History 600. European historiography from Antiquity to the Enlightenment
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Fall Semester 2002
Wed. 9–12, Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies, 650 E. Pleasant St. (the first meeting will begin in Herter 624)

Prof. Brian W. Ogilvie
Office: Herter 624, (413) 545-1599
Home: (802) 388-9676 Thursday – Monday;
(413) 253-7593 Tuesday and Wednesday (before 10 PM please)
Cell phone: (802) 236-2333 (try the others first)
E-mail: ogilvie@history.umass.edu
Website: <http://www-unix.oit.umass.edu/~ogilvie/600/index.html>

Brief description of course
Examination of the method, style, and purpose of history from antiquity (Greek and Hebrew historiography) through the eighteenth century. We will read excerpts from past historians and recent studies on the nature of historiography. As an introduction to graduate study in history, this course will also address historical method, writing, and the profession of history at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Some questions that will motivate our discussions include:

• Is history a unitary discipline? Do specific traits separate it from other ways of looking at the past? Are these traits methodological, metaphysical, or both?
• How have the subject matter and style of history changed within the Western tradition?
• Did history undergo a radical transformation in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries? If so, what changed and why?
• What have different cultural traditions contributed to Western approaches to understanding and explaining the past?
• What can historians in the twenty-first century learn from the history of their discipline?


Course goals
At the end of this course, you should be better able to:

• Understand the development of the Western historical tradition from antiquity to the Enlightenment and speak knowledgeably about it.
• Understand how modern historians address the history of their field.
• Relate these developments to your own historical interests and writing.
• Reflect critically on the adequacy of historians’ explanations, both your own and those of others.
• Write clear, coherent, and cogent short essays and book reviews on historical subjects.
Course structure
This course is a seminar. For the first nine weeks, we will meet each week for 2 to 3 hours, with a brief pause about halfway through. Except for the first week, these meetings will be conducted as tutorials: discussion will start from the brief essays that each student will write on the week’s readings. We will then break for two weeks for you to work individually on your final papers for the seminar. We will reconvene for two weeks to discuss drafts of your paper, and then gather in the last week of classes for a concluding general discussion.

The seminar format places much of the burden of learning on you and your fellow students. Not preparing for discussions will harm them as well as you. A good graduate course teacher does not tell students what to do or think; he or she guides them in the process of education. Much of my work consists in preparing this syllabus carefully and in identifying issues for discussion.

Discussion serves several purposes. First, it helps clarify difficult or obscure points in the readings. Second, it helps you decide between conflicting positions or to reach a synthesis. Third, it allows me to observe how you approach readings and problems. Fourth, it prepares you for thinking on your feet—an important part of academic life as well as life outside the academy.

Requirements and grading
Your grade for this course will be based on the following three requirements:

1. Attendance and participation in discussion
For the reasons mentioned above, attendance and participation are crucial for this course. Therefore, I have instituted a draconian policy: you are allowed one absence. If you miss class more than once, your maximum course grade will be “C” (which, in graduate school, is tantamount to “F”). This policy reflects the importance I attach to discussion. Exceptions will be made only due to illness or extraordinary personal circumstances.

2. Brief essays
Each week from Sept. 11 through Nov. 6 you will be responsible for writing a two-page essay on the week’s readings. Essay topics will be assigned for the first few weeks; after that, you will choose them yourself.

3. Five-to-eight-page paper
A 5-8 page paper will be due October 16 at 5 PM. Details are given below on the syllabus.

4. Twelve-to-fifteen-page paper
A 12-15 page paper will be due December 18 at 5 PM. You will have several weeks to work on the paper, and we will discuss drafts in the seminar. Details are given below on the syllabus.

The final course grade will be balanced among these three elements, with the most weighting going to the short papers. A rough breakdown is as follows:
- Brief essays and participation in discussion—50%
- 5-8 page paper—20%
- 12-15 page paper—30%
If necessary, however, I will re-weight the elements of the course to your advantage. Grades in graduate courses reflect my professional assessment of your achievements and potential as an
apprentice historian. Here is a rough key to their interpretation:

A........good to excellent
AB.......acceptable to good
B........marginal to acceptable
BC.......unacceptable to marginal
C........unacceptable

In addition to the grade, you will receive written comments at the end of the semester reflecting my assessment.

Books for course

The following books are available at Atticus Books (8 Main Street, Amherst, tel. 256-1547). They are listed in the order we will use them. The books are not on reserve, because I don’t expect more than a few students in the course this year. If you do not want to buy a book, you should check it out from UMass or from one of the four colleges; most of the books are available in at least two of the four colleges.


A note on readings

The following course schedule lists required and suggested reading for each week. The bibliographies and notes in required and suggested readings will suggest any number of further sources, primary and secondary, that you can pursue.
Course schedule with readings and assignments

Books available at the bookstore are indicated by author and short title; full citations are provided for other readings.

Sept. 4: Introduction

Introduction to the course and syllabus; brief tour of library resources for this course.

N.B. Today we will begin in Herter 624 (my office). Starting next week we will meet at the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies (directions are at the end of the syllabus).

Sept. 11: Overview

Required reading:
Kelley, Faces of history. Read the entire book quickly; pay close attention to the introduction.
Booth et al., The craft of research. Skim the entire book.
Turabian, A manual for writers of term papers, theses, and dissertations. Familiarize yourself with the contents of this manual.

Suggested reading:
Williams, Style: Toward clarity and grace. Begin reading through Williams’s book and doing the exercises he suggests.

Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) on the following subject: Compare Hayden White’s categories for analyzing historical texts with Donald Kelley’s categories. How are they similar, and how do they differ?

N.B. Starting this week we will meet at the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies (directions are at the end of the syllabus).

Sept. 18: Classical historiography

Required reading:
Momigliano, Classical foundations.
Kelley, Versions of history, 1-116.

Suggested reading:
Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) on the following subject: Finley claims that Greek historiography flourished in the fifth century but after that, Greeks quickly lost interest in history. Momigliano, on the other hand, asserts that the Greeks continued to practice historiography. Which argument do you find more persuasive, and why? What evidence would you use to decide between the claims?

Sept. 25: Hebrew historiography

Required reading:

Suggested reading:

Essay:
Find two reviews of *The creation of history in ancient Israel* in scholarly periodicals. Choose one critical remark by a reviewer. Write a two-page (500-600 word) essay analyzing the premises (stated or tacit) to the criticism.

Oct. 2: Medieval historiography

Required reading:
Spiegel, *The past as text.*

Suggested reading:

Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) on some aspect of this week’s readings. Be prepared to explain why you chose your subject.

Oct. 9: Renaissance historiography

Required reading:
Levine, *Humanism and history.*

Suggested reading:


Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) on some aspect of this week’s readings. Be prepared to explain why you chose your subject.

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**Oct. 16: NO CLASS (Monday schedule in effect)**

*** FIVE-TO-EIGHT-PAGE PAPER DUE AT 5 PM IN HERTER 624 ***

For this paper, choose one of the books (secondary sources) that you have read for this course (either required or recommended reading). Find a reasonably long review of the book in a scholarly journal. In approximately 5-8 pages (1500-2400 words), write a review of the review. Assess the review’s audience, the reviewer’s position and qualifications, how accurately the book is summarized, and how fair the critique of the book is. If the review is mostly positive, do you think the book warrants such praise? If mostly negative, does it deserve the criticism leveled at it? How does the reviewer assess the book’s contribution to the literature? Your paper should not simply be a list of answers to these questions; it should be a coherent whole. This paper will develop your ability to read critically and evaluate others’ judgments of a work that you have read.

As you are writing the paper, consider how to apply the concepts in *The craft of research* to your analysis: audience (part 1); topics, questions, problems, and sources (part 2); claims, evidence, warrants, and qualifications (part 3); and organization and style (part 4). These concepts should give you a set of tools for analyzing the book and review that you choose; you should also use those tools in writing your paper.

Please attach a copy of the review to your paper.

Your paper should follow the format specified by Turabian (a separate title page is not necessary). Papers that do not follow this format will not be accepted.

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**Oct. 23: The footnote and modern historical method**

**Required reading:**

Grafton, *The footnote*.


Suggested reading:

Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) on some aspect of this week’s readings. Be prepared to explain why you chose your subject.

Oct. 30: Enlightenment narratives

Required reading:
Pocock, *Barbarism and religion*, vol. 2.
Kelley, *Versions*, 439-496.

Suggested reading:

Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) on some aspect of this week’s readings. Be prepared to explain why you chose your subject.

Nov. 6: Modern historiography and its past

Required reading:
Kelley, *Versions*, 497-504.

Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) on the ethical claims of the European historiographical tradition from antiquity to the Enlightenment. Are these claims echoed in the contemporary (late 20th- and early 21st-century) historiography with which you are familiar? If so, how? If not, why not?

Nov. 13: NO CLASS

Work on your final papers. I will be in my office for consultations during the scheduled seminar hours.
Nov. 20: NO CLASS

Work on your final papers. I will be in my office for consultations during the scheduled seminar hours.

Nov. 27: Discussion of drafts (if necessary)

If necessary, today will be devoted to discussing drafts of your final papers. We will schedule one hour for each draft, so if there are three or fewer students in the seminar, today will be a work day for your final papers.

Dec. 4: Discussion of drafts

Today will be devoted to discussing drafts of your final papers. We will schedule one hour for each draft.

Dec. 11: Concluding discussion

No required reading.

Essay:
Write two pages (500-600 words) about the most significant thing or things you learned in this course and the most pressing question it has left unresolved.

Dec. 18: FINAL PAPER DUE AT 5 PM IN HERTER 624

For the final paper, you will choose a European historian from the period covered in this course and write a historiographical analysis of one of his or her works. You may attempt to survey the scope, method, purpose, and style of the work, placing it in its historical context, or you may choose to focus on one particular aspect. In either case your paper should pose and answer a question that contributes to our understanding of an interesting historical problem.

The Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies has many early printed editions of ancient, medieval, and early modern historians, as well as facsimile reprints of others, both in the original languages and in English translation. I encourage you to work with the Center’s collection. The Center is a fine place to work uninterrupted, and working with original sources can be more fun than dealing with a modern edition or reprint.

The paper should be 12-15 pages (3600-4500 words) in length, and it should follow the format specified in Turabian (including a title-page and a complete bibliography; abstract and table of contents are not necessary).
Appendix: A brief introduction to the profession of history

One task of this seminar is to introduce students to the profession of history at the beginning of the twenty-first century. As graduate students, you are making a commitment to the profession that undergraduates do not make, and it behooves you to learn about that profession. Professionalization involves both intellectual and cultural commitments. This appendix provides a brief guide to some of those commitments, with suggested reading. Items marked with an asterisk (*) are the most important.

Writing

History is located in the disputed borderlands between the social sciences and the humanities. Many historians pride themselves on being able to draw on the explanatory power of social science while still communicating their results clearly and effectively to a general audience. To do so, historians must think and write clearly. The following handbooks and guides will help you do so. The first three are required for this course.

A graduate student’s writing library


Cognate disciplines

History has always borrowed from the methods of other disciplines. At present, the most important of those disciplines are anthropology, sociology and social theory, and literary criticism; I also think that philosophical training is immensely useful for historians. At the
very least a practicing historian should be familiar with the concepts set out in the following books. These suggestions are for the beginner in these fields. For further suggestions, see the syllabus for my graduate seminar on Philosophy of History, available on my website.

**Suggested reading**


**Professional concerns**

History is not just a scholarly discipline; since the nineteenth century it is also a profession, and part of the broader profession of college and university professing. Part of graduate study involves learning the expectations and norms of the profession. Though much of this knowledge is picked up tacitly in the course of study, it is also worth reflecting on; furthermore, there are certain aspects of professionalization that don’t necessarily occur to beginning graduate students. Here are a few tips in that area.

**Historical journals**

Books are still important means of professional communication in history (unlike most of the sciences), but journal articles are also important. Journal articles are where historians stake out new positions, present the results of their work in progress, or challenge the claims of their peers. Journals also provide important venues for reviewing books.

Most journals are published quarterly, though there are many exceptions. You should regularly read the leading journals in your area of interest and the *American Historical Review (AHR)*, the leading general history journal in this country. Current journals are kept in the current periodicals room on the second floor of DuBois library; they cannot leave the room but there are several photocopiers in the reading room. The “Communications” section of the *AHR* often provides valuable insight into the values and ethics of the profession (most communications to the *AHR* are complaints about its book reviews).

**Mailing lists and online discussion groups**

Historians have entered the electronic age; you can find a mailing list for almost any conceivable historical period and approach. H-Net History and Humanities Online, <www.h-net.msu.edu>, is an umbrella group that sponsors dozens of historical and humanities mailing lists. The H-Grad list, reserved for graduate students, is a useful source of support. I
urge history graduate students to join H-Grad and to lurk on one or two other mailing lists in their area of interest.

**Professional associations**

Several professional associations serve the needs of historians. The American Historical Association is the largest and currently enrolls about 18,000 members in all areas of historical research. AHA members receive a subscription to the AHR and the association’s newsletter Perspectives, and discounted subscriptions to many other publications. I encourage history department graduate students in this seminar to join the AHA. Current dues for graduate students are $33/year. Depending on your interests, you might also consider joining another association, such as the Renaissance Society of America, the Sixteenth-Century Studies Conference, the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, or the Organization of American Historians. If you are a teacher or plan a career in teaching—including college teaching—you might consider joining the Society for History Education, publisher of The History Teacher, a quarterly journal on historical pedagogy.

**Conferences and meetings**

Historians gather frequently to present their research and network in meetings and conferences. Some national meetings, such as the AHA Annual Meeting, attract thousands of historians; other national meetings sponsored by more focused groups, such as the History of Science Society or Society for French Historical Studies, attract several hundred. Many regional associations sponsor smaller, more intimate meetings.

The New England Historical Association (NEHA) meetings, held in the spring and fall, are good places to meet other historians in the area and, when the time comes, to present your own research. NEHA is open to any historian living or working in New England on any period or region; it is not limited to the history of New England. Meetings last one day, registration is inexpensive, and the atmosphere is supportive.

In addition to national and regional meetings, conferences and symposia are regularly held on specific topics. Sometimes organized by colleges or departments, sometimes by professional societies, sometimes by libraries, these small meetings allow specialists to gather and discuss their research. You probably won’t attend these conferences unless you are an advanced Ph.D. student, but you should be aware of their existence.

**Other issues and concerns**

If you are a TA, you are probably a member of GEO. Keep up to date on contract negotiations and other issues. The university depends on graduate teaching assistants to fulfil its teaching mission; if you are a TA, you should consider yourself an employee of the university as well as a student in the history department.

You can keep up to date on professional issues through a couple of publications: the Chronicle of Higher Education, a weekly newspaper on colleges and universities, and Academe, the magazine of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP). The AAUP developed the current guidelines on tenure, academic freedom, and other professional issues affecting faculty and graduate students; it is increasingly concerned with the rise of part-time and adjunct faculty and the corporate model of university administration. The AAUP censures institutions that violate its guidelines on academic freedom and tenure; its reports on such cases make instructive reading.

However, don’t spend so much time on professional issues and concerns that you neglect your intellectual training, which is both the gateway to the profession and its raison d’être.
Suggested reading


Caplan, Paula J. *Lifting a ton of feathers: A woman’s guide for surviving in the academic world*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993. Aimed at advanced graduate students and beginning professors, this book addresses gender bias in the academy and provides advice for dealing with it. However, many of Caplan’s specific suggestions on how to succeed in academia are useful for men as well as women.


Directions to the Massachusetts Center for Renaissance Studies, 650 East Pleasant Street, Amherst MA 01002

1. By campus shuttle (10 minutes)
   From Haigis Mall, take the counter-clockwise campus shuttle (every 20 minutes). The bus marquee will read “Orchard Hill via Sylvan.” Stay on the bus until you pass the Sylvan residential area, then pull the cord for a stop. You will be let off at the Tilson Farm stop. Cross Eastman Lane (the road the bus stop is on) and walk north along the shoulder of East Pleasant Street. The Center’s entrance is on the west (left-hand) side of the road, about three or four minutes’ walk north of the bus stop. Walk down the driveway to the Center.

2. By car or bicycle (5-15 minutes)
   A. From Haigis Mall, go east on Massachusetts Avenue. Turn left at North Pleasant Street. Go north to Eastman Lane (the traffic signal). At Eastman Lane, turn right. Go east on Eastman Lane to East Pleasant Street. Turn left on East Pleasant Street. The Center is about two-tenths of a mile north, on the left-hand side of the road. Turn into the driveway and park in the lot next to the center.
   B. From Amherst Center, go north on North Pleasant Street. By the Carriage Shops, N. Pleasant becomes East Pleasant; stay on East Pleasant (don’t turn off toward UMass). Continue north, passing the Tilson Farm on your right and Eastman Lane on your left. The Center is about two-tenths of a mile north of Eastman Lane, on the left-hand side of the road. Turn into the driveway and park in the lot next to the center.

3. On foot (20-30 minutes)
   From Haigis Mall, walk north across campus to the intersection of Governor’s Drive, Eastman Lane, and North Pleasant Street. Walk east up Eastman Lane to the intersection with East Pleasant Street. Turn left (north) and walk along the shoulder for about three or four minutes. The Center’s entrance is on the left. Walk down the driveway to the Center.