Barnard College History Department
Senior Thesis Seminar, 2022-2023
(HIST 3391- HIST 3392)

Instructional Staff for Traditional Track, 2022-2023

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Course Description

The Senior Research Seminar is the capstone experience for all History majors. The objective is for students to produce a senior thesis on a topic of their choice that is based on original research in primary sources. The final grade for the course—the one recorded in the transcript—is based on the following criteria and weighting:

1. Course performance, including meeting deadlines throughout the year (i.e., handing in specified assignments on the specified date), showing energy and ingenuity in research, contributing to the learning process in section, and serving as a peer editor [together, 40%];
2. The quality of the thesis itself, as determined by the adviser and a second reader [60%].

Each student will receive a separate grade for the senior thesis itself, which will not be recorded in the transcript. Exceptional theses will receive a grade of A with Distinction.
SCHEDULE OF CLASSES
FALL 2022

(All meetings are on Wed. 4:10-6 p.m. Advisers will go over their preferred format for group meetings and individual meetings before and during your Week 2 meeting.)

Week 1 (Sept. 7): GROUP MEETING of all graduating seniors in 302 Barnard Hall.

Students will fill out a form indicating their areas of interest and possible thesis topic(s). The faculty will divide the students into seminar groups of 6-8 students. We will introduce a couple key themes of the thesis seminar: how to choose and narrow your topic, how to manage your time, and how to take notes and cite sources. Your goal this week is to identify a likely thesis topic: if you are struggling with this, we recommend that you meet one-on-one with your adviser (at their office hours or by making an appointment) by the end of week 2.

Week 2 (Sept. 14): GROUP MEETING with adviser group in designated room for each section.

Reading for Week 2 (available as PDFs under “Files” on Courseworks). Your adviser will be in touch and let you know what specifically they would like you to read ahead of meeting.

Zachary Schrag, “Asking Questions,” from The Princeton Guide to Historical Research, 39-64
William Cronon, “Getting Ready To Do History,”

Digital copies of most of the completed theses of the past several years are available on the Barnard History Department website.

Advisers meet with their thesis groups to introduce themselves and the thesis process. Groups will discuss how to choose a good topic and the essential elements of a thesis. Your goal this week is to decide on a feasible topic and think about how to narrow it in a way that matches available sources.

Week 3 (Sept. 21): GROUP MEETING - LIBRARY RESEARCH TOOLS

Students meet as a group with the history librarian from the Barnard Library, Gina Levitan. She will discuss the bibliographies and reference works available to students and give a brief demonstration of the use of digital media in research, and she will be available for questions and personal consultations after this meeting. Your goal this week is to search the library catalog, the physical stacks, online databases, and the catalogs of accessible archives or special collections for potential sources.

Week 4 (Sept. 28): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Students meet individually with their advisers to discuss their topics. Please bring to this meeting the first draft of your Thesis Proposal, which should consist of a short statement of
their topic, along with a preliminary bibliography. **Your goal this week is to continue searching for and compiling your sources, prioritizing sources for your first chapter.**

Week 5 (Oct. 5): GROUP MEETING

***SUBMISSION OF THESIS PROPOSAL AND WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY***

Students present to their group a one-to-two page statement of their thesis topic and a working annotated bibliography of primary and secondary sources. The bibliography should be divided into two sections: primary sources and secondary sources (i.e., scholarly articles and books.) The working bibliography is a crucial aspect of the thesis process, so please pay particular attention to this part of the assignment. **Your goal this week is to submit a polished and detailed proposal.**

Week 6 (Oct. 12): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Students work with their advisers, who will give feedback on their thesis proposals and bibliographies. **Your goal this week is to begin reading your available sources and taking notes so you can soon start writing your first chapter.**

Week 7 (Oct. 19): GROUP MEETING – PRESENTATION OF OUTLINES

Students present to the group tentative maps of the organization of their theses: rough number of chapters; sequence of topics, breakdown of work needed to finish, etc. We will also discuss time management and strategies for overcoming the terror of the blank page and getting started. **Your goal this week is to outline your first chapter and start writing.**

Week 8 (Oct. 26): NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING CHAPTER 1 DRAFT

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to start writing together. **Your goal this week is to continue writing your first chapter.**

Week 9 (Nov. 2): GROUP MEETING – SHARING CHAPTER 1 ROUGH DRAFTS

Students will bring a rough draft of their first chapter, consisting of at least five complete pages, to share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. **Your goal this week is to incorporate feedback from your peers and adviser and continue writing your first chapter.**

Week 10 (Nov. 9) NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING CHAPTER 1 DRAFT

*** SUBMISSION OF FIRST CHAPTER DRAFT ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11***

**Your goal this week is to finish a complete draft (between 10-20 pp long) of your first chapter.**
Week 11 (Nov. 16): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – DISCUSSION OF DRAFT

Adviser returns the first chapter draft with feedback. Students will meet with advisers individually to discuss their drafts. **Your goal this week is to revise your first chapter by incorporating your adviser’s feedback.**

Week 12 (Nov. 23): NO MEETING (day before Thanksgiving)

**Your goal this week is to eat.**

Week 13 (Nov. 30): GROUP MEETING – REFLECTIONS, SECOND CHAPTER PLANNING

Students will meet and discuss their plans for second and third chapters, specifically talking about how to write helpful outlines to structure your research and writing. We will also talk about how to write a good “mini-draft,” a one-page-minimum fragment of your second chapter so that when you return in January you will already have meaningfully started writing. **Your goal this week is to start writing your second chapter outline and mini-draft.**

Week 14 (Dec. 7) GROUP MEETING – OUTLINES AND HALFWAY CELEBRATION

***SUBMISSION OF SECOND CHAPTER OUTLINE AND MINI-DRAFT***

Students meet as a group in their normal rooms to share their second chapter outlines and mini-drafts. At 5 PM, thesis students will convene at Barnard Hall 302 for refreshments and a brief moment of celebration for their hard work to reach the halfway point. **Your goal this week is to finish your second chapter outline and mini-draft and celebrate your progress.**

**** WINTER BREAK ****

Winter Break Takeaway: Please keep in mind that the second chapter is due three weeks into the second semester, and the completed first draft of the thesis is due the second week in March. Also, if you haven’t fully revised Chapter 1 yet, it’d be wise to do so during break.

SPRING 2023

Week 1 (Jan. 18): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS

Students meet with their advisers to discuss their outlines and mini-drafts and their plans for writing the next chapter(s). **Your goal this week is to resume writing your second chapter.**

Week 2 (Jan. 25): GROUP MEETING – SHARING CHAPTER 2 ROUGH DRAFTS
Students will bring a rough draft of their chapter, consisting of at least five complete pages, to share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. Your goal this week is to incorporate feedback from your peers and adviser and continue writing your chapter.

Week 3 (Feb. 1): NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING SECOND CHAPTER

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to start writing together. Your goal this week is to continue writing your second chapter.

Week 4 (Feb. 8): GROUP MEETING

**SUBMISSION OF SECOND CHAPTER DRAFT AT START OF CLASS**

Students submit a complete draft of their chapter and share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. Your goal this week is to finish a complete draft (between 10-20 pp long) of your second chapter.

Week 5 (Feb. 15): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – DISCUSSION OF DRAFT

Adviser returns the second chapter draft with feedback. Students will meet with advisers individually to discuss their drafts. Your goal this week is to revise your second chapter by incorporating your adviser’s feedback.

Week 6 (Feb. 22): NO MEETING – FOCUS ON WRITING THIRD CHAPTER

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to write together. Your goal this week is to start writing your third chapter.

Week 7 (Mar. 1): NO MEETING – INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS AT ADVISER’S DISCRETION

We encourage you to meet with fellow students in your section (or with friends from other sections) to write together. Your goal this week is to continue writing your third chapter.

Week 8 (Mar. 8): GROUP MEETING

**SUBMISSION OF FULL DRAFT BODY OF THESIS AT START OF CLASS**

Students submit a full draft of the thesis body (all three chapters, no introduction or conclusion), and share their body drafts with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback (of however much they can read in class time). Your goal this week is to finish your third chapter along with any necessary revisions to your other two chapters.

Week 9 (Mar. 15): ***SPRING BREAK***

Your goal this week is to relax and recharge.
Week 10 (Mar. 22): INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS – DISCUSSION OF BODY DRAFT

Adviser returns the full thesis body draft with feedback and meets with students individually to discuss their work. Advisers work with students on plans for writing the Introduction and Conclusion of the thesis. Your goal this week is to revise your body draft by incorporating your adviser’s feedback, then start writing your Introduction.

Week 11 (Mar. 29): GROUP MEETING – SUBMITTING INTRO ROUGH DRAFTS.

Students will bring a rough draft of their Introductions, consisting of at least five complete pages, to share with their fellow thesis writers for comments and feedback. Your goal this week is to continue writing your Introduction and then start your Conclusion.

Week 12 (Apr. 5): GROUP MEETING – PRESENTATIONS

Students will each make 10 minute presentations to the group summarizing their thesis. We’ll also discuss the final submission strategy and logistics, including how to pick a title, how to make your Introduction gripping and your Conclusion satisfying, how to format your bibliography, etc. Your goal this week is to finish your Introduction and Conclusion, then tend to the final details: proofreading, bibliography, title, etc.

Week 13 (Apr. 12): NO MEETING – **SENIOR THESIS DUE**

Students submit one electronic copy and two print copies of their thesis to their adviser. Your goal this week is to finish your thesis.

Week 14 (Apr. 19): NO MEETING – REST AND RELAXATION

Your goal this week is to return your books to the library.

Week 15 (Apr. 26): SENIOR THESIS PARTY – LOCATION TBA

All advisers and students will come together for food, drink, and congratulations. Your goal this week is to celebrate your accomplishment.
APPENDIX A: Grading Rubric for Senior Theses. The following factors will all be considered in evaluating your thesis.

1. **Topic**: A good topic should pose an interesting question that can be answered by available evidence. How well does the thesis do this?

2. **Title**: A good title is difficult to create. It should excite the reader's interest, while reducing the thesis's core idea to a few words.

3. **Statement of Argument / Introduction**: The introduction should draw the reader into the topic and make clear where the writer is going. The writer should pose an answerable question and articulate the argument she will construct to answer that question. Does the author accomplish these goals?

4. **Discussion of the relevant scholarly literature / historiography**: A good essay is part of a larger conversation among scholars. How well does the author define the scholarly discussion to which she wishes to contribute? Does she make clear what others have said on the subject, what her own position is, and what she is adding to the debate?

5. **Primary Sources**: Perhaps the main requirement of the senior thesis is that it convey a coherent argument that is centered on and driven by original research in primary sources. How well does the thesis satisfy this requirement?

6. **Broader Context**: To be successful an essay must provide sufficient context to make clear how the particular issues being explored relate to larger social, cultural, economic, political, or intellectual themes. Authors generally rely on secondary sources to establish this context. How rich is the secondary literature that the author has explored? Has the author provided adequate context? Has she struck the right balance between analysis and context?

7. **Analysis of Evidence**: On what kinds of evidence does the author rely? Is the evidence used sufficient to satisfy the author's goals? Has the author constructed a convincing argument based on that evidence?

8. **Organization**: The longer a piece of writing, the more critical the organization. How well organized is this thesis? Do the chapter divisions make sense in terms of the overall argument? Are their smooth transitions between sections?

9. **Details**: Is the note form (either footnotes or endnotes may be used) proper and consistent? Does the author effectively use notes to convey useful information tangential to the main argument? Are quotations over 35 words indented?

APPENDIX B: ANNOTATION

WHEN TO USE NOTES:
Direct quotations from both primary and secondary sources must be identified and credited in a note. (Direct quotations from secondary sources should be used very sparingly. Rather than quote directly from secondary texts, it works better in almost every case to frame the point you are taking from a secondary author in your own (concise) words and then to note the source(s) of your
paraphrase, giving the author, work, and page you are drawing from in the note, just as you would with a direct quotation.)

You must provide notes for ideas and interpretations that you have discovered in reading your sources, as well as for direct quotations and quantitative data. You should not, however, provide sources for facts that are widely known. If you wish to quote a primary source that you have found in a secondary work, you should give credit to the author of the secondary work. [Example: Charles H. Cooley, "Reflections upon the Sociology of Herbert Spencer," *American Journal of Sociology* 26 (1920): 129, as quoted in Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought* [1944] (New York: Beacon Press, 1955), 33.]

WHERE TO PLACE THE NUMBER OF A NOTE:
Place note numbers at the end of the sentence in which cited material appears. The number should appear slightly above the line in the text and should not be enclosed in parentheses. If your note contains more than one source, list them in the order in which they are cited in the text.

WHETHER TO PLACE NOTES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE PAGE OR AT THE END OF THE THESIS:
You should print your notes in single-spaced form at the bottom of each page.

PROPER FORMAT FOR NOTE REFERENCES:

The first time you use any source, cite it in full. You need to use a full citation only the first time you cite any work. Every time thereafter, you should use the abbreviated short title form (see the section under this heading below).

FULL BIBLIOGRAPHIC BOOK CITATION

Author's full name (first name, initial, last name)
Complete title of the book (either underlined or in italics—whichever you choose, be consistent)
Editor, compiler, or translator, if any
Name of series in which book appears, if any, and volume or number in the series Edition, if other than the first
Number of volumes
Facts of publication -- city where published, publisher, date of publication Page number(s) of the particular citation'

EXAMPLES OF FULL CITATIONS FOR BOOKS:

Author: The first time an author's name appears it should be written in full. For footnotes, place the first name first and the last name last. (Only in the Bibliography should you place the last name first.)

If a work has more than three authors, use the first author's name and follow it with "et al."

All book titles must *either* italicized or underlined (choose one or the other and then be consistent throughout).

NB: There must be a comma after the author's name, a comma between the place and date of publication, a comma after the parenthesis containing the publication place and date (but no comma before this or any other parenthesis), and a period at the conclusion of every note.

Editors and Translators: The names of editors and translators appear after the title, unless that person had primary responsibility for preparing the book for publication:


Edition: References should generally be to a hardbound edition. If an edition other than the first is used, the number should be given:


Reprint: If you are using a book that has been reprinted, include the original date of publication, as well as the date of reprinting:


Multivolume Works: Works of more than one volume should be identified in notes by the number of volumes in the work and the number of the volume from which a quote has been taken. Some multivolume works have a general title and individual titles for each volume; in that case list the general title and then the particular title to which the note refers. Notes for books that are part of a series should list the title of the book in italics, followed by the title of the series in roman letters:


FULL CITATION FORM FOR ALL ARTICLES:

(To be used only the first time a work is cited. Every time thereafter, use the Short Title citation form as outlined below:

Author's Full Name (first name, initial, last name) Title of the Article (in quotation marks) Name of the periodical (either underlined or in italics) Number of the volume or issue Date of the volume or of the issue (year in parenthesis) Page number(s) of the particular citation

EXAMPLES OF FULL CITATIONS FOR ARTICLES

Article in a Scholarly Journal:


NB: First name first; comma after the author's name; comma after the title of the article (should be placed inside the quotation marks); the name of the periodical must be placed either in Italic or underlined (choose one but be consistent); comma after the name of the periodical; comma (or semicolon) after the date of the periodical in parenthesis; period at the conclusion of the footnote.

Chapter in a Book:


Article in a Magazine:


Citing a Newspaper:


Citing a Government Publication:


Citing a Court Case:

(Complex citation. Please follow carefully the form you have found in the secondary works you have consulted.)

Citing a Book Review:


Citing a Well-Known Reference Book:

Citing Dissertations:


Unpublished Papers:


FULL CITATION FOR UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPTS:

Title of document, if any, and date Folio number (or box number) Name of collection Depository and city where it is located EXAMPLES:

17. Lawrence E. Skelly to Joseph L. Hetzel, 6 March 1947, American Civil Liberties Union Papers, Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, Princeton, N.J.


*SHORT TITLE CITATIONS*:

After the first reference to a particular source of whatever kind, all subsequent references should be shortened.

The shortened reference to a book should include only: Last name of the author Shortened title of the book (underlined or in italics) Page number of the reference.

Example:

For the first citation of any book use the Book, Full Title:

For all succeeding citations use the Book, Short Title:

Example 2:
Book, Full Title:

Book, Short Title:
Rhode, ed., *Theoretical Perspectives*, 257-60.

**SHORT TITLE CITATIONS FOR ALL ARTICLES:**

The shortened reference to an article should include only: Last name of the author, Short title of the article, Page numbers of the reference.

Example:
Article, Full Title Citation:

Article, Short Title Citation:

A shortened reference to a manuscript source should include only the title and name of the collection.

APPENDIX D: BIBLIOGRAPHY FORM: At the end of your thesis you should provide a list of all the books and other references you have used. You may find it convenient to divide your bibliography into categories, such as Manuscripts, Interviews, Books, and Articles. Within each category works should be arranged alphabetically, by the author's last name.

SOME TYPICAL BIBLIOGRAPHICAL ENTRIES: The basic information given in a bibliographic entry parallels that given in a footnote, but note the differences in format. Note, for instance, that lines after the first are indented.

Books by a Single Author:

Books by Two or More Authors (Note that each name appears in inverse order, and that semi-colon is used with three or more names):

More than One Work by the Same Author:


Editor or Translator Named in Addition to Author:
Multivolume Work:

Association/Institution as "Author":

Edition other than the First:

When Paperback Reprint Is Used:

Volume in a Series:

BIBLIOGRAPHY FORMAT FOR ALL ARTICLES:

Article in a Scholarly Journal:

Article in a Popular Magazine:

Manuscript Material:

Unpublished Paper:

Interviews: