

The University of Western Ontario

History 4796F (undergraduate)
History 9870A (graduate)

Seminar on the Comparative History of North America

Fall Semester 2011

Tuesday 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM in Social Science Centre 3010
Thursday 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM in Social Science Centre 3014

Dr. Michael M. Brescia
Visiting Fulbright professor

Office Hours: T 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM; Th 10:30 AM - 12:00 Noon; and by appointment.
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Course Description and Rationale:

This seminar imparts a series of critical and evaluative skills that are part and parcel of historical research, including the historical method, the analysis and interpretation of primary sources and secondary works, the composition of a research paper, as well as the principles of exposition and style. The general theme of the course is North America, with an eye toward identifying and employing comparative methodology to generate case studies that compare and contrast the historical experiences of Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Students may choose a topic that speaks to any dimension of cross-cultural contact and exchange or transnational phenomenon within the broad sweep of continental history from Pre-Columbian times to the present. For example, students might examine the manner in which the various indigenous communities of North America shaped European colonialism in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the effects of the Enlightenment on nascent political structures; the impact of the Industrial Revolution on the Canadian Prairies, Great Plains, and Yucatán Peninsula; the federalist question in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries; the rights of indigenous peoples and minorities under constitutional law; free trade; etc. Transnational analysis and case studies are the driving forces behind this seminar; students will have to integrate the historical experiences of at least two countries in their research. In other words, it is insufficient to examine the federalist question in Canada, for example, without generating comparative case studies from the United States and/or Mexico. Finally, in addition to writing a semester-long research paper, students will examine the art and craft of the historical profession through a variety of analytical exercises, including an assessment of word origins and language, library workshops, reference matter, book reviews, and the delivery of several oral presentations.

Differences between Comparative History and Traditional Approaches to History:

--unit of analysis

--type of knowledge generated

--methodology

--three orders of analysis

Required Readings (both undergraduate and graduate students):

[book]

Brescia, Michael M., and John C. Super. *North America: An Introduction*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009.

[articles and chapters]

Bayly, C.A., et al. "On Transnational History." *American Historical Review* 111, no. 5 (2006): 1441-1464.

Benjamin, Jules R. "Writing Book Reviews." In *A Student's Guide to History*. Ninth Edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

Bender, Thomas. "Introduction" and "Global History and America Today." In *A Nation Among Nations: America's Place in World History*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2006.

Clarkson, Stephen. "Introduction: Framing the Question" and "Conclusion: Framing the Answer." In *Does North America Exist? Governing the Continent after NAFTA and 9/11*. Toronto and Washington, D.C.: University of Toronto Press and Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 2008.

Johnson, Benjamin H., and Andrew R. Graybill, editors. "Introduction." In *Bridging National Borders in North America: Transnational and Comparative Histories*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

Seigel, Micol. "Beyond Compare: Comparative Method after the Transnational Turn." *Radical History Review* 91 (2005): 62-90.

Required Readings (graduate students only):

[book]

Johnson, Benjamin H., and Andrew R. Graybill, editors. *Bridging National Borders in North America: Transnational and Comparative Histories*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.

Course Requirements for Undergraduate Students:

Class Participation	15%
Oral Presentations (6 presentations)	25%
Book Review (2-3 pages)	10%
Etymology Exercise (2-3 pages)	10%
Final Draft of Research paper (15-20 pages; topic proposal, annotated bibliography, peer review, and class presentation will be part of the final draft grade)	<u>40%</u>
	100%

Course Requirements for Graduate Students:

Class Participation	15%
Oral Presentations (6 presentations)	20%
Book Review (3-5 pages)	10%
Etymology Exercise (3-5 pages)	10%
Final Draft of Research Paper (25-30 pages; topic proposal, annotated bibliography, peer review, and class presentation will be part of the final draft grade)	<u>45%</u>
	100%

Grade Scale:

90-100	"A+"
80-89	"A"
70-79	"B"
60-69	"C"
50-59	"D"
Below 50	"E"

Learning Outcomes:

At the end of this research seminar students will be able...

- 1) to identify and employ in a research paper the comparative method in an effort to discern patterns of change and continuity in the North American historical experience;
- 2) to integrate in a research paper interdisciplinary frameworks that reflect the influences of archaeology, ethnohistory, political science, law, economics, etc., on what we know about the North American past
- 3) to differentiate between first, second, and third orders of analysis in the comparative method and how to apply these to a major research paper;
- 4) to locate, evaluate, and use primary sources in the development of a research paper;
- 5) to identify, assess, and critique secondary works and use them in meaningful ways that demonstrate a competent understanding of the historiography related to the topic;
- 6) to identify and evaluate the transnational dimensions of the North American experience in a research paper and several shorter writing assignments; and
- 7) to sharpen critical thinking, reading, writing, and oral presentation skills appropriate to an advanced seminar, and demonstrate these skills in both a research paper and a series of shorter writing assignments.

Book Review: The professor will direct students to various historical journals available in the main library that contain book reviews, such as *American Historical Review*, *American Review of Canadian Studies*, *The Americas*, *Canadian Historical Review*, *Canadian Journal of History/Annales Canadiennes d'Histoire*, *Canadian Review of American Studies*, *Hispanic American Historical Review*, *Itinerario*, *Journal of World History*, *Mexican Studies/Estudios*

Mexicanos, etc. Most scholarly journals are available in two formats: traditional print and electronic. Book reviews are found in the back of journals. Students will peruse a variety of book reviews and choose one that they think best reflects the criteria established in class for a good book review. Afterwards students will read and evaluate a book that speaks to their intellectual interests and write a review of it for class. **** Graduate students are required to read and review the Johnson and Graybill edited anthology. ****

Etymology Exercise: Students will research the etymology (origins and history) of a word, write up their findings in an essay, and report their findings to the class. Students will integrate a discussion of how the word has been used and understood over time in at least two (2) of the countries of North America. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED), *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Etymology*, *Diccionario de la lengua española*, *Diccionario de mejicanismos*, *Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française*, and *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language* are important reference works that will help students fulfill this course requirement. Students will choose one word from the following list:

miscegenation	anarchism	civilization	colonialism
communism	conservatism	democracy	fascism
federalism	feudalism	hagiography	imperialism
liberalism	marxism	nationalism	patriotism
racism	totalitarianism	revolution	multiculturalism
socialism	millenarianism	terrorism	theocracy

Topic Proposal: This explains the topic that you have chosen to research and analyze. In your topic proposal, you will establish a plan that includes why you have chosen to research the particular topic and what steps you will take to execute the plan, particularly its comparative dimensions. You also will posit some preliminary research questions that should help you generate a strong argument and thesis statement in the weeks ahead. Finally, you will discuss briefly the nature of the primary sources and secondary works available to you.

Annotated Bibliography of Primary Sources and Secondary Works: A bibliography lists the primary source materials and secondary works that you have employed to develop and write your research paper. Students are required to annotate each source and work, i.e., provide a brief, analytical description of its contents and explain its significance to your research paper.

Peer Review: Each student will assess a classmate's rough draft. Your assessment consists of three parts: 1) grammar, style, and mechanics; 2) content and analysis, including use of primary sources and the secondary literature; and 3) effective use of the comparative methodology. On the copy of the draft that your classmate provides, you should indicate errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, and style. Please do not correct the errors yourself; only note them. On a separate sheet (typed, double-spaced, and with the proper margins) you will evaluate both the content and analysis of your classmate's research paper. Is the argument clear and persuasive? Does the paper answer the questions raised in its thesis statement? Did the student use enough primary sources? Did the student rely too much on secondary literature? Are there unexplained gaps in the paper? How did the student employ the comparative method? Are there sufficient case studies?

Final Draft: Your seminar paper should be polished, comprehensive, logical, and neat. It must include a title page, citations, and a bibliography (following the guidelines established in class). In this course, students will employ footnotes rather than endnotes or parenthetical citations. In the final draft undergraduates must demonstrate the analytical use of at least three (3)

monographs and two (2) journal articles. Moreover, students need to show mastery of the available primary source materials by designing their papers around their own interpretations rather than those of others. Please number your pages (except the title page and first page). Your final draft should be 15-20 pages, excluding the title page and bibliography (25-30 pages for graduate students).

Course Schedule:

The Mechanics of Historical Research and Comparative Methodology

Th 9/8

A: Introduction. Course Requirements.

B: The Nature and Practice of History

T 9/13

A: Varieties of History and Historical Writing in North America

B: Class discussion of the uses and misuses of the book review.

Assigned Readings: Course syllabus; Rampolla, 24-25; Benjamin, 68-73.

Th 9/15 -- No Class

Students will use this time to identify books in the main library for their book review, as well as consult major reference works such as dictionaries, catalogues, inventories, etc.

T 9/20

A: The Broad Outlines of Historical Method

B: External and Internal Criticism of Primary Sources

C: Oral presentations on book reviews found in academic journals (1).

Assigned Readings: Rampolla, v-vi, 1-21, 39-53.

Th 9/22

A: Comparative Method, Part I: Idiographic vs. Nomothetic Knowledge

B: Class discussion of assigned readings on transnational history.

Assigned Readings: Articles by C.A. Bayly and Micol Seigel.

T 9/27

A: Comparative Method, Part II: Unit of Analysis, Orders of Analyses

B: Class discussion of assigned readings on comparative North America.

Assigned Readings: Chapters by Thomas Bender, Stephen Clarkson, and Johnson/Graybill.

Th 9/29

Workshop in the UWO Library on the nature and scope of available resources

Assigned Readings: Rampolla, 119-134.

T 10/4

Workshop in the UWO Archives on the nature and scope of the collections

Words, Language, and the Historian's Craft

Th 10/6

A: Reference Materials and Language Skills in Historical Research

B: Class discussion of the etymology exercise.

C: **** Book review due ****

Assigned Readings: Rampolla, 22-34; Brescia & Super, ix-xiv.

T 10/11

A: Virtues for, and Weaknesses of, the Historian

B: Oral Presentations on the etymology exercise (2).

C: **** Etymology paper due ****

Periodization, Sources, and Themes in North American History

Th 10/13

A: Historical Overview of North America

B: Convergence and Divergence in the North American Past

C: Oral presentations (3)

Assigned Readings: Brescia & Super, 1-35.

T 10/18

A: Regions and Resources

B: Politics and Power

C: Oral presentations (3)

Assigned Readings: Brescia & Super, 37-88

Th 10/20

A: Diplomacy and Continental Affairs

B: Indians, Africans, and Europeans

C: Oral presentations (3)

Assigned Readings: Brescia & Super, 89-127.

T 10/25

A: Immigration

B: Labor, Industrialization, and Social Class

C: Oral presentations (3)

Assigned Readings: Brescia & Super, 129-165.

Th 10/27

A: Trade and Commerce

B: Church and State

C: Oral presentations (3)

Assigned Readings: Brescia & Super, 167-215.

T 11/1

A: **** Paper topics due ****

B: Oral presentations on topic proposals (4).

Th 11/3

No Class -- Individual conferences with professor to discuss topic proposals.

Scholarly Citations and Principles of Writing

T 11/8

A: Format for Footnotes and Bibliography

B: In-class exercise on proper format
Assigned Readings: Rampolla, 77-118.

Th 11/10

A: Writing Style and Conventions
B: Editing and Revising Your Research Paper
Assigned Readings: Rampolla, 53-76.

T 11/15

A: The Value of Peer Review
B: In-class exercise on peer review.

Th 11/17

A: Oral presentations on the secondary literature related to each student's topic (5).

T 11/22

A: Oral presentations on the primary source materials related to each student's topic (6).
B: **** Annotated bibliography due ****

Th 11/24

No Class -- Research and Writing Day

T 11/29

No Class -- Research and Writing Day -- Professor available for consultation at this time.

Th 12/1

A: Class presentations of research papers, Part I.

T 12/6

A: Class presentations of research papers, Part II.
B: **** Final drafts of research paper due in class ****

Please contact the course instructor if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 661-2111 x 82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation.

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE

PLAGIARISM

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offense (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of Publication and page number. Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writer's ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source; these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction, your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases, in their suspension from the University.

MEDICAL ACCOMMODATION

The University recognizes that a student's ability to meet his/her academic responsibilities may, on occasion, be impaired by medical illness. Please go to https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_accommodations_link_for_OOR.pdf to read about the University's policy on medical accommodation. Please go to <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/medicalform.pdf> to download the necessary form. In the event of illness, you should contact Academic Counselling as soon as possible. The Academic Counsellors will determine, in consultation with the student, whether or not accommodation is warranted. They will subsequently contact the instructors in the relevant courses about the accommodation. Once a decision has been made about accommodation, the student should contact his/her instructors to determine a new due date for term tests, assignments, and exams.

If you have any further questions or concerns please contact, Rebecca Dashford, Undergraduate Program Advisor, Department of History, 519-661-2111 x84962 or rdashfo@uwo.ca