

HIST 510:500

Historian's Craft I

Fall 2017
W, 9:50-12:50 pm
011 Van Dyck Hall

Walter C. Rucker

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OVERVIEW:

This two-semester course for all first-year Ph.D. students in History is an introduction to the professional study of history, the diverse research methods and methodological approaches of current historiography, and the place of historical scholarship in both academic and nonacademic realms. The principal objectives of this seminar will be to engage first-year graduate students in discussions about the historical profession, historiography, historical research, and applications of historical knowledge. Moreover, through a series of readings, directed discussions, short written responses, and presentations from graduate students and departmental faculty, students will be introduced to both the structure of the history Ph.D. program at Rutgers and to larger issues and debates concerning the historical profession—the continued relevance of the humanities in the twenty-first century; concerns about the history job market; the process of historical writing, research, and publishing; and the place of history within a broader constellation of ideas and knowledge production.

REQUIRED WORK:

As a year-long, introductory course, the class will meet about once every two weeks. Though the course normally meets bi-weekly, the schedule will fluctuate due to the frequency of faculty meetings, department job talks, prospective graduate student recruitment, professional development workshops, and related activities.

For most class sessions, students will have a range of common readings around which class discussion will be centered. Each week we have common readings, short, one-page critical response papers will be due. In addition to critical responses, three to four students will be teamed up to facilitate or lead one class discussion each. As a major component of the course, each student will create a major field reading list draft consisting of 100 core texts. The lists should include works that have been read in previous course work, that have been assigned by instructors in Fall 2017 courses, and that will be read by Fall 2018. Each list should be created in consultation with exam conveners for the 2017-18 academic year.

It should go without saying that attendance is mandatory in any graduate seminar. All students are expected to attend and actively participate during each session. Unless otherwise excused, each absence will reduce the final course grade by half a letter (from an A to a B+ or a B+ to a B). Please note that incompletes will not be granted for this course.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Each student is required to purchase or borrow three books:

Novick, Peter. *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*. New York: Cambridge UP, 1988.

Scott, Joan W. *Gender and the Politics of History*. New York: Columbia UP, 1999.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History*. New York: Beacon Press, 1997.

In addition to the required books, a few short essays, articles, book chapters, and web links will be posted on the course Sakai site.

ESSENTIAL RESOURCES:

Bloch, Marc. *The Historian's Craft: Reflections on the Nature and Uses of History and the Techniques and Methods of Those Who Write It*. New York: Vintage Books, 1953.

Germano, William P. *Getting It Published: A Guide for Scholars and Anyone Else Serious about Serious Books*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

_____. *From Dissertation to Book*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Kelsky, Karen. *The Professor Is in: The Essential Guide to Turning Your Ph.D. into a Job*. New York: Three Rivers Press, 2015.

THE HISTORIAN'S "TOOLS":

American Historical Association

<http://www.historians.org/>

The Chronicle of Higher Education [Free Access to the Rutgers Subscription Version]

<https://login.proxy.libraries.rutgers.edu/login?url=http://chronicle.com/section/Home/5/?eio=34361>

The Professor Is In: Getting You through Graduate School

<http://theprofessorisin.com/>

H-Net

<http://www.h-net.org/lists/>

The Academic Jobs Wiki

<http://academicjobs.wikia.com/wiki/AcademicJobSearch>

WorldCat

<http://www.worldcat.org/>

Interfolio

<https://www.interfolio.com/>

Academia.edu

<https://www.academia.edu/>

LinkedIn

<https://www.linkedin.com/>

GRADING:

Discussion:	25%	Analytical Reading Responses:	25%
Group Discussion Lead:	25%	Major Field Reading List:	25%

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS:

September 27: Introduction to the Course, the Graduate Program, and the History Department

October 4: Objectivity Enthroned, Besieged, & Dethroned: **Novick, *That Noble Dream***
(Introduction, Ch. 1-3, 7-8, 11, 13-14)
Topics: The Historical Profession and Academic Professionalization
Due: Analytical Reading Response

October 18: History, the Archive, & Memory: **Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past***
Topics: Historical Research and the Publication Process
Due: Analytical Reading Response

November 1: Gender and Historical Thinking: **Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History***
Due: Analytical Reading Response

November 15: Methodology & Theory: Oral History, Interviews, and Folklore
Readings: Stuckey, "Through the Prism of Folklore" [Sakai]; Spindel, "Assessing Memory: Twentieth-Century Slave Narratives Reconsidered" [Sakai]; Scott, "Behind the Official Story" & "Domination, Acting, and Fantasy" [Sakai]
Due: Analytical Reading Response

November 29: Methodology & Theory: Ethnography, Deep Play, and Thick Description
Readings: Darnton, "Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue Saint Severin," 75-104 [Sakai]; Geertz, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight" & "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" [Sakai]
Due: Analytical Reading Response

December 6: Open Session: Reflections & Planning for Spring 2018
Due: Major Field Reading List Draft