

C A P S T O N E A N D R E S E A R C H S E M I N A R

CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENTS

Resources and Policies

The books and tools we will use in this class; instructor's course policies

Pages 2-5

Student Learning Outcomes

What you will know and do by the end of the course

Page 6

Schedule

Detailed list of each class meeting's topic, readings, and course calendar of due dates

Pages 7-10

WELCOME TO THIS SEMINAR

This cross-listed history course fulfills either the capstone requirement for the undergraduate history major or the research seminar requirement for the portfolio track of the M.A. in History (it can also be used as a United States graduate history elective in the thesis track).

This course considers such questions as, What are civil rights anyway? How does a movement begin, define itself, take shape, gain momentum, mark progress, and persist in the struggle against those who oppose it? How do movements end or transform? How have civil rights movements shaped our nation, your own history, and our discipline?

People commonly refer to "THE" Civil Rights Movement when speaking of the struggle for Black rights of citizenship, property, personhood, and voting after emancipation from slavery, or even more narrowly the decade of heightened mass action towards those goals in the American South from 1955 – 1965. But it's simplistic to think that there has been just one civil rights movement, or that such a movement has ended and is conveniently behind us in the past. In this course we consider a broadened definition of civil rights, embrace a wider range of movement types and strategies, and recognize that the fight for civil rights is ongoing and in constant dialogue with changing historical context, law, popular culture, and demography.

We will not be limited to one decade, or to one region of the country, or to the efforts of people of a single racial heritage. I encourage far-ranging research exploration as long your topic connects to the course's core concept. A significant portion of the course will be dedicated to guiding students as they define, research, and write upon a topic of their choosing within the field.

Note: due to the intensive focus upon writing and research in this class, AUDIT is not an appropriate option for this class.

Course Details

Fall 2021

Meets Mondays 5-8

Room: Sullivan 320

HI 460-01: 4 credits

HI 460-E1: 4 credits

HI 990-E1: 3 credits

Undergrad PreReqs:

Successful completion of Historians Craft + EN 102 or EN 250. Fulfills your LASC capstone and History major capstone.

Instructor

Dr. Tona Hangen

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Sullivan 327D x8688

Text: 617-506-9440

Office Hours posted under Prof Info on Blackboard. Zoom or In-Person appointments available.

COURSE INFORMATION



Course Readings

Christopher W. Schmidt, *Civil Rights in America: A History* (Cambridge University Press, 2021). ISBN 978-1108-44497-2

Make sure you have a recent edition (8th or 9th) of Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Univ of Chicago Press).

Other course readings will be accessed through Blackboard, WSU Library Resources, or free online. In addition, you will be doing research on a topic of your choosing and should expect to read (and possibly purchase) the equivalent of three to four books.

Graduate Students will also read: Hasan Kwame Jeffries, *Understanding and Teaching the Civil Rights Movement* (University of Wisconsin Press, 2019). ISBN: 978-0299321949

**Undergraduates:
successful completion of
this class is a graduation
requirement.**

Course Requirements and Grading

This course is structured around the research and writing of a single paper, approximately 20-25 pages (or about 5000 words) long. This paper will be on a topic of your choosing related to civil rights movements, should speak to a significant historical question, and will involve substantive research in primary sources as well as facility and understanding of relevant secondary sources and the historiography of your topic. The writing should be polished, the examples well-chosen, and the organization clear.

The Undergraduate and Graduate Experiences

For undergraduates, taking this course to fulfill the capstone requirement, there will be a set of assignments and activities to help develop professional skills, including the creation of an ePortfolio. The reading load is lower for undergraduates and there are fewer required formal presentations. Undergraduates will do a poster presentation at the end of the semester.

For graduate students, there are higher expectations to independently locate, analyze, summarize, and present scholarly and primary sources. Graduate students will begin to develop an ePortfolio of their work in the class, and will serve as sounding boards and mentors to undergraduates exploring career possibilities. At the end of the semester, graduate students will do a 15-minute presentation on their research, similar to what would be expected at a scholarly conference.

Participation and Attendance: 20 points

Participation is important, as we only meet once a week. Missed classes are impossible to duplicate. Merely showing up, though, is not enough; you need to do the required readings and assignments before class and be engaged and participating in class discussion. All that said, if you're feeling sick or have been quarantined, please stay home to keep yourself and others safe, and I can discuss alternatives to in-person attendance if needed in individual cases.

The expectations for this class are professionalism and respect (from me to you, among your colleagues, and from you to me). Please comply with any University health policies in effect during this semester.

ePortfolio and Professional Development: 50 points

For undergraduate students, taking this as the capstone to their major in History, the course will involve you in professional development. History is a degree that opens to many different fields and careers, and we want you to leave Worcester State with the ability to articulate your strengths and interests, having crafted a practical toolkit of artifacts (portfolio, writing samples, CV, and personal statement) that can be adapted for your own needs as you prepare for graduation and beyond.

Graduate students also benefit from professional development steps, though your portfolios will be at a different stage.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Requirements and Grading

Portfolio Shell Built on Time (by Sept 13)	5 points
Personal Statement	10 points
At least one example of prior work included	5 points
Curriculum vitae (CV)	10 points
Research paper abstract	10 points
Your revised, polished, reader-ready research paper	5 points
Distinction, professionalism and excellence	5 points



Pieces of the portfolio will be developed over the course of the semester, but the final, polished, graded version with all components is due on December 13th, 11:59pm.

The Process of Research: 80 points

The ultimate goal of the course for both undergraduate and graduate students is to research and write a substantive research paper, grounded in primary source research and situated within a broader historiography.

There are multiple, small assignments leading up to the final paper. These will help give you a sense of whether or not you are on the right track and will also help you pace the necessary work to create a high-quality paper at the end of the course.

7 annotated articles: 3 points each for 21 points

You will find seven *scholarly* articles (or chapters in a longer book), provide copies of those articles (either printed out or electronically made available through your website), and provide an annotation of the article. These articles should all be included in your final research paper.

An effective annotation is able to summarize the article and explain the significance and usefulness of the article. I expect that the annotation will be roughly 250 words. You should find these annotations very helpful as you begin writing your paper.

You should include a full citation of the article along with the annotation (Chicago Style).

With the exception of the first annotated article, all annotated articles are due at the beginning of class. They can be posted to your portfolio or printed out and handed in.

10 “50 word challenges”: 2 points each for 20 points

These assignments are usually due at the beginning of class and are designed to hone your writing and analytic skills. When you only have 50 words, every word counts! Too often, research papers have wandering, meandering prose dedicated to filling up the word count and presenting every piece of evidence. These assignments push you to be succinct and precise – skills you should bring to bear in your final paper. You may find that you can cut-and-paste some, if not all, of these 50 word challenges directly into your paper (or that they serve as important drafting step in your writing).

These assignments may be posted to your website or printed out and handed in at the beginning of class. On the days when the assignment is due after class, you can email me your assignment and/or post it to your website.

Initial Bibliography – Secondary Sources: 5 points

When you only have a semester, you need to work quickly to define your core readings. This bibliography will demonstrate your ability to cite appropriately (using Chicago style as outlined in Turabian) and make sure you are on track with finding sources. It also gives you time to order materials through InterLibrary Loan. This may be posted to your website or printed out and handed in at the beginning of class.

Initial Bibliography – Primary Sources: 5 points

Your paper needs to involve significant research in primary sources. Internet sources are allowed, but try not to limit yourself to only what is available on the internet. Citations should be done appropriately, using Chicago style (Turabian). This may be posted to your website or printed out and handed in at the beginning of class.

COURSE INFORMATION

Course Requirements and Grading

Skeleton Draft: 10 points

This is the “bones” of your future research paper, with some parts of it developed a little more completely than others. Like a fully articulated skeleton, all parts need to be present to get full credit:

- Working title
- Solid, well-crafted introduction
- Historiography section
- Outline with at least one section fleshed out
- Footnotes in the introduction, historiography, and any fleshed out section(s), so I can see that you are comfortable with this
- Bibliography, correctly formatted, with as many sources as you have so far

I would expect this to be a minimum of seven pages, double-spaced. These will be peer edited in class, so you will need to provide four hard copies at the beginning of class.

Peer Review of Skeleton Draft: 5 points

You will read and comment on 2-4 of your classmates’ skeleton drafts. This will be done during class time and further instructions will be provided at that time. Peer review is essential to the scholarly enterprise.

Primary Source Presentation: 4 points

You will do an oral presentation to the class, in which you show, explain, and highlight the strengths of a high-quality archive (online or brick-and-mortar) that you are using in your research. As part of your presentation, you will also select a 1-2 page primary source document (excerpt if necessary) found in that archive and provide copies of the source to the class. This should be a rich and interesting source that will engage the class and provoke discussion.

Research Presentation: 10 points

Consider this a test run for a history conference presentation. Undergraduates: a poster presentation, which includes a 5-minute oral presentation. Graduate Students: 15 minutes in which you engage your audience in the significance of your research and present your most compelling research findings.

Final Research Paper: 50 points

Due on December 13th to our Blackboard course site. If you want my comments and the ability to rewrite based on those comments, bring a hard copy of your penultimate draft to class our last class on December 6th.

Grading Scale (out of a possible 200 points)

188-200	A
180-187	A-
174-179	B+
168-173	B
160-167	B- (Graduate students must receive a B- or higher to get graduate credit)
154-159	C+
148-153	C
140-147	C-
134-139	D+
128-133	D
120-127	D-
119 and below	E (failure)

COURSE POLICIES

Academic Honesty and Dishonesty

All papers and other assignments for this class must be your own work, and your own writing. When and where you employ the work of others, you need to cite your sources. This is professional and academic courtesy - you're giving credit where credit is due. It also situates you within a broader community of people who are asking similar questions as you, compiling information that helps you figure out what you're doing, and developing analyses that help you think through a particular issue.

Papers that are clear cases of plagiarism – not inadvertent errors in citation or footnoting – are insults to me and to the class. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. Some examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: copying, or only slightly rephrasing, passages out of books, magazines, journals, and/or web sites and submitting them as your own work; buying papers off the internet; or submitting a friend's paper instead of your own. If you submit a plagiarized paper, you will automatically receive a failing grade (an "E") for the course.

If you have any questions about plagiarism and how to avoid it, please don't hesitate to ask. This course is designed to give you the tools to avoid plagiarism, both in terms of teaching you how and why to cite appropriately and of giving you the structure and time management skills so that you are not panicked and tempted to cheat.

Student Accessibility

WSU is committed to providing equitable access and appropriate reasonable accommodations within courses and programs for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that requires reasonable accommodations, please visit the Student Accessibility Services website worcester.edu/Student-Accessibility-Services/ or contact their office at SAS@worcester.edu, call 508-929-8733, or stop by the office, Suite 131 in the Administration Building. Please be aware that accommodations cannot be enacted retroactively, making timeliness a critical aspect for their provision.

Other Course Policies

Our collective hope is for a smooth return to in-person classes, diminishing infection rates in our community and everyone staying safe and healthy. What we hope for and what we get are not always the same, as we've seen. If you are feeling sick, are in quarantine, or are following doctor's orders, please stay home. We can work out an alternative in special circumstances. If we have to pivot the entire class to a remote learning mode, stay flexible and kind as we figure it all out together.

Please refrain from eating or drinking in class. There will be a short break partway through each class session. Silence cell phones in class; step out if you have to take an urgent call or respond to a text.

Support Services

I am very aware that each of us are more than our roles as instructor or student, and we all have full and complicated lives outside of class. It's important to me that you are aware of Worcester State student support services to help you navigate life while pursuing your degree. You might find you have unexpected new financial, emotional, social, or even nutritional needs. Services available to you include Residential and Commuter Services, the Graduate and Continuing Education Office, Counseling Services, Health Services, Multicultural Affairs, Career Services, Student Accessibility Services, and Thea's Food Pantry. Ask me about any of these.

We also have excellent academic supports in place which may help you with this class, including the Academic Success Center, Information Technologies, the Writing Center, and our stellar Library Reference Services. Our departmental reference liaison is the University Archivist, Ross Griffiths (rgriffiths@worcester.edu) and he's incredibly helpful and generous with his time when it comes to assisting people with history research. Reach out to me or one of these support services early if you find you are struggling with time management, writing, research, citation, or any other aspect of the course.

For additional University policies and resources, see the "Syllabi Additional Information" reference document posted on Blackboard. This document is prepared by the Division of Academic Affairs.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Undergraduate

1. Solve an important scholarly problem using structured research design, effective written communication, critical thinking, and information literacy.
2. Develop your professional skills and goals, presenting your work in formats suited to the discipline of history.
3. Demonstrate understanding of how historians approach problems and construct knowledge, practicing the “habits of mind” of successful historians.
4. Synthesize knowledge and skills from coursework within and outside your major. Students are invited to develop meaningful connections from courses taken in their major and throughout their previous years at college. For example, your capstone research project might be connected to scholarly interests and intellectual problems that predate the seminar itself.

Graduate

1. Independently design and engage in a research inquiry, demonstrating proficiency with research methods (locating, evaluating, analyzing, summarizing, and presenting both primary and secondary sources) and high-quality historical writing.
2. Situate your research project within existing scholarly discourses and historiographical debates, employing theory where relevant.
3. Develop your professional skills and present your work in an oral presentation, similar to what would be expected at a scholarly conference.
4. Mentor undergraduates pursuing their capstone research and exploring career possibilities.



CLASS SCHEDULE

This syllabus is subject to change; check Blackboard for latest updates

September 6 Introduction Week (No Class, University Holiday)

Tasks to complete this week:

INTRODUCTIONS: Create a 60-second Flipgrid video to introduce yourself to me and your colleagues. Tell us a little about yourself and what your hopes or goals are for the class.

PORTFOLIO: Create a website which will become your electronic Portfolio for the class and write a Personal Statement for your website. Use any platform you like. Free options include Weebly, Wix, Strikingly, Google Sites, and Wordpress. Be sure to provide me a link to your site and, if you choose to make it private, share or grant me permission to read it. My email is thangen@worcester.edu

READINGS:

- * Scholarly Reading Handout, Blackboard
- * Schmidt, *Civil Rights in America*, Introduction
- * Georgetown Law Library, *A Brief History of Civil Rights in the United States* (link on Blackboard)

September 13 First Class Meeting: Definitions, Background, and Groundwork

50 word Challenge #1 (due at the beginning of class): What are you leaning towards for a research question or topic for your research paper? What draws you to this topic?

READINGS:

- * Turabian, "What Research Is and How Researchers Think about It," "Moving from a Topic to a Question to a Working Hypothesis," "Finding Useful Sources," and "General Introduction to Citation Practices," *A Manual for Writers*, Chapters 1-3 and 15
- * Schmidt, *Civil Rights in America*, Chapters 1 and 2
- * White, "The Origins of Civil Rights in America," *Case Western Reserve Law Review* 64 (2014): 755-816.

ASSIGNMENT: Chase the sources in one footnote from Chapter 1 or 2. Be prepared to discuss your findings in class.

WORKSHOP: Developing an initial topic. The Internet is Your Friend: Websites, Zotero, Dropbox, and Twitter

September 20 Who's Who in (a) Civil Rights Movement

50 word Challenge #2: What is your current working definition of civil rights?

READINGS:

- * Schmidt, *Civil Rights in America*, Chapters 3 and 4
- * Turabian, "Engaging Sources," *A Manual for Writers*, Chapter 4.
- * Skim: Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, Parts II and III, so that you are aware of the information contained on citations and style, and can refer back as necessary throughout the semester – and beyond.
- * **Graduate Students:** Skim Jeffries, and choose a chapter that you find interesting and that you'd like to explore in greater depth. Have a backup, in case of duplications.

ASSIGNMENT: Briefly present on your assigned organization, and describe your investigative process. Tell us about a primary source or archive that would be helpful in researching this organization.

WORKSHOP: Moving from topic to research question.

September 27 Library Session: How to find Sources that Work

PLEASE NOTE: class will meet in the Library Instruction Room, LRC 236

50-word challenge #3: What is a significant research question for your work?

READINGS:

* Jeanne Theoharis, "National Honor / Public Mythology: The Passing of Rosa Parks," in *The Rebellious Life of Mrs. Rosa Parks* (vii-xvi).

WORKSHOP: Library Resources with Ross Griffiths. Bring laptops to class.

ASSIGNMENT: Article #1 & annotation due for portfolio by Sunday, Oct 3. Challenge: Find an article that orients you to the historiography of your potential paper. You will have class time to work on this assignment. Note that since your next article is due on Oct 4, you're really finding and annotating 2 articles this week, so plan accordingly.

October 4 Civil Rights Since "The" Civil Rights Movement

Article #2 & annotation due for portfolio. Challenge: Identify one of the top scholars in your field and annotate one of their scholarly works.

50-word challenge #4: How do you define yourself as an historian? What bigger questions animate you and your work?

PORTFOLIO: upload an example of your work from another class that exemplifies who you are as an historian (and perhaps other roles). Provide a brief description that explains how you define yourself as a historian, why you included this piece and what it represents.

READINGS:

* Schmidt, *Civil Rights in America*, Chapters 5, 6 and Conclusion

* Turabian, "Revising Sentences," *A Manual for Writers*, 111-121.

* Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, "And Yet": Distinguishing What You Say From What They Say," in *They Say / I Say: The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* (Norton), 68-77.

* Steven F. Lawson, "Freedom Then, Freedom Now: The Historiography of the Civil Rights Movement," *American Historical Review* 96 (1991): 456-471.

ASSIGNMENT: Graduate Students: Present on your chapter from Jeffries, *Understanding and Teaching the Civil Rights Movement*. Undergraduates: Locate a job ad for a history-related position you'd be interested in applying for someday. Describe the job and employer to us, and explain what credentials / experience are needed.

WORKSHOP: Historiography & Citations: What it is and how to do it.

October 11 - Online Week (No Class on Monday, University Holiday)

Tasks to complete this week:

Article #3 & annotation due for portfolio. Challenge: Look for an article that asks similar questions as you but in a different time and/or place.

50 word challenge #5 (posted to your site or emailed): How would you characterize the historiography of your chosen topic

ASSIGNMENT: Submit Initial Bibliography of Secondary Sources

ASSIGNMENT: Set up a meeting this week with me to check in / conference about your topic and progress so far

READINGS:

* Turabian, "Planning Your Argument," *A Manual for Writers*, 49-62.

* Jacqueline Dowd Hall, "The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past," *Journal of American History* 91 (2005): 1233-63

October 18 The Short and Long of Civil Rights Movements

Article #4 and annotation due for portfolio.

50-word challenge #6: Introduce one of the people that plays a significant role in your paper.

READINGS:

* Turabian, "Drafting Your Report" and "Presenting Evidence in Tables and Figures," *A Manual for Writers*, 73-99.

* Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, "As He Himself Puts It: The Art of Quoting," in *"They Say / I Say": The Moves That Matter in Academic Writing* (Norton), 42-51.

WORKSHOP: Determining the scope and size of your project.

FYI: A virtual New England Historical Association Conference is happening on Saturday, October 23 hosted at Worcester State. Attendance is free for undergraduates.

October 25 Taking Shape

Article #5 and annotation due for portfolio.

50-word challenge #7: Explain the benefits and limitations of the main type of primary sources you are using in your paper.

READING:

* Cornell, "Resumes and C.V.s"

ASSIGNMENT: Bring one current *printed* copy of your resume or C.V.

WORKSHOP: Outlining and Storyboarding.

November 1 Case Studies and What They Tell Us

Article #6 & annotation due for portfolio

50-word challenge #8: Describe your research project: topic, sources, and why it matters.

ASSIGNMENT: Initial Bibliography of Primary Sources is Due

WORKSHOP: Choosing and framing examples and case studies.

November 8 Primary Sources: Class Examples

Article #7 & annotation due for portfolio

50-word challenge #9: Write the title and the opening sentence of your paper.

READING:

* Ann Curthoys and Ann McGrath, "Once Upon a Time: Beginnings and Endings," in *How to Write History that People Want to Read* (Palgrave, 2011), 117-139.

ARTICLE ASSIGNMENT: *The readings for next week will be collectively generated by the class. Of the seven articles that you compiled and annotated, which one do you think your classmates should read? Please email me a complete PDF of one article by 1:00 pm on Sunday, November 14th, so that I can easily compile them into a handout/web page for the class.*

Primary Source Presentation: Identify and provide a review and walk-through of one of the major archives (digital or otherwise) for primary sources on your topic. Choose one primary source from that resource and provide it to the class for discussion. (hence, it must be short – at most, two pages -- so feel free to excerpt as appropriate). If you email it to me as a PDF at least one hour before class on Nov 8, I will make copies for the class.

WORKSHOP: Titles and introductory paragraphs, strong openings.

November 15 Article Discussion

Bring 4 printed copies of your C.V. with you to class and be prepared to share your website/ePortfolio with your classmates.

50 word challenge #10: What is the argument/thesis of your research paper?

Graduate Students: locate and present upon a scholarly article that is a model for the kind of work you aspire to do. Provide 1-2 pages that you find exemplary (if you email them to me as a PDF by 3pm on November 15, I will make copies for the class).

READINGS:

* Choose FOUR articles from among those provided by your classmates.

WORKSHOP: C.V.'s, Conferences, and Career Possibilities for History Majors/Graduate Students

November 22 The Craft of Historical Writing (and Re-Writing)

Skeleton Draft is Due: Please bring 4 copies with you to class, as you will be reading and critiquing each other's writing.

PORTFOLIO: Upload your revised and improved C.V.

READINGS:

* Turabian, "Revising Your Draft," "Writing Your Final Introduction and Conclusion," "Learning from Your Returned Paper," "Presenting Research in Alternative Forums" and "On the Spirit of Research," *A Manual for Writers*, 100-110, 122-132.

WORKSHOP: Peer Review

November 29 Check-In and Next Steps

PORTFOLIO: Finalize all aspects of your portfolio

Conferences and Consultations as needed

WORKSHOP: Creating an effective poster presentation. Writing an Abstract of your work.

December 6 Mini Conference: Civil Rights Movement(s)

Graduate Research Presentation: 15 minutes that makes clear the significance of your work and provides some well-chosen examples and evidence. Q&A is outside of your 15 minutes.

Undergraduate Poster Presentation: You will create a poster for a poster session (you can do this electronically through PowerPoint - we will develop this skill in class). You can choose to display your poster through the projector, in which case you'll do a 3-5 minute walk-through of your project and poster, and then take questions from the audience. Or, you can print out your poster (there is a special printer on campus for this purpose) and people will approach you and ask questions, which is the typical format for a poster session at a conference.

Research Papers turned in at the beginning of class will be returned on Friday, December 10th. They will be available in the History Department any time after 3pm - I can also scan a copy of your paper with my comments and email it to you. You will have the option to rewrite for a higher grade. Rewrites are due on December 13th (the same time that the final paper is due).

Final Exam Night Dec 13 (No Class Meeting)

The Final Paper is due on Monday, December 13th, at 11:59pm, to Blackboard. It should also be posted on your website/ePortfolio. All components of your Portfolio, including a 250-word abstract of your research paper, should be polished and completed by Monday, December 13, at 11:59 pm.