

- Maza, *Thinking about History*, Intro-Ch. 3, 1-117
 - o discussion led by Clarice M. and Ronny F.

Wednesday, Feb. 1

- first half of prospectus: Introduction, Historiography sections due by 9 am (5 pages)
- print and bring hard copy to class

Week 5 – Positioning Your Project, pt. II

Monday, Feb. 6

- Maza, *Thinking about History*, Ch. 4-Conclusion, 118-238
 - o discussion led by Ronin R. and Georgia S.

Wednesday, Feb. 8

- print two hard copies of your Discover Grant draft due by 9 am
 - o 700-word research statement (what the project does and how it does it)
 - o 700-word personal statement (what motivates you, individual connection)

*** Meet with potential faculty advisors, schedule office hours visits *BEFORE* the end of Module II. This is especially important for students considering Honors applications.**

Module III

Week 6 – Violent States, Sexual Archives, pt. I

Monday, Feb. 13

- Tortorici, *Sins Against Nature*, A Note on Translation-Ch. 3
 - o discussion led by Kirsten B. and Isabella K.

Wednesday, Feb. 15

- second half of prospectus: Work Plan, Conclusion sections due by 9 am (5 pages)
- print and bring hard copy to class

Week 7 – Violent States, Sexual Archives, pt. II

Monday, Feb. 20

- Tortorici, *Sins Against Nature*, Ch. 4-Conclusion
 - o discussion led by Justin O. and _____

Wednesday, Feb. 22

- research opportunities and fellowships

Module IV

Week 8 – Voices of Present, Visions of the Past

Monday, Feb. 27

- select *three of the articles below* and prepare discussion notes for class:
 - o Sangster, “Telling Our Stories: Feminist Debates and the Use of Oral History”
 - o Beverly, “The Real Thing” (article on *testimonio* in Guatemala)
 - o Cahn, “Sports Talk: Oral History and its Uses, Problems and Possibilities for Sports History”
 - o Kushner, “Oral History at the Extremes of Human Experience: Holocaust Testimony in a Museum Setting”
 - o Mahajan, “Beyond the Archives: Doing Oral History in Contemporary India”
 - o Daniel James and Mirta Zaida Lobato, “Family Photos, Oral Narratives, and Identity Formation: The Ukrainians of Berisso”
- Discussion led by ALL students

Wednesday, Mar. 1

- final prospectus (10 pages) and full bibliography due by 9 am
- send to pablo.sierra@rochester.edu as Word doc or PDF (no Google docs!)

March-April

- contact research librarians, archivists, possible interviewees for permissions or availability during Spring, Summer, and Fall 2023. Be proactive!

Friday, Apr. 28

- mandatory attendance for Honors Colloquium and Banquet, details TBD

After HIST 299H ends...

Honors application due by March 15, 2023, send to thomas.fleischman@rochester.edu

- *1500-word research statement and work plan*
- *Preliminary bibliography (excluded from word count) with separate primary and secondary source listings*

**** Discover Grant applications open on January 15 and are due by March 31, 2023. Do not wait until the last second, submit early!***

- funding decisions announced April 18, 2023

**** Conduct your summer research! Ask questions, read books, immerse yourself in the project***

**** Honors Program in History begins Fall 2023 (HIST 389H) and continues in Spring 2024 (HIST 393H and HIST 399H)***