

HI 411
Spring 2011
TR 10:00 – 11:15, Room S-126
<http://www.tonahangen.com/wsc/hi411/>

The Historian's Craft

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Designed for the history major or minor (but open to anyone), “The Historian’s Craft” provides hands-on exploration of American history as both a professional field and a scholarly discipline. This course will provide students an overview of historiography and methods in history, and offers opportunities to build research, writing and interpretive skills through intensive work with sources, texts, and other historical evidence.

By the end of this course, you will understand how historians work and how history is made and constructed. You will also feel confident in approaching your own historical investigations because you will possess the practical skills and methodological tools. Over the course of the semester, you will build and polish a portfolio of your work, a solid foundation for more advanced and independent future work in the history major/minor and beyond.

Reading List

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* 6e (Bedford, 2010) ISBN 0312535031
Robert C. Williams, *The Historian's Toolbox: A Student's Guide to the Theory and Craft of History* (M. E. Sharpe, 2007) ISBN 780765620279
James W. Loewen, *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong*, Revised ed. (New Press, 2007) ISBN 9781595583260
Website: Making Sense of Evidence, <http://historymatters.gmu/browse/makesense>
Any additional readings will be posted as PDFs to the course Blackboard

Assignments and Course Requirements

For this course, you will set up a **Google Site** which will serve as both weekly journal and ePortfolio. You don't have to make the site public but you will need to grant me access as a reader so that I can check it each week. (5% of course grade)

In **weekly journal** assignments, you write informal (but still, polished) responses to the week's readings, class discussions, workshops, and your own research efforts. Some journal assignments will have specific writing prompts, while others will be open-ended. Journals should be submitted as a new post on your Google Site by Tuesday 6am of each week. (15% of course grade)

Class participation and discussion will be critical to your learning in this course. I take attendance in each class. You should be on time and ready for discussion each day. History is not a spectator sport; you must speak up in class. I expect class discussion will be lively, respectful, substantive, and

that you will have done that day's assigned reading before class. Much of the work during the "Practice of History" weeks will be in the form of in-class workshops, and those cannot be made up, since they depend on being present in class. (20% of course grade)

You will write **three papers**, one at the end of each unit. For each unit you should choose a research topic of interest to you. You can use the same topic for all three units or you can pick a new one each time. Each paper should be 4-6 pages long (1000-1500 words) and use correct and full citations in Chicago Style, which is the conventional style for the discipline of history. Your Rampolla book, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, has an extensive citation guide, and you hopefully also have your own copy of Diana Hacker, *A Writer's Reference* which provides additional guidance on using Chicago Style.

Full guidelines for each paper will be given out later. As a general rule, though – sources and citations are tremendously important. You need to leave a clear "vapor trail" of your research through your footnotes. Sources for your each paper should be completely documented if you accessed them as paper print sources. For electronic or non-print sources – find a way to show them to me... we'll demo these options in class, but possibilities include: attach printouts, upload as files to your ePortfolio, organize in a public Zotero folder, or hyperlink from a page on your Google Site (double check your links, make sure you have stable URLs!).

Paper #1 – Primary Sources v. Secondary Sources, due on February 17 (20% of course grade)

Paper #2 – The Practice of History, due on March 31 (20% of course grade)

Paper #3 – The History Profession, due on or before May 10 (20% of course grade)

Grading

Class Participation	20%
ePortfolio	5%
Weekly Journal (13 entries)	15%
Paper 1 (2/17)	20%
Paper 2 (3/31)	20%
Paper 3 (5/10)	20%
	100%

Communication and Technology

Course information is provided in the Blackboard shell, but you'll notice that it's somewhat pared down – we don't need many of its features, so I have only kept the essentials: course roster & email capability, Digital Dropbox, and a few others. Blackboard links out to a **public website for the**

course, <http://tonahangen.com/wsc/hi411>. Please bookmark this site and/or subscribe to its RSS feed (we will talk about how to do that in class). I use a public website because it's accessible from any computer, so if Blackboard or the campus computer system is down, our work goes on.

In addition, I have created a **public Google calendar** for the course which lists the meeting dates and due dates for our assignments. If you use Google calendar to organize yourself (and I recommend that you do, since you already have the capability built into your campus Gmail account), you can add the course calendar to your own by clicking on the [+ Google Calendar] icon in its lower right corner.

You will get one copy of this printed syllabus, but it is subject to change (like the US Constitution, it's something of a "living document"). The website, the electronic PDF version of the syllabus posted on the website, and the course Google calendar will always be the most accurate sources of current information, so check prior to each class for readings, discussion questions, and any changes to the syllabus.

We will be busy in every class session, and we don't need any technological distractions. Silence your cell phones before you enter the classroom, and no texting in class. If you choose to bring a laptop to class, I expect that you're using it **only** for taking notes or accessing the course's relevant material during discussion – not to surf the internet, check your email, or update your Facebook status.

I check email frequently during working hours, and that is the preferred way to contact me (thangen@worchester.edu). I am unlikely to reply to any email sent after 6 pm until the next morning, and I don't always check my campus email on the weekends, so be patient if you don't hear back right away.

I will introduce you to some new Web 2.0 tools which many scholars find useful and/or essential. You aren't required to use them, but I hope you'll take the time to explore them. They include:

- **Dropbox:** a filesharing/syncing service which saves your work "in the cloud" and across different computers. Eliminates the need for a flash drive.
- **Evernote:** an internet and note capture system, capable of archiving and organizing documents, audio, video, images, with tagging and searching capabilities.
- **Zotero:** a research database system with an intuitive iTunes-like organization platform, and the capability to automatically format your citations and bibliographies in Word documents according to standardized citation methods. Wait until you see it work, it's brilliant.
- **Digital Archives and Databases:** You'll learn how to navigate, search within, and understand the design of historical databases, archive catalogs, finding aids, and other digital resources for historical research.

Syllabus

#	Date	Topic/ Reading	What's Due
Unit I: "Don't Know Much About History"			
1	T 1/18	Course Introduction	
2	R 1/20	How (and why) to create an ePortfolio <i>Reading:</i> Williams pp. 1-19	
3	T 1/25	Textbooks and the Stakes for History Education <i>Reading:</i> Loewen Ch 1 + 1 other (TBD in class)	Create your Google Site J1 – identify Topic #1
4	R 1/27	<i>Reading:</i> Loewen Ch 12 and 13	
5	T 2/1	Textbooks: Diagnosis and Solutions <i>Reading:</i> Loewen – a chapter from 2-6, TBD	J2
6	R 2/3	<i>Reading:</i> Loewen – a chapter from 7-11, TBD	
7	T 2/8	Historical Writing: Conventions, Practices, Habits <i>Reading:</i> Williams Ch 8, Dartmouth Writing Program, "Writing the History Paper" (online)	J3
8	R 2/10	<i>Reading:</i> Rampolla TBD, Williams 11	
9	T 2/15	Sources <i>Reading:</i> Williams Ch 9 and 10	J4
10	R 2/17	In-class workshop with 1 more Loewen chapter, TBD *Bring the Loewen book to class	Paper #1
Unit II: The Practice of History as Craft			
11	T 2/22	Quantitative Data <i>Reading:</i> Gary J. Kornblith, "Making Sense of Numbers," <i>History Matters</i> (online)	J5 – identify Topic #2
12	R 2/24	In-class workshop	
13	T 3/1	Private Papers <i>Reading:</i> Steven Stowe, "Making Sense of Letters and Diaries," <i>History Matters</i> (online)	J6
14	R 3/3	In-class workshop	
15	T 3/8	Government Documents <i>Reading:</i> University of New Haven, "Finding Government Documents," (online) http://www.newhaven.edu/library/Guides/Research/GovernmentDocuments/ Additional Website: http://gpoaccess.gov	J7
16	R 3/10	In-class workshop using http://www.streetlaw.org	
March 14-18 Spring Break; No Classes			
17	T 3/22	Radio, the Sound of the Past <i>Reading:</i> Susan Douglas, "Radio Comedy and Linguistic Slapstick," in <i>Listening In: Radio and the American Imagination</i> , pp. 100-124 (PDF)	No J this week
18	R 3/24	In-class workshop	

#	Date	Topic/ Reading	What's Due
19	T 3/29	Images <i>Reading</i> : David Stephens, "Making Sense of Maps" <i>History Matters</i> (online)	J8
20	R 3/31	In-class workshop	Paper #2
<i>Unit III: The History Profession/ Professing History</i>			
21	T 4/5	Historiography <i>Reading</i> : Williams Ch 12	J9 – identify Topic #3
22	R 4/7	<i>Reading</i> : Joan Wolloch Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis" (PDF)	
23	T 4/12	Film <i>Reading</i> : Williams Ch 13	J10
24	R 4/14	In-class film workshop <i>Reading</i> : Tom Gunning, "Making Sense of Films," <i>History Matters</i> (online)	
25	T 4/19	Public History <i>Reading</i> : Williams Ch 17	J11
26	R 4/21	<i>Reading</i> : Enola Gay Documents, see blog for links	
27	T 4/26	Historical Memory, Professional Ethics <i>Reading</i> : Loewen Ch 10	J12
28	R 4/28	History on the 'Net <i>Reading</i> : Williams Ch 19	
29	T 5/3	Discussion Day, Class Wrap-Up	J13 – course reflection
	T 5/10	8:30 Final Exam Slot	Paper #3