

HIST 481 Research Methods

Gender, Sex, and Society (1600-1800)

Course Overview: This course explores western ideas about men's and women's bodies, sexuality, and reproduction spanning the 1600s-1800s. Topics include marital relations, conceptions of sexually transmitted disease, and debates about men's and women's roles as midwives. While this is a class about gender, sex, and society, it is meant to serve as a course in historical research, writing, and thinking. Students will learn to develop ideas, analyze different kinds of evidence, and complicate their thinking through revision and peer collaboration. Assignments consist of two short papers and a longer essay based on original primary source research.

Course Goals & Structure: For each class session there is a reading and/or writing assignment. I also list the focus of each class meeting – how we will use the reading and writing assignments to think through an aspect of historical research. The goal of the course is twofold: to explore and discuss the content of the readings, and to use that content to hone our writing and research skills.

Class Librarian:

Assignments:

Participation and good citizenship

This is a seminar, which means the bulk of the class involves the discussion of texts and in-class exercises. For this reason, participation counts for a significant portion of your grade. I expect everyone to attend class, actively contribute to class discussion, and participate in the in-class activities and workshops. There are a series of short writing assignments that I will ask you to complete for homework, which will count toward your participation grade.

Essay 1 (5 pages) – Draft due in class Feb. 9/ Final due by email Feb. 18

Using at least three primary sources as evidence, pose an argument about venereal disease in early modern England. This is an open-ended assignment; you may choose which aspect of the disease to focus on, as long as you can analyze that theme using the sources we read for class. (I do not expect you to do any outside research for this assignment.) For instance, you might want to address how healers presented themselves as trustworthy, competent professionals; how gender shaped prevailing views of the disease; or the experiences of patients.

Essay 2 (5 pages) – Due by email March 4

Find something puzzling, contradictory, or surprising in one of the primary sources on childbirth that we read for class. Try to resolve or explain your puzzle by analyzing the source, as well as one additional source we read for class.

Research Essay (18-20 pages) – Due by email May 15

- Topics **due March 21**
- Primary source report **due March 28**
- Bibliography **due April 6**
- Introductory paragraph **due April 18**
- Draft of research essay **due April 27**

The second half of the semester is devoted to researching and writing a longer essay based on your own, original primary source research. This includes the timely completion of a number of smaller assignments over the second half of the semester, all of which count toward 10% of your final grade: a bibliography, introductory paragraph, and essay draft.

Extra credit (5% added to your overall grade):

Attend an event in Boston relevant to the themes of the course – this could be a talk, colloquium, gallery opening, screening on any topic on the history of gender, women, and sexuality or on any topic in early modern history. Write a 2-page report of the event that discusses what the event entailed, who spoke, what they spoke about, and what you took away from it or how it complemented the themes of the class.

Papers Guidelines

Papers must be word-processed. Please use Times 12-point font or its close equivalent, double spacing, and 1-inch margins. Proofread your writing for typographical, grammatical, and punctuation errors. If you consistently make these kinds of errors, your grade will drop.

You have the opportunity to rewrite your essay if you earn a C- or below. If you are worried about completing any of the requirements for this course, remember that Academic Support Services offers many types of assistance. I am also happy to work with you in preparation for tests and papers. However, if you think that you need any sort of special accommodation, please visit the Ross center.

Grade Distribution

Paper 1	15%
Paper 2	15%
Research Paper	50% (30% for final, 5% for revising draft, 15% for Source, Bib, Intro)
Participation	20%

Grading Scale

100-93	A
92-90	A-
89-87	B+
86-83	B
82-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-73	C
72-70	C-
69-67	D+
66-63	D
62-below	F

Late/Absence Policies

All deadlines in this class are firm. Except in the case of medical or family emergency or religious observance, I give no individual extensions. If, due to such an emergency, you cannot meet a deadline, please contact me as soon as possible so that we may work out an alternative schedule. A late paper will be marked down by a third of a letter grade for every 24 hours that it is late. If you do not submit an assignment at all, you will receive a 0 for that assignment.

Readings

Please purchase Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (Bedford/St. Martin's) available for purchase at the campus bookstore or online. All other readings will be posted on Blackboard: <https://umb.umassonline.net> *** **Please bring assigned readings to class** ***

Week 1

Due 1/24

Introductions

Due 1/26

Assignment:

- Read Primary source packet: John Smith, Courts Hanna Logan (1748); Keeping a House of Fornication (1754); William Gouge (1622).

In-Class: Source criticism

Week 2

Due 1/31

Assignment:

- Read Siena, "The 'Foul Disease' and Privacy"
- Read packet of VD advertisements

In-Class: Using evidence to make an argument

Due 2/2

Assignment:

- Read John Marten, *A Treatise of all the Degrees and Symptoms of the Venereal Disease* (1707), excerpts
- Read John Sintelaer, *The scourge of Venus and Mercury* (1709), excerpts
- Read John Spinke, *Quackery Unmask'd* (1711), excerpts
- In a paragraph, discuss which author you find most credible or convincing and why.

In-Class: Analyzing sources

Week 3

Due 2/7

Assignment:

- Read James Boswell, *London Journal* (1762-1763), excerpts
- Read Samuel Pepys, *Diary* (1664), excerpts
- Begin drafting Essay 1. Write a 1-page reflection on your writing process and bring it to class. Include a brief discussion of the following: What is your main idea or point? What are the biggest problems you're having at this point? What point do you feel you've made most successfully?

Due 2/9

Assignment:

- **DRAFT OF ESSAY 1 due** (bring a hard copy to class).

In Class: Preventing plagiarism, Style

Week 4

Due 2/14

Assignment:

- Mary Wiesner, "Wandervogels and Women: Journeymen's Concepts of Masculinity in Early Modern Germany"
- Read *A Pocket Guide*, pp. 52-62

In-Class: Developing a thesis

Due 2/16

Assignment:

- Read sample student essay

Due 2/18 **ESSAY 1 DUE at 12 Noon** (email me a copy directly)

Week 5

Due 2/21 **Assignment:** Read Alice Thornton, *Autobiography* (1629-1669), excerpts
In-Class: Introduction to the history of childbirth

Due 2/23

Assignment:

- Read Hendrik van Deventer, *The art of midwifery improv'd* (1716)
- Read Sarah Stone, *A complete practice of midwifery* (1737)
- Look through "Midwives Images"
- List of 1-3 things that you found puzzling or surprising in one of the sources

Week 6

Due 2/28

Assignment:

- Read Nicholas Culpeper, *A Directory for Midwives* (1651), excerpts
- Read Jane Sharp, *The Midwives Book* (1671), excerpts

Due 3/2

Assignment:

- Read Fissell, "Culpeper's Radical Book" in *Vernacular Bodies*
- Choose 2-3 specific examples that Fissell uses to support her argument. Be prepared to discuss how these examples are employed, the sources she uses, and whether and why they are effective.

In-Class: Evidence and analysis

Due 3/4:

ESSAY 2 DUE at 12 Noon (email me a copy directly)

Week 7

Due 3/7

Assignment:

- Bring 1-3 possible research topics to class
- Optional: Listen to this podcast on how to find a topic:
www.benfranklinsworld.com/episode-066-simon-p-newman-how-historians-find-their-research-topics/

In-class: Exploring topics

**** We will meet in the "White Lab", Room 09E, 3rd floor, Healey Library ****

Due 3/9

Assignment: Scan the bibliography on posted on Bb and identify two essay titles that are most intriguing to you. Search the scholarly databases on the Healey Library website until you find them. Scan the two articles, choose the one that looks most interesting and read it, taking notes in response to the following questions:

- What were the scholar's research questions?
- What were his or her research methods?
- What academic discipline is the scholar working in?
- What do you notice about the way the paper is structured? Its style and conventions?
- How does the scholar acknowledge sources?

In-Class: Disciplinary differences

3/12-3/19 SPRING BREAK!

Week 8

Due 3/21

Assignment: TOPICS DUE (bring a 1-paragraph description of your topic)

In-Class: Finding sources

** We will meet at University Archives/Special Collections, 5th floor, Healey**

Due 3/23

Assignment:

- Read David Turner, "Adulterous Kisses and the Meanings of Familiarity"
- Read *A Pocket Guide*, pp. 77-84

In-Class: Tightening topics / Asking analytical questions

Week 9

Due 3/28

Assignment: PRIMARY SOURCE REPORT DUE (bring 3 copies to class)

- Find a primary source for your research essay
- Transcribe a copy of it
- Write a brief 2-3-page essay introducing it; bring 2 copies to class

Due 3/30

Assignment:

- Find a journal article that might be useful for your paper. Print it out, read it, and bring it to class
- Read *A Pocket Guide*, pp. 84-97

In-Class: Source forms and functions

Week 10

Due 4/4

Assignment:

- Read primary source packet on marital breakdown
- Read Byrd Diary excerpts
- Bring 2-3 questions to class that the readings provoked

In-Class: Thinking critically about sources

Due 4/6

Assignment:

- Find a book in Healey that might be useful and bring it to class
- Bring *A Pocket Guide* to class
- ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE (Bring a hard copy to class). It should include:
 - Primary sources (number can vary)
 - At least 8 secondary sources, 3 of which must be books
 - 1-2 sentences describing each source and how you plan to use it

In-Class: Evaluating sources / citation practices

Week 11

Due 4/11

NO CLASS -- One-on-one conferences with me

Due 4/13

NO CLASS -- One-on-one conferences with me

Week 12

Due 4/18

Assignment:

- Read Booth, *The Craft of Research*, “Introductions”
- **INTRO PARAGRAPHS DUE** (bring a hard copy to class)

In-Class: Workshop introductory paragraphs

Due 4/20

Assignment:

- Continue drafting. Bring what you have (anything!) to class
- Read *A Pocket Guide*, pp. 106-112

In-Class: Integrating quotes / thinking about structure

Week 13

Due 4/25

Assignment:

- Read 3 classmates’ drafts (I will email you the three we will read)
- Come to class prepared to discuss them.
- Bring hard copies of your classmates’ drafts to class.

In-Class: Draft workshops

Due 4/27

Assignment: **ESSAY DRAFTS DUE** (bring hard copy to class *and* email it to me)

In-Class: Exercises with drafts

Week 14

Due 5/2

Assignment:

- Read 3 classmates’ drafts (I will email you the three we will read)
- Come to class prepared to discuss them.
- Bring hard copies of your classmates’ drafts to class.

In-Class: Draft workshops

Due 5/4

Assignment:

- Read 3 classmates’ drafts (I will email you the three we will read)
- Come to class prepared to discuss them.
- Bring hard copies of your classmates’ drafts to class.

In-Class: Draft workshops

Due 5/12

FINAL ESSAYS DUE at 12 Noon (email me a copy directly)