

Syllabus

HIST 803: Research and Writing Seminar: America to 1860

Spring 2021
3 Credits

Online, via Zoom
Thursdays, 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Zoom: <https://udel.zoom.us/j/99725008154>
password: writegood



Class Spotify Playlist:
["The Mouse Eat the Cable in Two"](#)

Note: This syllabus, including the course calendar, is subject to change with notification. You are now looking at the most up-to-date version.

1. Instructor Information

Prof. Dael Norwood
he/him
dnorwood@udel.edu

Office Hours:
Weds, 2-5pm, via Zoom
[Book an appointment](#)

Office Hours

I hold regular Zoom office hours on Wednesdays, 2-5pm, but will add extra hours for weeks when we're doing individual meetings, draft consultations, etc.

To attend, [book an appointment using my Google Calendar](#). (If none of the listed times listed work for your schedule, email me to suggest a time that would).

Office Hours Zoom Info:

Meeting ID: 946 6049 4640

<https://udel.zoom.us/j/94660494640>

Password: officehrs

About Your Professor:

I am a historian of nineteenth-century America specializing in the global dimensions of U.S. politics and economics. My particular area of specialty is on the political economy of commerce: how the ideas and practices of international exchange have affected Americans' relations with other powers, as well as their dealings with each other. I'm now finishing my first book, entitled *Trading in Freedom: How Trade with China Defined Early America* (forthcoming December 2021, University of Chicago Press). It examines how the flourishing commerce between the United States and China intertwined with the struggles over sovereignty, citizenship and race that defined the first century of the American state. My other work includes studies of the role of commerce in shaping the Constitution, the historiography of political economy in the early republic, the history of indentured servitude, and the origins of "the businessman" as a potent political and cultural identity in America.

At UD I teach courses on the history of America in the world, capitalism, U.S. foreign relations, race and inequality, and American political economy. I'm also an active member of the UD Antiracism Initiative, where since early 2020 I have recruited and directed research teams investigating the history and legacies of dispossession, slavery, and race in Delaware, generally, and the University of Delaware specifically. (FYI: we're always looking to recruit new researchers).

During the pandemic, I've been enjoying tv procedurals (currently, *The Mentalist* and *Lupin*), posting pics of long walks to Instagram, and writing GOTV postcards.

2. Course Description

History 803 provides you with an opportunity to research and write history. The goal of the seminar is for each seminar participant to produce an article-length research essay on a topic in early American history, a topic construed broadly, vastly, and generously. This essay, in all its drafts, should be 25-30 pages in length (6,000-8,000 words), with footnotes and a bibliography (the latter not included in the page/word count).

This will not be easy work, but you will have guidance – from me, and from your classmates – to aid you. By completing the assignments, you will learn how to locate sources needed for successful research on early American history; how to interpret those sources and use them as evidence to craft a novel, credible analysis; and finally, how to assemble that evidence to write a polished, engaging narrative. Seminar participants will be graded on an A-F scale for their class participation and their final research papers (see “Assessment” below); all other presentations, drafts, and critiques will be marked either complete/incomplete, for marginal credit.

We will proceed as follows:

Before our first class, I will assign two articles; these will provide the basis for a discussion about the research article as a genre, and an introduction to the course’s content. Read them closely and come prepared to discuss them in depth.

At that first meeting, all seminar participants will *also* be assigned a prompt for a “**treasure hunt.**” Working in pairs, seminarians will investigate the digital resources of Morris Library and outside online databases, and present their findings at our second class. Your succinct oral reports should include tips for conducting online searches and locating specific collections.

Treasure-hunting has only one iron rule: **you may not use any monographs or journal articles.** Focus on mastering the available resources (databases, catalogs, and finding aids), but remember to leave space for serendipity, too.

In non-pandemic times, I’d say “haunt the stacks, and get lost in the stuff,” but since such physical loitering is quite dangerous in our current moment, my advice is to replicate that wandering as best you can online.

You’ll be amazed at what you can find in some random collection, in that government report, or what suddenly draws your attention after examining the thousandth image in that digitized microfilm. I encourage you to conspire with each other while treasure-hunting: exchange tips and leads, share strategies and ideas. I also urge you to consult the excellent staff at Morris Library – the professional librarians, not the student workers – in Reference, Microfilms, and Special Collections. (You can find their contact information on the library website).

At the end of our second class meeting, seminar members will break themselves into three groups. Those who wish to pursue a topic of their own devising, unrelated to the first treasure hunt, will comprise Group I. Those students who wish to pursue a research topic related – however tangentially – to the first treasure hunt will join Group II. Students who have made no firm decision about their research project will form Group III. As necessary, I will assign each member of Group III an individual treasure hunt for the following week, one that should yield a research topic.

After further research and reflection – including a survey of the secondary literature to ensure that no other scholar has addressed your subject as fully or as imaginatively as it merits – you will present **an individual research proposal** to the seminar. Proposals should be two pages, double-spaced: page one should be a description of your research project; page two should be a brief bibliography, indicating major primary sources and secondary works, with some summary of the role you expect them to serve in your work. Individual research proposals are due in our shared

Google Drive folder by class time on the day of your presentation; presentations will be weekly, by group (see Course Calendar, below).

I urge all seminar participants to consult with me on research topics *well before* the seminar meeting in which you will make your presentation to the class. Indeed, I encourage you to confer with me regularly about your research, across the semester – in person works best. My regular office hours are Weds., 2-5pm ([book an appointment](#)), though I can be available at other times by request; just email me.

Group I will have the **first draft** of their research papers finished and uploaded to our shared Google Drive folder by 5pm, Friday April 2. Group II will do the same by class time the next week, and followed, logically, by Group III.

These drafts will provide fodder for productive discussion and written criticism. On the day drafts are due to be discussed, seminar participants will provide each author with a **critique** – one page, single-spaced, addressed to the draft author as a letter, constructive but unsparing, and organized so as to answer the questions in the “draft workshop” script – submitted by class time the shared Google Folder. We will repeat, in the same order, a similar review of **revised drafts**, at the times appointed in the syllabus.

It is important that all seminar members meet their deadlines. Failing to do so will inconvenience your colleagues, and possibly result in “bumping” the discussion of an overdue paper into a later week, thereby stealing time from the seminar members allotted that class meeting for consideration of their drafts. So: don’t fall behind!

Final research papers are due by 5pm on Thursday, May 20, 2021.

This course aims to provide you with an opportunity to improve your historical research and writing skills through practice. To get the most out of the semester’s work, for the final assignment you will draft a **reflection paper** – two to three pages in which you consider the work you completed and skills you developed, and what of them you want to carry into the future.

3. Learning Resources

Readings

This course has no required textbooks.

Our course readings will consist primarily of drafts, as described above, made available through a shared class Google Drive folder. The two articles to be read before our first class meeting will have citations with links in the syllabus, and be shared in an introductory email.

You should attend every class with copies of the readings accessible. If you have any trouble obtaining course texts in a timely manner, please let me know, and I will do what I can to assist you.

Technology

Zoom

In this class, Zoom will be used for video conferencing for each of our class meetings. You will receive a meeting invitation with a specific web link and meeting ID number for use in this class; this is also linked at the top of our syllabus.

Zoom is a web-based application that can be used from a computer, tablet, or phone. From a computer, click the class web link and be sure to install the small program that will download to your computer. You only need to install the program once. From a mobile device, download the free Zoom app and type in the class meeting ID number. A microphone and camera are recommended for online meetings. Information on how to test your computer's audio and video can be found on [Zoom's website](#). Learn more info about [Zoom at UD](#).

Google Drive

In this class, a shared Google Drive will be used for the submission, and sharing, of all assignments, including research proposals, drafts, and revised drafts. You will receive an email notification alerting you to the location of this folder.

Additional Learning Resources

- University of Delaware University Library, <https://library.udel.edu/>
- UD Library Guide: Primary Sources, <https://guides.lib.udel.edu/primarysources>
- UD Library Guide to History Resources, <https://guides.lib.udel.edu/history>
- Chicago-style Quick Citation Guide, https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html
- University of Delaware Student Code of Conduct: Academic Honesty, <http://www.udel.edu/stuguide/19-20/code.html>
- Disability Support Services (accommodations, etc), <https://sites.udel.edu/dss/>
- Writing Center (consultations for papers and oral presentations *highly* recommended), <https://www.writingcenter.udel.edu/>
- Office of Academic Enrichment (tutoring, study skills, time management), <http://www.ae.udel.edu/>

4. Learning Assessment

Seminar participants will be graded on an A-F scale for their class participation and their final research papers; all other presentations, drafts, and critiques will be marked either complete/incomplete, for marginal credit.

Grade Breakdown & Grading Scale

Course Component	Percentage of Total		Grade	Interval
Participation	15%		A	94.0 and above
Treasure Hunt Presentation	1%		A-	90.0 to <94.0
Research Proposal & Presentation	2%		B+	87.0 to <90.0
First Draft	2%		B	84.0 to <87.0
Critiques of Group I First Drafts	1%		B-	80.0 to <84.0
Critiques of Group II First Drafts	1%		C+	77.0 to <80.0
Critiques of Group III First Drafts	1%		C	74.0 to <77.0
Revised Draft	2%		C-	70.0 to <74.0
Critiques of Group I Revised Drafts	1%		D+	67.0 to <70.0
Critiques of Group II Revised Drafts	1%		D	64.0 to <67.0
Critiques of Group II Revised Drafts	1%		D-	61.0 to <64.0
Final Paper	70.00%		F	< 61.0
Total	100.00%			

Participation

Our course will only be as good as the level of participation of its members. For this reason, participation is graded and weighted heavily in your final grade. Participation is measured not just by talking – although that you must do that – but by your sustained critical engagement with the readings, with the questions posed by fellow students and the professor, and with the larger historical issues throughout the term. Obviously, you cannot participate effectively if you are not in attendance: thus, every effort should be made to attend our meetings.

Research Proposal

Proposals should be two pages, double-spaced: page one should be a description of your research project; page two should be a brief bibliography, indicating major primary sources and secondary works, with some summary of the role you expect them to serve in your work. Individual research proposals are due in our shared Google Drive folder by class time on the day of your presentation; presentations will be weekly, by group (see Course Calendar, below).

Critiques of [First or Revised] Drafts

On the day drafts are due to be discussed, seminar participants will provide each author with a critique – a one page, single-spaced, addressed to the draft author as a letter, constructive but unsparing, and organized so as to answer the questions in the “draft workshop” script (found in the shared Google Folder). Critiques should be submitted by class time to the shared Google Folder.

Research Paper (First Draft, Revised Draft, & Final)

This is the primary assignment for the seminar: an article-length research essay on a topic in early American history. It should be 25-30 pages in length (6,000-8,000 words), with footnotes and a bibliography (the latter not included in the page/word count) formatted in Chicago style.

For models of this assignment, look to published articles in journals like the *Journal of the Early Republic*, *Early American Studies*, or the *William and Mary Quarterly*.

NB: These guidelines also apply to drafts - both First Drafts and Revised Drafts. Each draft paper should be as close in form and length to the final research paper as is possible in that moment.

Rubric for Written Assignments

When grading, only the words on the page will be evaluated – external variables like improvement or effort will not be. The effort you put into an assignment will most certainly be evident in the paper you produce. Pluses and minuses represent shades of difference.

- A range papers -** have a clear, engaging and interesting argument, show extraordinary analytical effort or skill, deploy evidence insightfully and in-depth, make almost no factual errors, are comprehensive, thought-provoking, and written in a clear, sophisticated style;
- B range papers -** exhibit a clear but perhaps vague, uninteresting, or inconsistently argued argument, show good analytical skills, have no more than a few insignificant factual errors, include well-chosen but sometimes undigested evidence, and are solidly written, and thorough;
- C range papers -** do not mount a clear and convincing argument, fully analyze the subject, make few consequential factual errors, fail to present sufficient evidence to support all claims, or are written in an unclear, simplistic, or technically flawed style
- D range papers -** are purely descriptive, lacking a clear argument and displaying a rambling or unfocused structure, draw on little evidence, make factual errors, are incomplete, or do not show sustained awareness of the basic conventions of academic writing
- F papers -** have failed to address the questions or objectives of the assignment, or fail to meet basic standards for analysis, use of evidence, or quality of expression in writing, or fall significantly short of the assigned length.

Reflections Paper

It is useful to take stock at the end of a semester, to consider the work completed and skills developed, and contemplate what of it you want to carry with you into the future. This assignment is an opportunity to pause and reflect on how your thinking and skills developed during the course in a structured way.

Before you write, review the work you've completed for this course – readings, treasure hunt presentation, notes on sources, research proposals, drafts, revisions, final paper, etc. Then, draft a short paper of no more than 1,500 words (3-4 pages) in which you take stock of the semester, reflect on all that work, and consider how you plan to apply this expertise going forward.

Some questions you might consider: Where did you start in terms of your approach to historical research and/or your specific research topic – and where have you ended up? What have you learned about reading, analyzing, and making historical arguments? What lessons – about the topic, about using sources, about reading, about writing – will you take from this class into your other endeavors? What's going to stick with you?

Suggestions or criticism about the course (assignments, discussion organization, feedback etc) are welcome – but this paper should primarily be a reflection on *your* progress.

5. Course Calendar

Week 1	Thu., Feb. 18	Introduction, Discussion, & Treasure Hunt Assignment A <u>Readings (available in shared Google Folder)</u> Kathryn Olivarius, “Immunity, Capital, and Power in Antebellum New Orleans,” <i>The American Historical Review</i> 124, no. 2 (April 1, 2019): 425–55. Yohuru Williams, “‘Revenged in the Most Terrible Manner’: The Lynching of African American Civil War Veteran William ‘Obie’ Evans,” <i>Delaware History</i> 34, no. 1 (Fall 2013): 33–60 <u>Optional</u> Sarah Jones Weicksel and James Grossman, “Racist Histories and the AHA.” <i>Perspectives on History</i> , January 27, 2021,
Week 2	Thu., Feb. 25	Reports on Treasure Hunt A, by all Treasure Hunt B Assignment for Group III
Week 3	Thu., Mar. 4	Reports on Treasure Hunt B, by Group III Presentation of Individual Research Proposals by Group I (Proposals for those presenting are due in shared Google Folder by class time)
Week 4	Thu., Mar. 11	Presentation of Individual Research Proposals by Group II (Proposals for those presenting are due in shared Google Folder by class time)
Week 5	Thu., Mar. 18	Presentation of Individual Research Proposals by Group III (Proposals for those presenting are due in shared Google Folder by class time)
Week 6	Thu., Mar. 25	No group class; individual meetings (make an appt) & work on papers
Week 7	Thu., Apr. 1	No group class; individual meetings (make an appt) & work on papers Group I First Drafts Due in shared Google Folder <u>by Friday at 5pm</u>
Week 8	Thu., Apr. 8	Discussion of Group I First Drafts Group II First Drafts Due in shared Google Folder <u>by Friday at 5pm</u>
Week 9	Thu., Apr. 15	Discussion of Group II First Drafts Group III First Drafts Due in shared Google Folder <u>by Friday at 5pm</u>
Week 10	Thu., Apr. 22	Discussion of Group III First Drafts Group I Revised Drafts Due in shared Google Folder <u>by Friday at 5pm</u>
Week 11	Thu., Apr. 29	Discussion of Group I Revised Drafts Group II Revised Drafts Due in shared Google Folder <u>by Friday at 5pm</u>
Week 12	Thu., May. 6	Discussion of Group II Revised Drafts

Group III Revised Drafts Due in shared Google Folder by Friday at 5pm

Week 13 Thu., May. 13

Discussion of Group III Revised Drafts

Finals Week Thu., May 20

Final Paper due in shared Google Folder by 5pm

Tues., May 25

Reflection Paper due by 5pm

6. Course Policies

Course specific policies

Courtesy

We will be discussing contentious issues throughout the semester, and practicing the very difficult art of offering – and accepting – constructive criticism. While different opinions are expected, I will demand that you show courtesy, respect, and generosity to your fellow seminar colleagues, at all times.

Attendance

We're all adults. Let's be here on time, every time, for every meeting. Regular attendance is expected unless there are significant extenuating circumstances forcing you to miss class. Per [University of Delaware attendance policy](#), absences will be excused for religious holidays and observances, military duty, and participation as a university representative in official extracurricular activities, as well as for illness, family emergencies, or other personal crises. If you are going to be absent, I expect a message explaining why. Excessive unexcused absences will negatively affect your participation grade.

Communication

A shared Google Drive folder will be maintained for this class; check it regularly for course materials, including readings and draft papers.

Outside of class, I communicate primarily via email, so make sure you regularly check your University of Delaware email account. During the regular semester, you can expect an email response to any inquiries within 48 hours. That said, while I am happy to answer simple queries over email, I will not discuss paper topics or grades in-depth. Please see me in office hours (Weds., 2-5pm, [book an appointment](#)) for these more involved discussions.

Late Work

Late written work is not encouraged, but will be accepted. However, you will lose a half a letter grade for every day that a paper is late (e.g. an A will become an A-, a B+ a B, etc.). That said, it is far, far better to turn in a late paper than to plagiarize in order to get a paper in on time.

UD Policies

Academic Integrity

Please familiarize yourself with UD policies regarding academic dishonesty. To falsify the results of one's research, to steal the words or ideas of another, to cheat on an assignment, to re-submit the same assignment for different classes, or to allow or assist another to commit these acts corrupts the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work and neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance. Complete details of the university's academic integrity policies and procedures can be found at sites.udel.edu/studentconduct/sgup/ Office of Student Conduct, 218 Hullihen Hall, (302) 831-2117. E-mail: student-conduct@udel.edu

Harassment and Discrimination

The University of Delaware works to promote an academic and work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. As a member of the community, your rights, resource and responsibilities are reflected in the non-discrimination and sexual misconduct policies. Please familiarize yourself with these policies at www.udel.edu/oei. You can report any concerns to the University's Office of Equity & Inclusion, at 305 Hullihen Hall, (302) 831-8063 or you can report anonymously through UD Police (302) 831-2222 or the EthicsPoint Compliance Hotline at www1.udel.edu/compliance. You can also report any violation of UD policy on harassment, discrimination, or abuse of any person at this site: sites.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct/how-to-report/

Faculty Statement on Disclosures of Instances of Sexual Misconduct

If, at any time during this course, I happen to be made aware that a student may have been the victim of sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic/dating violence, or stalking), I am obligated by federal law to inform the university's Title IX Coordinator. The university needs to know information about such incidents to, not only offer resources, but to ensure a safe campus environment. The Title IX Coordinator will decide if the incident should be examined further. If such a situation is disclosed to me in class, in a paper assignment, or in office hours, I promise to protect your privacy--I will not disclose the incident to anyone but the Title IX Coordinator.

For more information on Sexual Misconduct policies, where to get help, and reporting information, please refer to www.udel.edu/sexualmisconduct. At UD, we provide 24/7/365 crisis assistance and victim advocacy and counseling. Contact 302-831-1001 to get in touch with a sexual offense support advocate, as well as confidential and anonymous counseling services for other concerns.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Any student who thinks he/she may need an accommodation based on a disability should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS) office as soon as possible. Students who have documentation of their need for accommodation should register via the SAM platform: andes.accessiblelearning.com/UDEL/. Reach DSS in the following ways: Phone: 302-831-4643, fax: 302-831-3261, [DSS website](http://www.udel.edu/dss). Email: dsoffice@udel.edu or visit at 240 Academy Street, Alison Hall Suite 130.

During COVID-19, Disability Support Services staff are available remotely. Please call 302-831-4643 during business hours (8-5 M-F) or email dsoffice@udel.edu for assistance.

Non-Discrimination

The University of Delaware does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, disability, religion, age, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in its employment, educational programs and activities, admissions policies, and scholarship and loan programs as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. The University of Delaware also prohibits unlawful harassment including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

For inquiries or complaints related to non-discrimination policies, please contact: Office of Equity & Inclusion-oei@udel.edu, 305 Hullihen Hall Newark, DE 19716 (302) 831-8063

For complaints related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact: Office of Disability Support Services, dssoffice@udel.edu, Alison Hall, Suite 130, Newark, DE 19716 (302) 831-4643 OR contact the [U.S. Department of Education - Office for Civil Rights](#)

Basic Needs Security

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students (302-831-8939) for support and direction to accessible resources. The campus food pantry, Blue Hen Bounty, is open for walk-ins throughout the semester at 276 South College Ave, M-Th 9am-1:30pm, and W 4-5pm. You can also reach out via e-mail (bluehenbounty@gmail.com).

7. Acknowledgments

I would like to express my grateful appreciation to Jessica Choppin Roney (Temple University), Andrew Shankman (Rutgers University – Camden), Owen White (University of Delaware), Christine Heyrman (University of Delaware), and Catherine McNeur (Portland State University), for their advice and conversation on teaching research methods in history. This syllabus has been improved through study of – and prodigious borrowings from – course materials created by Christine Heyrman (University of Delaware), Jessica Choppin Roney (Temple University), Stephen Ortiz (Binghamton University), and Heather Welland (Binghamton University).

Any errors or limitations are my sole responsibility.

8. Copyright

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