

# American Public University System

*The Ultimate Advantage is an Educated Mind*

## Department of History and Military Studies

### HIST491 Senior Seminar in History

3 Credit Hours

8-Weeks

**Prerequisite(s): None but HIST300 recommended**

The course materials, assignments, learning outcomes, and expectations in upper level (300-400) undergraduate courses assume that you have completed lower level (100-200) History courses to develop content knowledge and skills necessary for research, writing, and critical thinking.

Students who have not fulfilled these requirements or awarded transfer credit should strongly consider completing these requirements prior to registering for upper level courses.

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## Instructor Information

**Instructor:** Dr. Loni Bramson

**Email:** [loni.bramson@mycampus.apus.edu](mailto:loni.bramson@mycampus.apus.edu) (For use before and after the course. During the course use Messages only.)

**Skype:** My Skype ID is dr.bramson.

**Office Hours:** By appointment only, and only through Skype.

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## Course Description

Students are required to develop primary and secondary source materials on their research topic and address the writing requirements as described in the syllabus and classroom assignments. The thesis proposal must provide a clear description of a question or problem and a proposed method of answering the question or solving the problem.

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## Course Scope

HIST491 is divided into eight weeks and is based on a learning experience that culminates in a Research Proposal and Working Bibliography. Throughout the course the student will work with the professor to identify a topic, formulate a proposal, and research primary and secondary sources.

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**Course Objectives**

Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify the purposes and types of historical research, the various methods and designs for a research proposal, and the steps in the research process.
2. Evaluate past and current research in order to formulate researchable problems related to the topic and thesis.
3. Justify the scope of the topic and significance of potential findings related to the proposal.
4. Develop a cogent introduction, review of the literature, and methodology pertaining to the specific research topic.
5. Compose a complete research proposal and working bibliography for the thesis.

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**Course Delivery Method**

This course is delivered via distance learning and enables students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. APUS ensures that the proper course materials and access to an online learning management system are available to you.

In online courses, we construct knowledge not just by completing readings and assignments. An important part of the process is communicating with classmates and learning from what they have to say. As such, we need to share online conversations about ideas.

Direct interaction is a key feature of the educational experience. For that reason, it is important that you interact with fellow students and the course instructor during the course as specified in this syllabus. Additionally, you can contact the instructor during posted office hours.

You are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals we understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment please contact the faculty before the due date so you can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution. Routine submission of late assignments is unacceptable and may result in points deducted from your final course grade.

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**Course Materials**

**NOTE:** Students in History and Military Studies classes may not use Wikipedia.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- Marius, Richard, and Melvin E. Page. *A Short Guide to Writing about History*. 8th ed. New York: Longman, 2012.
- Turabian, Kate L. *Manual for Writers of Term Papers*. 7th Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. (Kate L. Turabian's *Manual for Writers* is a more accessible citation guide than the longer and more formal guide, *The Chicago Manual of Style*. While historians traditionally use *Chicago*, the *Turabian* is essentially the same documentation system but in a more accessible manner for student writers.

**RECOMMENDED REFERENCES**

- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 16<sup>th</sup> edition, can be found in the APUS library system, online at: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.ezproxy2.apus.edu/16/contents.html>. Please use the link to the *Chicago Manual* if information is needed for citations that are not available in Turabian.
- **General History Links accessible through the APUS Online Library.**  
United States and World

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** The Department of History and Military Studies requires conformity with the traditional University of Chicago Style Manual and its Turabian offshoot. Citations will follow traditional footnote attribution. Do not use endnotes or parenthetical (MLA) variation. **Students in History and Military Studies classes cannot use Wikipedia.**

**WEB-BASED READINGS Hyperlinks to these readings are in the Course Materials, External Website section): Recommended References:**

The APUS Online Library, in the Tutorial and Student Studies Center provides a link to the *Chicago Style Manual – Online*. This is that link: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.ezproxy2.apus.edu/16/contents.html>.

If you are majoring in History or Military History, then it is highly recommended that you purchase a bound version of this style manual because you will need to be required to follow this citation manual in all of your History, Military History and Military Studies courses.

Microsoft Word **NOTE – The classroom only supports .doc and .docx files.** Please visit Adobe for a free copy of [Adobe Reader](#).

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**Evaluation Procedures**

This course, one of your two senior capstone courses, has a variety of measurement tools, with the primary grade based on the submission of a Research Proposal and Working Bibliography. To assist you in reaching this goal you will have milestones throughout the course and all of them are graded. These milestones are defining your research proposal topic (week one), evaluating and identifying sources (weeks two, five, and six), and developing an argumentative thesis. Along the way, six discussion boards will help you with the proposal.

Detailed instructions for the Research Proposal and Working Bibliography are in the Resources folder.

When submitting work, the proper file name is:

Hist491SectionNumberLastNameFirstNameAssignmentName.doc or .docx. No late assignment will receive an A grade unless the instructor has been contacted before the due date with a valid reason.

**COMPUTER FAILURE or other technological problems are not an excuse for late work. Save your work every few minutes. Purchase an external hard drive and back up your work. Alternatively, you can save your drafts and documents in a cloud. Google Drive and dropbox.com are free.**

The assignment and course breakdown are as listed below --- it looks more complicated than it really is and gives you multiple changes to earn points, not just a few all or nothing assignments.

| <b>Grade Instruments:</b> | <b>Points</b> | <b>% Final Grade</b> |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Forum #1                  | 5             | 5%                   |

|   |     |      |
|---|-----|------|
| Forum #2  | 5   | 5%   |
| Forum #3  | 5   | 5%   |
| Forum #4  | 5   | 5%   |
| Forum #5  | 5   | 5%   |
| Forum #6  | 5   | 5%   |
| Research Proposal Topic                               | 1   | 1%   |
| Working Bibliography of Primary and Secondary Sources | 4   | 4%   |
| Chicago Style Quiz                                    | 5   | 5%   |
| How to Vet Sources Exercise                           | 5   | 5%   |
| Thesis Sentence(s)                                    | 5   | 5%   |
| Proposal and Working Bibliography                     | 40  | 40%  |
| TOTAL   | 100 | 100% |

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**Course Outline**

| <u>Week</u>   | <u>Topic(s)</u>                                  | <u>Learning Objective(s)</u> | <u>Reading(s) and Web-Activities</u>                      | <u>Assignment(s) and Discussion Boards</u>  |
|---------------|--|------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Week 1</b> | Research Proposal Topic and Virtual Introduction | CO-1 and CO-2                | Marius and Page, Chapters 1 to 3.<br>Turabian, Chapter 1. | <p>Post your virtual introduction.</p> <p>Forum #1, Research Topic. Your postings are due throughout the week, this is a very active forum between you and me about the topic of your research proposal. Initial postings are due as soon as you can formulate a concept of what you want to write about. We will then work together to refine it. Post at least 3 times in the forum about your research topic. The initial post must be made by the Friday with the subsequent posts made by the Sunday, midnight. The earlier you do it, the more I will be able to help you, as I am not available 24/7. I recommend that you start posting by Wednesday.</p> <p>Research Proposal Topic due by Sunday in the Assignments area.</p> |
| <b>Week 2</b> | Historiography                                   | CO-2 and Co-3                | Materials in Lesson 2                                     | Forum #2: Major Historians on your Topic. Post at least 3 times in the forum. Again, it is best to  |

|               |                                   |      |  |  |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|------|--|--|
|               |                                   |      |  | post as early as possible so that I can help you.  |
| <b>Week 3</b> | Secondary Sources                 | CO-2 | Marius and Page, pg. 48 to 53 and Chapters 4 and 6.<br>Turabian, Chapters 3 and 4. | Exercise: how to vet Sources<br>Forum #3: Secondary Sources<br>Post at least 3 times in the forum, as early as possible.<br><br>Week 3 Skype appointment. This is not required, but I will make myself available to students twice during the course to Skype with you about your research proposal. Make an appointment because they are first come, first serve. |
| <b>Week 4</b> | Primary Sources                   | CO-2 | Marius and Page, Chapters 4 and 6.<br>Turabian as needed.                          | Forum #4: How will these sources support your argument?<br>Post at least 3 times in the forum, as early as possible.   |
| <b>Week 5</b> | Using Chicago Correctly           | CO-1 | Turabian, part II—bibliography style as needed.                                    | Exercise: Submit Working Bibliography of primary and secondary sources using Chicago-style citations correctly.<br>Quiz on using Chicago Style.<br>Non-graded discussion for questions.<br>Assignments due by Sunday night, midnight.  |
| <b>Week 6</b> | Original Argument                 | CO-4 | Marius and Page, Chapter 3.<br><br>Turabian, Chapter 2 and 5.                      | Forum #5: Formulating a Thesis Sentence<br>Post at least 3 times in the forum, as early as possible.<br><br>Week 6 Skype appointment. This is not required, but I will make myself available to students twice during the course to Skype with you about your research proposal. Make an appointment because they are first come, first serve.                     |
| <b>Week 7</b> | Proposal and Working Bibliography | CO-5 | As required to complete proposal and working bibliography                          | Non-graded discussion.   |
| <b>Week 8</b> | Proposal and Working Bibliography | CO-5 | As required to complete proposal and working bibliography.                         | Proposal and Working Bibliography due by the Wednesday.<br><br>Forum #6: submit proposal and bibliography to forum by Wednesday. Respond to at least 2 of your classmates' proposals by the Sunday.  |

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## **CITATION AND REFERENCE STYLE**

Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow the accepted guidelines of the American historical profession, which is the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16<sup>th</sup> ed. This course will require students to use the citation and reference style established by Kate Turabian in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1996), which is the most readily available distillation of the [Chicago Manual of Style](#).

The [Chicago Manual of Style](#) for book-length works and its *Turabian* offshoot for research papers have long been the standard across all fields of study, as well as much of the publishing industry. These texts cover the layout and production gamut--including rules for chapter headings and subheadings, abbreviations, alphabetizing non-English names, and table design / designation.

1. Front matter—for example, title page, copyright statement, dedication, table of contents, lists of illustrations or tables, acknowledgements, abstract.
2. Narrative with scholarly attributions.
3. Back matter--bibliography, appendices.

## **NETIQUETTE**

Online universities promote the advance of knowledge through positive and constructive debate--both inside and outside the classroom. Discussions on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and “flaming.” Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting--basic academic rules of good behavior and proper “Netiquette” must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the fun and excitement of learning that does not include descent to personal attacks, or student attempts to stifle the discussion of others.

## **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

The staff at American Public University System (APUS) knows how hard it is for students to balance work and other commitments while pursuing a college education. We created the APUS Student Handbook as the ultimate reference for answers to questions about administrative and academic policies and procedures. APUS students do not have to wait for our offices to be open in order to find the information they need to succeed. No matter what location or time zone our students are in, they can consult the online Student Handbook with any questions about financial aid, tuition assistance and refunds, registration, drop/withdrawal or extensions, the University System's grading system, and the electronic classroom. The handbook also covers issues related to various student services, academic guidance, and each student's rights and responsibilities. Of course, there may be a unique question that requires additional information outside that is covered in the handbook. APUS students should use the contact information listed online inside their campus to contact the APUS staff with any additional questions. See [Student Handbook](#).

## **DISCLAIMER STATEMENT**

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

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