

# HISTORIOGRAPHY AND METHODOLOGY

HIST 300-001 CRN 10991 FALL 2020  
TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, 12:30–1:45 204 KINARD  
DR DAVE PRETTY [prettyd@winthrop.edu](mailto:prettyd@winthrop.edu)  
virtual office hours: MTWTh 1:50 to 2:50 or by appointment

**COVID STATEMENT:** Any student who puts other students and the instructor at risk by appearing in the classroom without a properly (over nose, over mouth) worn, effective mask will fail the course.

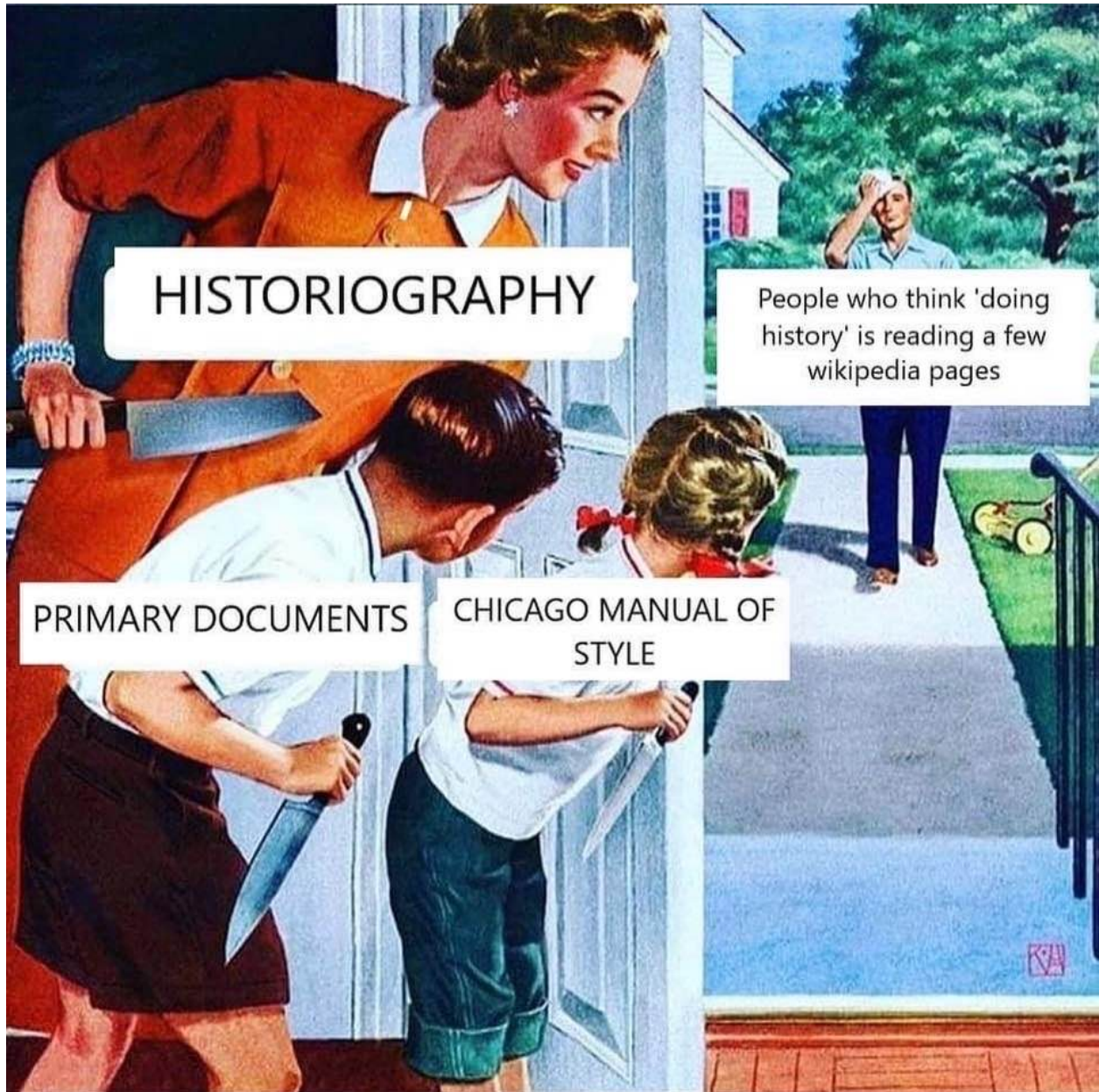
This class is a required course for History majors and for Social Studies majors on the history track. It may also satisfy the methodology requirement for the Social Science minor. It satisfies the Intensive Writing requirement of the general education program.

Methodology is, in theory, simple: the nuts and bolts of doing history research. Students will obtain an ability to research an important subject: use libraries and other databases, read and analyze secondary source material critically and coherently, and present historical work according to the norms of the discipline in a cogent, lucid, and well-documented manner. Students will also understand and be able to utilize the great variety of historical sources and historical modes of research (such as public history, oral history, digital history), as well as the benefits and lurking dangers of the internet.

These skills will be used in writing—and presenting the arguments of—a historiographical essay. Historiography is most simply put the history of history. Every secondary work of history is in itself an artifact of the time and place it was written. Historians must learn why different historians in different times have examined the same evidence, discussed the same objective events and processes, and come to very different conclusions about what caused why, why events occurred in the manner they did, and what the effects of those events were. As broad groups, German historians of the mid-1800s, English historians of the early 1900s, American historians of the late 1900s, and Chinese historians in new millennium will look at the past in very different ways and see very different things as important. Even within each of these subgroups, different historians often had very different interpretations of similar events, depending on political leanings, social background, religious persuasions, or personal experience. When historians address these secondary sources—even when they utilize primary sources that past historians have gathered, evaluated, edited, and annotated—they must be aware of the interplay of all these different currents.

**Goals of the course.** This course satisfies the oral intensive requirement of the general education program. It also satisfies all four university-level competencies.

This course is also a major requirement for history majors and satisfies the methodology requirement for social science minors. For that reason, students will satisfy the first, second, and fourth student learning outcomes of the history department's B.A. degree.



**Student outcomes.** In order to satisfy these complex goals, the course will have the following student learning outcomes:

**History Department goals:**

**Student Learning Outcome 1:** History majors demonstrate an ability to comprehend major issues in historiography.

**Student Learning Outcome 2:** History majors are personally and socially responsible. They demonstrate understanding of ethical dimensions of historical moments, processes, and developments.

**Student Learning Outcome 3:** History majors demonstrate their understanding of the interconnectedness of the world, past and present, by conducting independent research based on the critical assessment of both primary and secondary sources.

**Student Learning Outcome 4:** History majors communicate effectively core themes, ideas, and subject matter, in both written and oral form.

The vast majority of the student's grade is based on work that addresses historiographical issues, fulfilling SLO 1. Historiography demands that students understand how the environment of any scholar deeply effects their view of the past. Not only must they understand this about how previous historians remained part of their contemporary world as they wrote about other places and times, but also about themselves. They must personally address how their own perceptions of the world today can shape their views of the past in a socially responsible manner. The second SLO is thus important in almost every class assignment. Most of the grade is also based on the presentation of lengthy reasoned arguments, on the basis of extensive research in secondary sources, on historiographical issues, fulfilling both SLO 3 and SLO 4.

**University-level competencies:**

- 1) Winthrop graduates think critically and solve problems.
- 2) Winthrop graduates are personally and socially responsible
- 3) Winthrop graduates understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live.
- 4) Winthrop graduates communicate effectively.

The first and fourth ULCs are addressed through the stress on the presentation of reasoned arguments, in which students identify core issues, make an argument about those issues, present evidence applicable to those issues, and weave both evidence and argument together.

The second and third ULCs are addressed by the course's very subject matter. Historiography demands that students understand how the environment of any scholar deeply effects their view of the past. Not only must they understand this about how previous historians remained part of their contemporary world as they wrote about other places and times, but also about themselves. They must personally address how their own perceptions of the world today can shape their

views of the past in a socially responsible manner. These competencies are intertwined in every assignment in this course.

### **Writing Intensive General Education goals:**

Well over four thousand words of writing are required for this course, both in-class exams and a more formal research paper. The research paper will have a rough draft allowing for revision. A workshop on library usage occurs early in the semester. The expectations for these assignments will be extensively discussed.

**Required texts.** Students must read the following items for this course. All books should be available for sale at the bookstore. **You must complete each week's reading *\*\*BY\*\** the date indicated on the syllabus.**

Ian Wood, *The Modern Origins of the Early Middle Ages*

Robert C. Williams, *The Historian's Toolbox: A Student's Guide to the Theory and Craft of History*, **3rd edition ONLY**

*The Chicago Manual of Style* (13th ed. or later; the necessary parts are easily available online)

The two books required for this course reflect the two components of the courses title. *The Historian's Toolbox*, 3rd edition, is a good introduction to the nuts and bolts of historical practice. NOTE: ONLY THE THIRD EDITION IS PERMISSIBLE. IT HAS GONE OUT OF PRINT AND THE BOOKSTORE COULD NOT OBTAIN A FULL COMPLEMENT OF COPIES, BUT THERE ARE MANY COPIES AVAILABLE ON THE WEB. MAKE SURE IT IS THE CORRECT EDITION. We will read and discuss sections of it through the course of the semester.

The other book is a very good work of historiography, looking at how an entire subfield of European history has developed through the course of the last 300 years in ways that reflect the concerns of the times when historians were writing at least as much as the times being written about. This tension is beautifully captured in the title: *The Modern Origins of the Early Middle Ages*. One reason I like this book so much is that it balances two parts of my own life: for over thirty years I was primarily a historian of modern Europe, but have spent the last several years concentrating on the early middle ages (roughly, Europe 300-1000, although even those limits are a matter of controversy). One reason that I decided to concentrate this course on early medieval Europe was because this book exists: I do not know of its equivalent for modern Europe.

This is not an easy book, and I will be doing my best to help you along the way. We will be reading it over the course of most of the semester, between now and the week of November. Everyone will be responsible for leading a class discussion on one chapter. The exact determination of who does which chapter will occur during the third week of classes. Most class sessions currently scheduled to be face-to-face will begin with a ten-minute presentation of the chapter's major conclusions, with a class discussion led by the presenter. Those chapters not presented by students will be presented by the instructor.

There will be quizzes most weeks, in an online format, usually five minutes long that can be taken during a broad window on the first day of the week. They will cover the readings for that week. So, for example, before the first class meeting on September 1, there will be a quiz covering the first chapter of Wood and the first part of *Toolbox*. At other times, there will be other exercises, most notably involving the Chicago Manual of Style.

There will be a midterm the week of September 28. It will cover various topics covered in class, including the two books. There will be a study guide made available the week before. The same is true for a final examination on the day indicated in the syllabus.

The most important part of this class will focus on the writing of a historiographical essay of fifteen to twenty pages (4125 to 5500 words). You will choose a topic from the list provided at the end of this syllabus by September 7. You will, over the course of the semester, identify important sources for this topic and provide a series of annotations for ten of them. Those due dates listed below. The last three scheduled days of in-person class before Thanksgiving will be dedicated to presentations of your research. A rough draft of your paper will be due on November 17. A final draft will be due on December 3.

Rubrics for all assignments will be presented well before the due dates. Most online discussions will take place on Blackboard. These will be largely asynchronous. It is my intention to avoid Zoom presentations. However, if a university-wide move to remote learning—or even a class-specific one, for any reason—is necessary, Zoom presentations will be a necessity.

Students must attend all physical and required synchronous class sessions. The instructor will take roll regularly. Students are permitted two unexcused absences without penalty; every unexcused absence more than that will result in points being subtracted from your grade. For an excuse to be valid, it must state that the student could not attend class. Excuses will also be accepted for deaths in the family but must be supported by evidence. **By remaining in this course, the student understands that the instructor may or may not accept any excuse for a missed class. The midterm and final examination will be not excused except with the most detailed, trustworthy, and verifiable information, according to the instructor's satisfaction. STUDENTS MUST TAKE THE MIDTERM AND FINAL TO PASS THIS COURSE.**

**Summary of assignments:**

|                                |            |
|--------------------------------|------------|
| Midterm examination:           | 10 percent |
| Final examination:             | 25 percent |
| Rough draft of final paper:    | 5 percent  |
| Final draft of final paper:    | 20 percent |
| Leading discussion on chapter: | 10 percent |
| Ten annotations of sources:    | 10 percent |
| Quizzes and other exercises:   | 10 percent |
| Class oral participation:      | 10 percent |

**Grading system:** This course will be graded on a plus/minus basis. All course components will receive a letter grade, the numerical value of which is equal to the grade points as listed in the Winthrop University Catalog (e.g., a C- equals 1.67). The final grade will result from a weighted average of those grades. I will only give incompletes in extraordinary circumstances.

**Classroom behavior:** The instructor will not tolerate disruptive behavior, such as personal conversations; such behavior may result in a student being counted as absent.

**Use of Handheld and Wireless Technology:** Unless specifically informed beforehand, students must turn off ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES before the class begins. During class, these devices must be kept out of sight in a book bag, purse, or pocket. Any student who violates this policy will receive one warning. For subsequent violations the student's final grade will be reduced one full-letter grade for EACH violation. If this policy is violated during any exam or quiz, the student must leave the classroom immediately and receive a grade of zero on the exam or quiz. Students may not use laptop computers or notebooks for taking notes unless coordinated through the Office of Accessibility.

**Ethical behavior:** The instructor will not tolerate unethical behavior, and any student caught cheating will receive an F for the course. **Remember, even if you cite the sources, but do not use your own words, it is plagiarism, and is thus cheating. USE YOUR OWN WORDS.** To aid in this process, all papers will be submitted through turnitin.com. If there are in-person exams, students must supply bluebooks with their names on them to the instructor by the evening before the exams, or risk not being allowed to take the exam. In addition, because of past abuses, baseball caps and shorts will not be permitted during exams.

**Students with disabilities.** If you are a student with a disability (including mental health concerns, chronic or temporary medical conditions, learning disabilities, etc.) and you anticipate or experience academic barriers due to the condition, please contact The Office of Accessibility (OA) for information on accommodations, registration, and procedures. After receiving approval for accommodations through OA, please make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely manner. OA contact information: [accessibility@winthrop.edu](mailto:accessibility@winthrop.edu); 803-323-3290; 307 Bancroft Hall Annex.

**Syllabus Change Policy:** The instructor does his best to adhere to the syllabus, but circumstances, whether based in the class's own experiences, in world events, in weather conditions, or (lord knows) health conditions, may require a change in the syllabus. The syllabus posted Blackboard will be always be considered the active one.

## SCHEDULES OF CLASSES AND ASSIGNMENTS

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 8/25, 27. | Introduction to the course                  |
| 9/1, 9/3  | Chapter I of Wood; part I of <i>Toolbox</i> |

9/8, 9/10      *Toolbox*, chapters 8 and 9; using Winthrop's library resources

9/15, 9/17      *Toolbox*, chapter 10; *Chicago Manual of Style* cheatsheet available on the library website; Wood, chapter 2

9/22, 9/24      Wood, chapters 3 and 4; *Toolbox*, chapters 11 and 12

9/29, 9/31      Midterm on 9/29. *Toolbox*, chapter 13 on 9/31.

10/6, 10/8      Wood, chapters 5 and 6; *Toolbox*, chapter 14 and 15

10/13, 10/15      Wood, chapters 7 and 8; *Toolbox*, chapters 16 and 17

10/20, 10/22      Wood, chapters 9 and 10; *Toolbox*, chapters 18 and 19

10/27, 10/29      Wood, chapters 11 and 12; *Toolbox*, chapters 20–22.

11/5              Wood, chapters 13

11/10, 11/12      Wood, chapters 14 and 15

11/17, 11/19, 11/24      Oral presentations

12/1, 12/3      Individualized discussions with students on final project

12/10              Final presentations

#### ANNOTATION DEADLINES (ALL FRIDAYS AT 5 PM)

FIRST) September 25  
SECOND) October 9  
THIRD). October 16  
FOURTH) October 23  
FIFTH) October 30  
SIXTH) November 6  
SEVENTH AND EIGHTH) November 13  
NINTH AND TENTH) November 20

## TOPICS

Why did the Western Roman Empire fall?

Did “barbarians” conquer Rome or assimilate into it?

What drove the process of Christianization in Europe between 300 and 1000?

Examine the historiography of one of the invading peoples—Franks, Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Vandals, Lombards, and so on.

What happened to Europe’s economy between 400 and 1000? (the Pirenne theory)

How did the nature of religious practice change in Western Europe between 300 and 1000?

What marked the growth of an ascetic movement within Christianity between 300 and 1000?

What was the role of women within Western Christianity between 300 and 1000?

What is the role of women within Western Europe’s ruling elites between 300 and 1000?

How important is an aristocracy in Western Europe between 300 and 1000?

Do Europe’s peasants move from primarily slaves to primarily serfs between 300 and 1000?

What was the nature of the Merovingian and early Carolingian state?

How important was Charlemagne in early medieval history?

Why did the Carolingian empire fall apart by the end of the 800s?

How did the nature of papal power in central Italy change between 300 and 1000?

What happened to Britain after the fall of Rome?

What was the place of Ireland in Western European culture between 300 and 1000?

Vikings (that’s all)

What caused England to become united around the Wessex crown?

What are the effects of the Arab conquest on Spain?

Is the Ottonian dynasty creating a modern Germany?