

**University of Detroit Mercy**  
**Term I 2003**

# Historical Methods

**Course Number:** HIS 291-01  
**Credit Hours:** 3  
**Meeting Place:** Briggs 16  
**Meeting Time:** 2:30-5:00 p.m. M

**Instructor:** Roy E. Finkenbine  
**Office:** Briggs 322  
**Office Hours:** 5:15-6:30 p.m. M  
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This course is an introduction to historical research and writing, the location and use of primary sources, the skills of historical analysis, and questions of style.

We will use lectures, discussions, in-class exercises, a visit to the university library, guest speakers, and several writing exercises to explore this subject and to improve your skills as an historian.

This course is required of all History majors who entered UDM under the 2001-2003 *Undergraduate Catalog* or subsequent catalogues.

**Required Texts:** You are required to purchase the following books, which are available at the University Bookstore:

Constance Schultz, Page Putnam Miller, Aaron Marrs, and Kevin Allen, *Careers for Students of History* (American Historical Association, 2002).

Paul A. Cimbala and Robert F. Himmelberg, eds., *Historians & Race: Autobiography and the Writing of History* (Indiana University Press, 1996).

Michael Wayne, *Death of an Overseer: Reopening a Murder Investigation from the Plantation South* (Oxford University Press, 2001).

William Kelleher Storey, *Writing History: A Guide for Students*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford University Press, 2004).

Handouts and brief photocopied selections will also be distributed at various points during the course. These are also considered required reading.

It is expected that readings will be completed prior to the class meeting for which they assigned.

**Evaluation:** You will be evaluated on the basis of two essays (40% -- 20% each), a research paper (40%), and class participation (20%). The instructor reserves the right to exercise some discretion in assigning final grades

Each of the essays are to be five or more pages in length. These will be based, respectively, on questions I will pose about your reading of *Historians & Race* and *Death of an Overseer*. Each is to be typed, double spaced, and in Times New Roman font and 12-point type. Essays handed in late will be penalized a minimum of one letter grade.

The research paper is to be ten or more pages in length. It will allow you to apply the information you learn in *Writing History*. Research papers are to be typed, double-spaced, in Times New Roman font and 12-point type, and documented with endnotes and bibliography. Research papers handed in late will be penalized a minimum of one letter grade. Failure to hand in the proposal and annotated bibliography, sample research notes, outline, or introductory paragraph(s) by the due dates listed in the course schedule will lead to a substantial reduction of the final grade on the research paper.

Separate handouts will explain each of the above assignments in more detail.

Your class participation grade will be based on your contribution to class discussion, your preparedness for each class, your involvement in in-class exercises, and the regularity of your attendance. The reference room “scavenger hunt” and any in-class writing assignments will be factored into your participation grade.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance in this course is both expected and required. The instructor will formally take roll at the beginning of each class during the first few weeks in order to learn your names and faces. But attendance will continue to be recorded throughout the course. It is your responsibility to notify the instructor and provide documentation of any medical, funeral, legal, athletic, or other excused absences. You are allowed one unexcused absence. Additional unexcused absences will negatively affect your class participation grade.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Cheating in any form (including *plagiarism*) is not permitted and may result in failure in the course. It may also be grounds for further university disciplinary action. Plagiarism consists of “submitting the words or style of another author or source without acknowledgment or formal documentation. Plagiarism occurs when specific phrases or entire passages, whether a sentence, paragraph, or longer excerpt, are incorporated into one’s own writing without quotation marks or documentation. One also plagiarizes by paraphrasing the work of another, that is retaining another writer’s ideas and structure, without documentation.” (UDM Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty.)

**Academic Support Services:** Those of you with learning difficulties, especially those with previously identified disabilities which might require accommodations, are urged to identify yourselves to the instructor as soon as possible. A variety of academic support services are available to you free of charge. This includes the writing center in Briggs 245 and tutorial assistance at the learning center in the basement of the Student Center.

**Calendar:** Every effort will be made to adhere to the following schedule:

Sept. 8 Introduction to the Course  
What is History?

**UNIT ONE: THE HISTORIAN**

Sept. 15 Career Options in History  
William McElhone, Birmingham Historical Museum  
Bronwyn Reid, historic preservationist (Holly, MI)  
Matthew Daley, UDM University Archives  
Read *Careers for Students of History* (entire)

Sept. 22 What Does the Historian Bring to His/Her Work?  
Discuss *Historians & Race*, 1-66

Sept. 29 Discuss *Historians & Race*, 66-146  
**First Essay Due**

**UNIT TWO: HISTORICAL EVIDENCE**

Oct. 6 Visit to UDM Library Reference Room (Cindy Gillham, Reference Librarian)  
*Meet at McNichols Library Reference Desk promptly at 2:30 p.m.*  
Reference Room "Scavenger Hunt"

Oct. 13 Primary and Secondary Sources

Oct. 20 Historical Sources on the Internet  
Discuss *Death of an Overseer*, 3-111

Oct. 27 Discuss *Death of an Overseer*, 113-194  
**Second Essay Due**

**UNIT THREE: WRITING HISTORY**

Nov. 3 Varieties of History: Dr. Sarah Stever  
Beginning the Research Project  
Discuss *Writing History*, 1-16

Nov. 10 Varieties of History: Dr. Diane Robinson-Dunn  
Doing Research  
Discuss *Writing History*, 17-23  
**Proposal and Annotated Bibliography Due**

Nov. 17 Varieties of History: Dr. Edwin DeWindt  
Crafting an Argument  
Discuss *Writing History*, 25-35, 45-79  
**Sample Research Notes Due**

- Nov. 24      Varieties of History: Dr. Gregory Sumner  
Writing Style  
Discuss *Writing History*, 81-105  
**Outline Due**
- Dec. 1        Varieties of History: Professor Devissi Muhammad  
Documentation and Revision  
Discuss *Writing History*, 36-43, 107-111  
**Introductory Paragraph(s) Due**
- Dec. 8        Wrap-Up and Evaluation  
**Research Paper Due**

This syllabus is provided as a general guideline. The instructor reserves the right to make necessary adjustments for the orderly progress of the course.