

Department: HIST

Course No.: 297W

Title: Senior Seminar

Credits: 3

Contact: Nancy Shoemaker

WQ: W

Catalog Copy: HIST 297W. Senior Seminar. Either Semester. Three Credits. Prerequisite or corequisite HIST 211. Prerequisite: ENGL 105, or 110, or 111, or 250. Open only to undergraduate history majors in their senior year. With a change in content, may be repeated for credit.

This seminar gives students the experience of reading critically and in-depth in primary and secondary sources, and of developing and defending a position as an historian does.

W Criteria: This course is a writing intensive senior seminar for history majors and is part of the major requirement. It is designed to give students an in-depth experience of primary source research and the composition of a formal paper based upon that research. Class meetings involve both discussions and workshops. In discussion session students consider and debate historical evidence, various research methods, and different historians' interpretations. In workshops students cover topics such as how to avoid plagiarism, how to choose a topic, how to proofread and edit, how to organize one's ideas, how to develop a thesis, how to accurately cite sources, etc. The writing component will comprise a major research paper the length of which will be at the instructor's discretion, but not less than 15 pages. The research paper will fulfill 75% of the class grade. Since the entire course is devoted to writing this single research paper, students cannot pass the course without having proving that they have satisfactory writing skills. Students revise the entire paper at least once and often have additional opportunities to revise it in its entirety or portions of it. This revision process may include both peer and instructor evaluation, and oral presentations at various stages in the writing process.