

Syllabus, Fall 2026

HIST 1010-01, Introduction to Historical Skills

Catalog Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to methods and practices of historical research, analysis and writing. It is a discussion-based and collaborative seminar in which students work on and demonstrate the acquisition of historical skills by producing an original research paper using primary and secondary sources. History majors should take this class immediately after the major is declared. Corequisite(s): HIST 1011 required for History majors only. (Fall and Spring)

Textbooks:

Required:

Sarah Maza, *Thinking About History* (University of Chicago Press, 2017). ISBN: 978-0-226-10933-6 (List: \$23.00, paper)

Recommended:

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (9th ed; University of Chicago Press, 2018). ISBN: 9780226430577 (List \$22.00, paper)

For Turabian/Chicago-style source citation formats you can also consult this free [link to the Chicago Manual of Style's quick citation guide](#)

For Research Assistance:

Rod Library has developed a webpage for this course to assist you with research: <https://guides.lib.uni.edu/introduction-to-history>

Grading Criteria (**IMPORTANT: FOR ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS**—except for your draft thesis statement which can be brief and typed directly into BlackBoard—**ALWAYS UPLOAD A FILE TO BLACKBOARD; NEVER PROVIDE ONLY A LINK OR WEB ADDRESS**):

- 1) Class Participation and attendance (10 pts).
- 2) Citations exercise: both footnote (full, not abbreviated) and bibliography format entry, in Chicago-style (a.k.a. Turabian), of all four items provided to you on the BlackBoard course content file “Citation Exercise Data Fall 2026,” **submit on BlackBoard by midnight Sept 10**. This is practice for you in the formats that you must then use for your original research paper (5 pts).

- 3) Article Analysis. Read a scholarly research-based history article of your choice from a peer-reviewed professional journal such as the *American Historical Review* (reading a full-length university press monograph [book] is an alternative option). It is fine to read the article online, but it must be a journal article (or book), not a website or webpage. This article can also then be used as part of your original research project. Provide a **roughly five-seven minute in-class oral description** of the article's content, its thesis, your thoughts on its methodology, and your overall evaluation. Do you have any criticisms? How successfully do you think it "does history"? **Also** submit a written 1-2 page double-spaced summary of the same on BlackBoard, including complete bibliographical information for the article in Chicago/Turabian style format. **Present orally in class Oct 6-15 (in alphabetical order by students' family name); submit written summary on BlackBoard by midnight Oct 15** (10 pts combined oral and written score).
- 4) Annotated draft bibliography for your original research project, containing at least 8 items and including both primary and secondary sources,* with brief comments on their value and relevance. Avoid tertiary sources. **Submit on BlackBoard by midnight Oct 22** (10 pts).
- 5) Draft thesis statement. **Submit on BlackBoard by midnight Oct 29** (5 pts).
- 6) One 20 question multiple choice test covering course material, **Nov 10**. Class does not meet on test day—access via BlackBoard between 8:00am-midnight. **Time limit: 30 minutes.** (20 pts.) There is no final exam.
- 7) Draft original research paper on an historical topic of your choice, at least ten double-spaced pages of text not counting bibliography (delete the annotations from your earlier draft bibliography, but feel free to add additional new sources), using both primary and secondary sources.* Try to avoid using tertiary sources. Use Chicago-style (Turabian) footnote citations. **Submit on BlackBoard by midnight Nov 12** (20 pts).
- 8) Final, revised, version of research paper (at least ten, but not to exceed fourteen, double-spaced pages, not counting bibliography). It is **required** that you look at the professor's comments on your first draft—especially the specific comments posted directly on the paper rather than the general overall comments—and take them into consideration in making revisions. **Submit on BlackBoard by midnight Dec 10** (10 pts).
- 9) Oral research presentation (based on your paper—but try to not merely read it aloud) towards the end of the semester. The presentation sequence will be determined randomly by drawing names from a hat on Oct 1. Approximately 15 minutes. (10 pts).

(Total = 100 pts)

Grade scale:

90-100% = A
 88-89% = A-
 86-87% = B+
 80-85% = B
 78-79% = B-
 76-77% = C+
 70-75% = C

68-69% = C-
 66-67% = D+
 60-65% = D
 58-59% = D-
 57% and below = F

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Writing Skills:
 - Students will be able to use their research to create a cogent, well-organized and readable historical essay.
 - Students will demonstrate evidence of revision in their written work.
 - Students will be able to demonstrate writing as a process of understanding complex issues rather than a simple summary of information.
2. Analytical Skills:
 - Students will be able to identify levels of analysis in historical writing, from narrative to historicism.
 - Students will be able to create an original approach to a topic by placing it within an analytical framework consisting of 1) possible historical contexts; 2) possible analytical lenses, including politics, class, race, gender, identity, and geography or place.
 - Students will be able to develop a thesis in relationship to relevant scholarly literature.
3. Historical Research Skills:
 - Students will be able to develop original research that uses both primary and secondary sources.
 - Students will be able to navigate a library and / or an archive, using finder's guides and databases for books, articles, and documents.
 - Students will be able to create correctly formatted citations (footnotes or endnotes) and bibliographies using the "Chicago style" or "Turabian style" of citation.
4. Historical Knowledge:
 - Students will be able to identify historical contexts.
 - Students will be able to demonstrate an adherence to historical accuracy.
 - Students will be able to demonstrate a recognition of diversity in people and perspective.
 - Students will be able to avoid timeless, universal, or ahistorical explanations for past events.
5. Students will demonstrate critical thinking through the ability to evaluate, analyze, and integrate information from a variety of sources in order to develop reasoned positions and solutions to problems. (University SLO 1)

3 credit hrs. This course meets the Course Credit Hour Expectation outlined in the Course Catalog. Students should expect to work approximately 2 hours per week outside of class for every course credit hour.

Class Schedule

T Aug 25	Orientation
Th Aug 27	Introduction to “Introduction to Historical Skills”; construct seating chart
T Sept 1	Video: “Book Talk ‘The Ever-Changing Past’ with James M. Banner Jr.”
Th Sept 3	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Section I, “Thinking Historically” (which includes the short chapters 1-5), from Stephanie Cole, et al., How History is Made: A Student’s Guide to Reading, Writing, and Thinking in the Discipline (University of Texas-Arlington, Mavs Open Press, 2022).
T Sept 8	<u>Library Workshop, Rod Library Rm 287</u>
Th Sept 10	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Sarah Maza, Introduction and Chapter 1, “The History of Whom?”; <u>submit citations exercise on Blackboard by midnight</u>
T Sept 15	Video: “Why History Matters?” Emory University
Th Sept 17	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Sarah Maza, Chapter 2, “The History of Where?”
T Sept 22	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Sarah Maza, Chapter 3, “The History of What?”
Th Sept 24	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Chapter 5, “The history advantage: the dynamic range of historical study,” from Marcus Collins and Peter N. Stearns, <i>Why Study History?</i> (London Publishing Partnership, 2020), <u>available free online from Rod Library</u> (search for “Why Study History?”)
T Sept 29	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Sarah Maza, Chapter 4, “How is History Produced?”
Th Oct 1	Videos: Christopher Browning, “How did ‘Ordinary Men’ Become Murderers?” and “The Open Mind: <i>Hitler’s Willing Executioners</i> , pt. 2”; the sequence of student oral research presentations will be determined by drawing from a hat today
T Oct 6	Students’ Journal Article Analysis Presentation (alphabetically by family name)
Th Oct 8	Students’ Journal Article Analysis Presentation (alphabetically by family name)
T Oct 13	Students’ Journal Article Analysis Presentation (alphabetically by family name)
Th Oct 15	Students’ Journal Article Analysis Presentation (alphabetically by family name); <u>submit written summary of article analysis on BlackBoard by midnight</u>
T Oct 20	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Sarah Maza, Chapter 5, “Causes or Meanings?”

Th Oct 22	Read and <u>Discuss</u> “Making Sense of Oral History,” free online at https://historymatters.gmu.edu/browse/makesense/ ; <u>submit annotated draft bibliography on Blackboard by midnight</u>
T Oct 27	Read and <u>Discuss</u> Sarah Maza, Chapter 6, “Facts or Fictions?,” and “Conclusion”
Th Oct 29	Movie: “Lincoln” pt. 1; <u>submit draft thesis statement on Blackboard by midnight</u>
T Nov 3	Movie: “Lincoln” pt. 2
Th Nov 5	Movie: “Lincoln” conclusion; Class <u>Discussion</u> of Movie
T Nov 10	<u>Test</u> (Class does not meet. Access test via eLearning Blackboard between 8:00am-midnight today. 30-minute time limit.)
Th Nov 12	Student Research Presentations; <u>submit first draft of research paper on BlackBoard by midnight</u>
T Nov 17	Student Research Presentations
Th Nov 19	Student Research Presentations

Thanksgiving Vacation Nov 23-27

T Dec 1	Student Research Presentations
Th Dec 3	Student Research Presentations
T Dec 8	Student Research Presentations
Th Dec 10	Student Research Presentations; <u>submit final, revised, version of research paper on BlackBoard by midnight</u>

Syllabus Statements

ChatGPT and AI

Because writing, analytical, and critical thinking skills are fundamental parts of the learning outcomes of this course, all writing assignments should be prepared solely by the student. AI-generated submissions are not permitted and will be treated as plagiarism.

Free Speech

The University of Northern Iowa supports and upholds the First Amendment protection of freedom of speech and the principles of academic and artistic freedom. We encourage the free and responsible exchange of diverse ideas on our campus. The University is committed to open inquiry and the spirited and thoughtful debate of such ideas.

All UNI employees, students, applicants and campus visitors are welcome to disclose their personal pronoun preferences, though no one shall be compelled to do so.

Non-discrimination in Employment or Education

Content in this class has the potential to be disturbing to some individuals based on life experiences. If you ever feel the need to step out of the classroom or decline participation in an activity, please request an alternative learning experience.

UNI Policy 13.02 Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct states: "The University is committed to providing a workplace and educational environment, as well as other benefits, programs, and activities, that are free from discrimination and harassment based on a protected class, as well as retaliation."

Policy 13.02 outlines prohibited conduct and reporting processes. All University employees who are aware of or witness discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, or retaliation are required to promptly report to the Title IX Officer or Title IX Deputy Coordinator.

Title IX Officer Leah Gutknecht, Assistant to the President for Civil Rights Compliance, 117 Gilchrist, 319.273.2846, leah.gutknecht@uni.edu

If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you can find the appropriate resources at civilrights.uni.edu. Resources that provide free, confidential counseling are also detailed at civilrights.uni.edu.

For additional information, contact the Office of Civil Rights Compliance, 117 Gilchrist Hall, 273-2846, civilrights@uni.edu.

Accessibility Statement

The University of Northern Iowa (UNI) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act of 2008 (ADAAA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Fair Housing Act, and other applicable federal and state laws and regulations that prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. Students with disabilities experiencing a barrier to access should connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to request accommodations. SAS views disabilities as an integral part of the rich diversity at UNI and works collaboratively with students, faculty, and staff to create an accessible educational environment for students. UNI faculty are not obligated to provide accommodations for students with disabilities without proper notification from SAS and the student. Students may initiate the accommodation process at any time. However, accommodations are not retroactive, and the process for getting connected takes time. Therefore, SAS staff always recommends that students initiate the process as soon as possible rather than wait for academic and social-emotional responsibilities to become overly stressful and/or overwhelming. For more information about the accommodation process, please contact SAS at (319) 273-2677 Relay 711, accessibilityservices@uni.edu, or GIL 118. Additional information is also available at sas.uni.edu.

*A note on primary and secondary sources

What is a Primary Source? (Reprinted from Harvard University Library Research Guide at <https://guides.library.harvard.edu/HistSciInfo/primary>)

Primary sources provide first-hand testimony or direct evidence concerning a topic under investigation. They are created by witnesses or recorders who experienced the events or conditions being documented.

Often these sources are created at the time when the events or conditions are occurring, but primary sources can also include autobiographies, memoirs, and oral histories recorded later.

Primary sources are characterized by their content, regardless of the format available. (Handwritten notes could be published; the published book might be digitized or put on microfilm, but all formats are still primary sources)

Some types of primary sources:

Original documents (excerpts or translations acceptable): Diaries, speeches, manuscripts, letters, interviews, news film footage, contemporary newspaper articles, autobiographies, official records, pamphlets, meeting notes, photographs, contemporary sketches

Creative works: Poetry, drama, novels, music, art

Relics or artifacts: Furniture, clothing, buildings

What is a Secondary Source? (Reprinted from Harvard University Library Research Guide at <https://guides.library.harvard.edu/HistSciInfo/secondary>)

Secondary sources were created by someone who did not experience first-hand or participate in the events or conditions you're researching. For a historical research project, secondary sources are generally scholarly books and articles.

A secondary source interprets and analyzes primary sources. These sources are one or more steps removed from the event. Secondary sources may contain pictures, quotes or graphics of primary sources.