History 9823B
Professional Development

Mondays 1:30-3:30 / Winter 2017 / Lawson 2270C

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Course description

Historians are everywhere. They work in universities, government departments and agencies, archives, libraries, NGOs, publishing, media, etc. And while I don’t know of any alumni who work in waste management, there may be some out there; at least the guy in the cartoon looks happy.

A fundamental part of doing history is engaging with historical practice itself. Professional Development aims to assist History graduate students develop an understanding of our discipline’s professional expectations; think reflectively about research, writing, and teaching; and develop skills that they will use to launch their career, whether within academia or beyond. History 9823B is a pass/fail course mandatory for 2nd year PhD History students (and elective for MA students), and involves group discussion, student presentations, workshops, and guest speakers. The emphasis throughout the course is on collaborative and participatory learning.

Learning outcomes

Students completing this course will be able to:

- Think reflectively about their PhD specifically and their historical practice generally,
- Present their work more effectively in a variety of forms and to a variety of audiences,
- Develop skills and strategies to manage their work, improving their efficiency and output,
- Improve how they give and receive feedback on writing,
- Identify means of marketing themselves effectively in the academic job market and beyond.
Assignments & evaluation
- Participation (throughout term)
- Draft OGS grant application (due 21 Jan)
- Draft PhD thesis proposal (due 18 Mar)
- Draft academic job app cover letter & CV (due 1 Apr)

Professional Development is a pass/fail course. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings, participate in group discussions each week, and complete the three written assignments, and provide feedback on peers’ written work. History PhD students must pass the course to fulfill their degree requirements.

Schedule of classes, assignment, & readings
All readings are either available on the OWL site or online. In order not to overburden you with readings, I’ve often assigned short passages from books that are well worth you reading in their entirety outside class.

**Week 1 | 9 Jan | intro**
Introduction to course structure, objectives, and assignments.
    - Melissa McDaniels, “Doctoral Student Socialization for Research,” 45-56

**Week 2 | 16 Jan | grant writing - 1**
Why, where, and how to apply for funding. It’s about money, but about more than money.
  - Sample Canadian graduate grant applications. Read the OGS & SSHRC PhD ones, & be prepared to critique them. -- [http://www.chashcacommittees-comitesa.ca/becoming%20a%20historian/applications.shtml](http://www.chashcacommittees-comitesa.ca/becoming%20a%20historian/applications.shtml)

**21 Jan – email your draft Ontario Graduate Scholarship applications to classmates & instructor**

**Week 3 | 23 Jan | grant writing - 2**
Discuss draft OGS applications in class.
**Week 4 | 30 Jan | the thesis proposal – development – 1**

Purposes and expectations of the thesis proposal.

- Queen’s Learning Commons, “Writing a Dissertation Proposal.”
- (Consider also MyGradSkills.ca course on “Research Management.”)

**Week 5 | 6 Feb | the gradual student life**

On making the most, and taking the least time.

- Explore these sites about the PhD & beyond, & find an additional one to recommend in class:
  - Jennifer Polk, *From PhD to Life*
  - Inside Higher Ed, *GradHacker*
  - MyGradSkills.ca
  - The Versatile PhD

**Week 6 | 13 Feb | teaching**

Towards developing a teaching portfolio.

- Western Teaching Support Centre, “Teaching Portfolio.”
- (Consider also MyGradSkills.ca course on “Teaching Dossiers.”)

**Reading Week**

**Week 7 | 27 Feb | thesis proposal - writing - 2**

Discuss thesis proposal progress.

- Barbara Kamler and Pat Thomson, “Putting Doctoral Writing Centre Stage” and “Writing the Doctorate, Writing the Scholar,” *Helping Doctoral Students Write* (2006), 1-27.
Week 8 | 6 Mar | cultivating your academic profile
How and why to build your brand.
- Queen’s Learning Commons, “Creating a Dissertation Support Network.”

Week 9 | 13 Mar | publishing
Should your goal be a dissertation or a book? Is publishing during the dissertation a distraction or a necessity?

**18 Mar – email your draft thesis proposal to classmates & instructor**

Week 10 | 20 Mar | thesis proposal - drafts - 3
Discuss draft thesis proposals in class.

Week 11 | 27 Mar | beyond the PhD – 1
Where, when, and how to look for jobs.
- Jessica Edge and Daniel Munro, Inside and Outside the Academy: Valuing and Preparing PhDs for Careers (Ottawa: Conference Board of Canada, 2015).
- Canadian Historical Association, Sample CVs & cover letters – http://www.chashcacommittees-comitesa.ca/becoming%20a%20historian/cvs.shtml
- (Consider also MyGradSkills.ca course on “The Versatile Graduate: Exploring Diverse Career Paths for PhDs.”)

**1 Apr – email your draft cover letter & CV to classmates & instructor**

Week 12 | 3 Apr | beyond the PhD - 2
Discuss draft cover letters & CVs.
Some other good resources that almost made it into the assigned readings:

- Western SGPS, *Thriving in Graduate School*.
- Gloria Leckie for Western Teaching Support Centre, *Graduate Program Practices at Western University*, 2014.
- Western Teaching Support Centre, *Certificate in University Teaching and Learning*.
- Queen’s University, *Online Thesis Manager*.
- Canadian Historical Association, *Statement on Research Ethics*.
- Resources within COPE: Committee on Publication Ethics.

...& lots else.