

**History 491: Historiography**  
California State University, Channel Islands

**Catalog Description:**

Three hours lecture per week

*Prerequisite: HIST 280, Senior Standing, or consent of the instructor*

This course surveys major historians and their theoretical and methodological approaches to the discipline from the nineteenth century to the present day. The course is designed to update students to the most influential theories in the study of history. Included in this survey are theoretical approaches based on the writings of Braudel, Foucault, Freud, and Marx.

**Learning Objectives and Outcomes:**

Fulfills the historiography category of the History major. By taking this course students will be able to:

- Trace the origins of the historical discipline
- evaluate different perspectives in the study of history
- write a short paper each week about different historical theories
- prepare a major research paper examining a particular theoretical orientation in history
- compare and contrast individual historian's contributions to the discipline

**Required Texts:**

Norman J. Wilson, *History in Crisis? Recent Directions in Historiography*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (2005).  
EReserves available through Blackboard.

**Course Requirements:**

Grades for this course will be based on three things: weekly short papers, a long paper, and participation. All three components should reflect that the student has attended lectures, read the textbook, and engaged the readings critically.

**1. Attendance:** It is assumed that all students will attend all class sessions. More than two unexcused absences (doctor's notes, etc. will be required for an excused absence) will result in a failing grade for the semester.

**2. Participation:** Historiography is best understood through discussion and debate. All students are expected to be active participants in class discussion. As part of participation, each student is expected to help lead discussion at least once during the semester. Also, all students are expected to post questions and reflections on the readings to the course Blackboard site each week. These posts are due at midnight on Wednesdays.

**3. Short Papers:** A 2-3 page paper on the week's readings is due every Thursday. The papers must answer specific questions, which are found on this syllabus. There are a total of fourteen papers, but I will only count your top ten grades. No late papers will be accepted

**4. Paper:** There is one 8-10 paper due in my office. Further details on the paper will be handed out later in the semester. No late papers will be accepted.

**Grading:**

Discussion posts	5%
Participation	25%
Short Papers	20%
Final Paper	50%

**Reading Schedule**

**Part I: Big Questions and Historical Consciousness**

1/22: Introduction

1/29: Greeks, Chinese, and Romans, Oh My!

Wilson: pp. 1-163 (skim)

EReserves:

Thucydides *The Peloponnesian War* 431 BC

Tacitus (c. 56-117 AD) *Annals*

Ssuma Chi'en, *Records of the Grand Historian of China*

Paper Question: How did these ancient historians understand human nature? How did their ideas on human nature influence the histories that they wrote?

2/5: Medieval and Renaissance

Wilson: pp. 6-13

EReserves:

Paulus Orosius, *The Seven Books of History Against the Pagans*

Lorenzo Valla, *On the Donation of Constantine*

Paper Question: How did these medieval and Renaissance historians understand human nature? How did their ideas on human nature influence the histories they wrote?

2/12: Enlightenment

Wilson pp. 14-16; 28-37

EReserves:

Ibn Khaldoun, *Kitab al 'Ibar*

Johann Gottfried Herder, *Reflections on the Philosophy of the History of Mankind*

Paper Question: How did these Enlightenment era historians understand human nature? How did this understanding influence the histories they wrote?

**Part II: The Professionals**

2/19: Ranke, Ranke, Ranke!

Wilson: pp. 17-20

EReserves:

Leopold von Ranke, "The Great Powers"

Leopold von Ranke, selections from various works.

Paper Question: If Ranke were to write the history of the revolution in Corcyra, how would his history be different from Thucydides? Consider what Ranke thinks is important in the study of history and use that to explain what he would emphasize about

Corcyra. You may approach your paper in one of two ways. Either explain the points that Ranke would do differently, or you may be creative and rewrite the "Revolution in Corcyra" as if you were Ranke. You may also include information that Thucydides does not discuss, if you believe it is something that Ranke would find important. That does not mean you have to do research. You can make something up, within reason (in other words, you wouldn't want to tell me that Ranke would be interested in ancient Greek nuclear weapons, but you might want to invent a Corcyran state archive where Ranke would do research. Hint.)

2/26: The "Human Sciences"

Wilson: pp. 20-27

EReserves:

Wilhelm Dilthey, *Pattern and Meaning in History*

Johann Huizinga, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*

Paper Question: How Dilthey or Huizinga write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

3/5: Marx, Marxism, and Marxians

Wilson: pp. 53-59; 106-113

EReserves:

Karl Marx, *The German Ideology*, 1845

E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*

Paper Question: How would a Marxist historian write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

3/12: Structuralism and the *Annales* School

Wilson: pp. 70-77

EReserves:

Fernand Braudel, "History and the Social Sciences: The *Longue Durée*,"

Lucien Febvre, "Excommunication for debts in Franche-Comté"

Paper Question: How would structuralist historian write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

### **Part III: Down The Rabbit Hole**

3/19: Poststructuralism and Postmodernism

Wilson: pp. 119-131, 144-146

EReserves:

Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Chapters 1-3

Edward Said, *Orientalism* pp. 1-15; 92-110

Paper Question: How would a poststructuralist historian write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

**3/26: Spring Break. No Class.**

4/2: Textuality and Narrative

EReserves:

Hayden White, "Interpretation in History," *New Literary History*, Vol. 4, No. 2, On Interpretation: II. (Winter, 1973), pp. 281-314.

Simon Schama, *Dead Certainties, Unwarranted Speculations*

Paper Question: How would a historian using White or Schama's approach to narrative write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

#### 4/9: History and Psychology

Wilson: pp. 94-99

EReserves:

Jacques Lacan, "The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious"

Dyan Elliott, *Fallen Bodies: Pollution, Sexuality, and Demonology in the Middle Ages*

Paper Question: How would a historian using Lacan's approach to psychology write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

### **Part IV: Quo Vadamus?**

#### 4/16: Cultural History

Wilson: 64-68; 90-94

EReserves:

Clifford Geertz, "History and Anthropology"

Robert Darnton, "Workers Revolt: The Great Cat Massacre of the Rue Saint-Séverin"

Paper Question: How would a historian like Robert Darnton write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

#### 4/23: Postcolonialism and Subaltern Studies

Wilson: pp. 138-153

EReserves:

Dipesh Chakrabarty, "Conditions for Knowledge of Working-Class Conditions: Employers, Government and the Jute Workers of Calcutta, 1890-1940"

Oyeniya Okunoye; Ngugi Wa Thiong'o; Micere Githae Mugo, "Dramatizing Postcoloniality: Nationalism and the Rewriting of History in Ngugi and Mugo's 'The Trial of Dedan Kimathi'" *History in Africa*, Vol. 28. (2001), pp. 225-237.

Paper Question: How would a postcolonial historian write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

#### 4/30: History of Gender and Sexuality

Wilson: pp. 114-119

EReserves:

Joan W. Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis"

Katherine B. Crawford, "Love, Sodomy, and Scandal: Controlling the Sexual Reputation of Henry III"

Paper Question: How would a gender historian or historian of sexuality write the history of the revolution in Corcyra?

#### 5/7: Microhistory and the History of Everyday Life

Wilson: 77-82; 85-86

EReserves:

Thomas V. Cohen, "The Case of the Mysterious Coil of Rope."

Adreas Eckart and Adam Jones, "Historical Writing About Everyday Life"

Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*

Paper Question: How would one write the history of Corcyra's revolution using the tools of microhistory and the history of everyday life?

## **Final Project Due: Thursday, May 14, 4:00-6:00**

### **Academic Honesty**

1. Academic dishonesty includes such things as cheating, inventing false information or citations, plagiarism and helping someone else commit an act of academic dishonesty. It usually involves an attempt by a student to show possession of a level of knowledge or skill that he/she does not possess.
2. Course instructors have the initial responsibility for detecting and dealing with academic dishonesty. Instructors who believe that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred are obligated to discuss the matter with the student(s) involved. Instructors should possess reasonable evidence of academic dishonesty. However, if circumstances prevent consultation with student(s), instructors may take whatever action (subject to student appeal) they deem appropriate.
3. Instructors who are convinced by the evidence that a student is guilty of academic dishonesty shall assign an appropriate academic penalty. If the instructors believe that the academic dishonesty reflects on the student's academic performance or the academic integrity in a course, the student's grade should be adversely affected. Suggested guidelines for appropriate actions are: an oral reprimand in cases where there is reasonable doubt that the student knew his/her action constituted academic dishonesty; a failing grade on the particular paper, project or examination where the act of dishonesty was unpremeditated, or where there were significant mitigating circumstances; a failing grade in the course where the dishonesty was premeditated or planned. The instructors will file incident reports with the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs and for Student Affairs or their designees. These reports shall include a description of the alleged incident of academic dishonesty, any relevant documentation, and any recommendations for action that he/she deems appropriate.
4. The Vice President for Student Affairs shall maintain an Academic Dishonesty File of all cases of academic dishonesty with the appropriate documentation.
5. Student may appeal any actions taken on charges of academic dishonesty to the "Academic Appeals Board."
6. The Academic Appeals Board shall consist of faculty and at least one student.
7. Individuals may not participate as members of the Academic Appeals Board if they are participants in an appeal.
8. The decision of the Academic Appeals Board will be forwarded to the President of CSU Channel Islands, whose decision is final.

### **CSUCI Disability Statement**

Cal State Channel Islands is committed to equal educational opportunities for qualified students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The mission of Disability Accommodation Services is to assist students with disabilities to realize their academic and personal potential. Students with physical, learning, or other disabilities are encouraged to contact the Disability Accommodation Services office at (805) 437-8510 for personal assistance and accommodations.

### **Other Policies:**

- Please turn off all cell phones and beepers during class.
- You may use a tape recorder in class.
- Please do not leave class early unless in an emergency.
- Final grades will be determined according to this schedule:

99-100%	A+	78-79%	C+
93-98%	A	73-77%	C
90-92%	A-	70-72%	C-
88-89%	B+	68-69%	D+
83-87%	B	63-67%	D
80-82%	B-	60-62%	D-

All grades below 60% = F

- Information contained in this syllabus, other than that mandated by the University, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor