U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY, 1945 — PRESENT

Undergraduate History Major Reading Senior Seminar: HIST 490
NJIT-Rutgers, Newark: Spring 2013
Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00 - 2:25
Location: 307 Cullimore Hall

Instructor: Prof. Neil Maher
Federated Department of History NJIT-Rutgers, Newark

Office Hours: 325 Cullimore Hall
Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Thursdays, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
And by appointment

Contact: E-mail: maher@njit.edu
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Cell: 646-325-3704 (not before 9:00 a.m. or after 11:00 p.m.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
The second semester of the senior research seminar will be devoted entirely to researching and writing your senior thesis. Because of this, our class time this semester will be a combination of group and individual meetings.

Early in the semester we will convene as a group to establish a common framework for the research and writing process you will be undertaking this spring. During the middle of the semester you will also begin meeting with me individually, during my office hours, about the progress you are making on your projects. These individual meetings will be by appointment and are required — if you miss them your grade will suffer. Finally, near the end of the semester, we will reconvene as a group to read and critique your classmates’ work-in-progress.

Your thesis will be due in draft form well before the end of the semester, so that you will have time for two sets of revisions. To help with this process, drafts of your introductions will be due soon — during weeks 6-7. The first draft of your thesis is due immediately after spring break, and your second draft is due in week 13. Since revision is crucial to effective historical research and writing, students will be required not only to submit drafts but also to read, critique, and discuss each other’s work in class. Your final senior thesis must be submitted online to me by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, May 6th.

COURSE GOALS:
There are three major goals for this course.

1. Students will understand the major historical actors, events, and issues that define the environmental history of the United States during the post-World War II period.

2. Students will locate and analyze both primary and secondary source materials relevant to the history of the postwar United States for their final historical research projects.

3. Students will use those primary and secondary sources to formulate, plan, and write a full-length historical research paper.
REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and Class Participation:
Attendance at our group meetings is mandatory. We will meet as a whole class less often than last semester, but when we do we will have important tasks to accomplish. Further, when we meet, we will often be sharing work, and your fellow students will depend on your presence and participation. Any absences MUST be explained to me, preferably in advance. Failure to attend these classes or to adequately explain any absences will affect your grade. If absences are excessive, you will fail the course.

Your individual meetings with me are also mandatory. You will sign up for specific appointment times, throughout the semester, as indicated on the weekly schedule below.

Reading Assignments:
During the beginning of the semester, we will be revisiting The Craft of Research by Booth, Colomb, and Williams, in order to re-familiarize ourselves with HOW historians DO research. During this portion of the class we will also be reading the very important Elements of Style by William Strunk Jr., and E.B. White, which will help you think more clearly about your writing.

Throughout the middle part of the semester there are no group reading assignments, because you will be undertaking your own reading based on your research projects. This independent reading will include both primary and secondary sources.

Finally, during the last several weeks of the semester, we will all reconvene for writing and research workshops. During these class sessions you will all be expected to read drafts of the introductions of your classmates theses, as well as the first rough draft of their entire papers. For these meetings will be expected to come to class with written comments and suggestions for your classmates.

Writing Assignments: This spring semester, like its fall counterpart, will be a writing intensive course comprised of three different types of assignments. First, you will be asked to submit drafts of various parts of your thesis. Additionally, you will be asked to write reader’s responses to your classmates’ drafts. Finally, you will submit a final thesis between 20 and 25 pages in length (not including footnotes/endnotes).

GRADING:

In-Class Participation: 15%
Reader’s Responses to Classmates’ Written Material 15%
Final Research Paper 70%

REQUIRED TEXTS:
COURSE SCHEDULE:

RESEARCHING

WEEK 1  January 22:  The Syllabus (group meeting)
Required Reading:
None

January 24:  Your Research Topics (group meeting)
Required Reading:

Assignment:
See Moodle webpage

WEEK 2  January 29:  Your Sources (group meeting)
Required Reading:

Assignment:
See Moodle webpage

January 31:  Your Argument (group meeting)
Required Reading:

Assignment:
See Moodle webpage

WEEK 3  February 5:  Your Evidence (group meeting)
Required Reading:

Assignment:
See Moodle webpage

February 7:  What Are Warrants? (group meeting)
Required Reading:
Assignment:
See Moodle webpage
WEEK 4  February 12:  **Your Outline** (group meeting)
  Required Reading:
  Booth, *Craft of Research*, pages 171-179

  Assignment:
  Your outlines

February 14:  **Your Introduction** (group meeting)
  Required Reading:

  Assignment:
  Your introduction

**WRITING**

WEEK 5:  February 19:  **Individual Meetings**
  Required Reading:
  Strunk and White, *Elements of Style* (entirety)

February 21:  **Individual Meetings**
  Required Reading:
  Strunk and White, *Elements of Style* (entirety)

WEEK 6:  **Introduction Workshop I & II** (group meetings)

March 5:  Required Reading:
  Your classmates’ draft introductions

  Assignment:
  Comments on your classmates’ draft introductions

March 7:  Required Reading:
  Your classmates’ draft introductions

  Assignment:
  Comments on your classmates’ draft introductions

WEEK 7:  **Introduction Workshop III & IV** (group meetings)
March 12: **Required Reading:**
Your classmates’ draft introductions

**Assignment:**
Comments on your classmates’ draft introductions

March 14: **Required Reading:**
Your classmates’ draft introductions

**Assignment:**
Comments on your classmates’ draft introductions

**WEEK 8:** **SPRING BREAK**

No class — Continue researching and writing your thesis

**WEEK 9:** **First Draft Workshop I & II** (group meetings)

March 19: **Required Reading:**
Classmates’ first drafts

**Assignments:**
Comments on classmates’ first drafts (2 copies to class)

March 21: **Required Reading:**
Classmates’ first drafts

**Assignments:**
Comments on classmates’ first drafts (2 copies to class)

**WEEK 10:** **First Draft Workshop III & IV** (group meetings)

March 26: **Required Reading:**
Classmates’ first drafts

**Assignments:**
Comments on classmates’ first drafts (2 copies to class)

March 28: **Required Reading:**
Classmates’ first drafts

**Assignments:**
Comments on classmates’ first drafts (2 copies to class)
PART III: EDITING

WEEK 11:
April 2: How to Revise (group meeting)
April 4: No Class – Keep Revising

WEEK 12:
April 9: No Class – Keep Revising
April 11: No Class – Keep Revising

WEEK 13: Second Drafts Due
April 16: Individual Meetings
April 18: Individual Meetings

WEEK 14: April 23: Individual Meetings
April 25: Individual Meetings

WEEK 15: Tying Up Loose Ends (group meetings)
April 30: Footnotes & Plagiarism
May 2: One Final Edit

THESIS DEADLINE: May 6 (by 5:00 p.m., NO exceptions)