

HISTORY 871.01 and 871.02

SEMINAR IN U.S. DIPLOMATIC HISTORY  
Winter-Spring 2004

Instructor: Associate Professor Peter L. Hahn

Course description and requirements: This research seminar is designed to train graduate students in historical methodology, especially in the techniques of research, writing, and criticism. Each beginning student will be expected to research and write a paper of publishable quality based on primary sources and framed in the context of the secondary literature. ABDs who have completed substantial research and who are actively writing their dissertations are expected to complete at least two chapters of their dissertations, one in the winter and one in the spring. All students are expected to criticize constructively the work of others.

Class meetings: The seminar will meet regularly to discuss research strategies, topics, progress, and problems. In the winter quarter, each student will present a bibliography and prospectus, and new students will also present a five-page progress report. By the respective due dates, copies of each assignment should be distributed to me and to every other student. Beginning students must also submit one- and three-page progress reports to me by certain due dates, although these reports will not be presented to the class.

In spring quarter, meetings will be devoted to presentations and discussions of papers. During those meetings each student will present his or her paper or chapter to the class, serve as chief critic of one other student's paper or chapter, and provide written and oral feedback to all other authors.

Attendance is required at all class meetings.

Papers and Chapters: Each student will write a research paper or dissertation chapter and present it for class discussion and criticism. The paper or chapter should run from 25 to 30 double-spaced, typed pages, and should be accompanied by a title page, footnotes or endnotes, and bibliography. ABDs writing two chapters should submit one chapter by the last day of winter quarter and the second by the last day of spring quarter. Either one can be presented in class.

Discussion of papers: Each student is responsible for distributing copies of his or her paper or chapter to me and to every other student on or before the due date, which is one week before class consideration of the work. A schedule of due dates will be composed after topics are selected. Deadlines are absolutely firm; failure to meet them is inexcusable. On the date designated for discussion, the author of each paper will present in class a summary of his or her findings and conclusions.

Critiques: Each student will be designated the chief critic of a classmate's paper. The chief critic will write and present a detailed critique of the paper based on examination of its text and sources. The critique should number five to seven double-spaced pages and it should identify strengths and weaknesses and make suggestions for improvement. It should be distributed to me, the paper author, and other members of the seminar at least one day prior to the class. After the author of a paper introduces his or her work to the seminar, the chief critic will present the critique, invite the author to respond, and lead discussion involving the entire class. Chief critic assignments will be made after topics are selected.

In addition, each student is required to write one-page, single-spaced critiques of all other papers and to participate actively in the class discussions of them. Two copies of each one-page critique should be prepared, one for me and one for the author of the paper. One-page critiques are due at the beginning of the class session in which the paper is discussed.

Recommended Books: The following reference works are recommended (not required) and should be available at local bookstores:

Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations.

Margaret Shertzer, The Elements of Grammar.

William I. Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, The Elements of Style.

Office Hours:

My office is in Dulles Hall 271 (telephone 292-7200; e-mail hahn.29@osu.edu). My winter quarter office hours are Mondays 9:00-12:00 and by appointment. Spring quarter office hours will be announced in class.

Method of determining final grade: Final grades will be determined as follows:

	<u>new students</u>	<u>ABDs</u>
Prospectus and bibliography	10%	10%
Five-page progress report	10%	--
Paper	60%	--
First chapter	--	35%
Second chapter	--	35%
Major critique	10%	10%
Other critiques	10%	10%

Students who fail to complete any portion of assigned work should not expect to receive a passing grade. Excessive tardiness or absence from class meetings could lower a final grade by one letter.

Course policies: This seminar will be taught over two quarters. Students must enroll in both quarters to earn any credit. At the end of winter quarter, a grade of P (progress) will be awarded to students who are making satisfactory progress toward completion of course assignments. A letter grade will be assigned at the

end of spring quarter and will apply to both halves of the course.

All students must be officially enrolled in the course by the end of the second full week of each quarter. No requests to add the course will be approved by the department chair after that time. Enrolling officially and on time is solely the responsibility of the student.

In the event that a student cannot attend a meeting, he or she should notify me as far in advance as possible. Written work that is turned in late will be penalized. Rare exceptions might be made but these must be approved by me in advance of the due date.

Any student in need of an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss specific needs. Additional information is available from the Office for Disability Services (292-3307, Room 150 Pomerene Hall).

#### Schedule of assignments:

##### Winter Quarter:

- |      |    |  |
|------|----|--|
| Jan. | 5  | Introduction to the course. Research in diplomatic history. Schedule an appointment with me to discuss a topic.  |
|      | 12 | No class; individual consultations with instructor (by appointment).   |
|      | 19 | HOLIDAY  |
|      | 26 | Research strategies and sources. Meet in Room 124 of the Main Library at 1:30 pm sharp.  |
| Feb. | 2  | Topics: be prepared to describe your topic and its historiographical significance. Preliminary bibliography is due at beginning of class.                                  |
|      | 9  | Final bibliography and one-page prospectus due at 12:00 noon on Friday, February 6. Present your work to the class and be prepared to discuss the contributions of others. |
|      | 16 | One-page progress report due. No class; individual consultations with instructor (by appointment).   |
|      | 23 | Three-page progress report due. No class;  |

individual consultations with instructor (by appointment).

- Mar. 1 Problems of research: declassification, bias, funding. (Discussion of materials distributed earlier.)
- 8 Five-page progress reports due at 12:00 noon on Friday, March 5. Present your work to the class and be prepared to discuss the contributions of others.  
ABDs must submit first chapters by noon on Friday, March 12.

Spring Quarter:

- Mar. 29 Brief progress reports.
- Apr. 5 No class; individual consultations with instructor (by appointment).
- 12 Discussion of papers.
- 19 Discussion of papers.
- 26 Discussion of papers.
- May 3 Discussion of papers.
- 10 Discussion of papers.
- 17 Discussion of papers.
- 24 Discussion of papers, if needed.
- 31 HOLIDAY

**RESEARCH AND WRITING PROCEDURES**

The following instructions are designed to remind students of the most important steps in producing a research paper.

1. **SELECT AND DEFINE A TOPIC.** Define the purpose, theme, and limits of your subject as sharply as you can at the beginning of your work. Keep in mind, however, that a growing knowledge of the subject, acquired in your research, may require rather drastic redefinition and refinement as you proceed.
2. **PREPARE A WORKING BIBLIOGRAPHY** using finding aids to pertinent archival and manuscript collections, relevant periodical and newspaper indexes, the Catalog of Public Documents, Ohio Link and similar data bases, bibliographical aids, the bibliographies in relevant historiographical articles, and the bibliographies in surveys and monographs covering the period of your interest.
3. **READ SECONDARY MATERIALS**, making background notes as you do, but keeping these to a minimum. The purpose of this reading is not to accumulate specific data for your paper, but rather to achieve a better understanding of your subject and its setting, the specific dimensions of your intended paper, the materials other writers have used, and the way your project will add to, change, or confirm existing historical knowledge.
4. **MAKE A TENTATIVE OUTLINE AND DRAW UP TENTATIVE HYPOTHESES**, remembering that the value of research usually depends upon the ability of the researcher to formulate and ask the right questions and test the right hypotheses.
5. **USE YOUR OUTLINE AND HYPOTHESES TO GUIDE RESEARCH IN PRIMARY MATERIALS**, making notes of all data that seem relevant. Once you have evaluated your sources and accepted the evidence, however, be flexible. If new evidence indicates that your outline or hypothesis should be changed, then change it. Do not warp the evidence to fit a preconception or bias.
6. **ORGANIZE YOUR MATERIAL.** When you have completed most of your intended research, think your way through the subject, define it again as sharply as possible, make a detailed outline, and arrange your notes in the proper sequence. A good paper should have an over-all unifying theme, should be subdivided either by topics within periods or by sequences within topics, and should achieve a balance between narrative, analysis, and interpretation, telling not only what happened, but also why and how it happened, of what importance it is, and how it is related to larger themes and to earlier and later developments.

7. WRITE YOUR PAPER, following the rules of good expository writing. Pay particular attention to topic sentences and transitions, to the maintenance of a sense of movement, to the preservation of logical coherence, and to the exclusion of irrelevant material. It is best to study your material, write the story in your own words, and then check it against your notes for accuracy. Do not string notes together, do not plagiarize, and do not use long quotations. Generally speaking, quotations should be used only if they add clarity, flavor, or authenticity. Leave the introduction and conclusion to the last, and be sure that the former leads into and the latter flows logically from the body of your paper. Footnote the paper and add a bibliography. It may also be necessary at this stage to do some additional research to clear up questionable points.
8. EDIT AND POLISH THE PAPER, preferably after laying it aside for a time. Pay particular attention to the adequacy of your introduction and conclusion, the smoothness of your transitions (between sentences, paragraphs, and sections), and the maxim that the fewer words it takes to say something, the better said it usually is. Footnotes should also be rechecked against the original sources for accuracy and to make sure that the sources really support the text.
9. FOOTNOTE FORM: Footnotes are used to indicate the material upon which the text is based, to give the source of a quotation, or to explain and amplify statements in the text. They go either at the bottom of the page, separated from the text by a line extending from the left margin, or in a separate "Notes" section at the end of the paper. They should be single-spaced, with double-spacing between notes, and should be numbered consecutively throughout the paper. For information on correct form the student should refer to Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, or simply consult the form employed by major scholarly journals (such as Diplomatic History or The Journal of American History).
10. BIBLIOGRAPHICAL FORM: The bibliography should be divided into primary and secondary sources, with other subdivisions where advisable. Within each division, the material should be arranged alphabetically with the last name of the author appearing first, the second and succeeding lines of each entry indented, and complete bibliographical information provided for each entry. For information on correct form see Turabian, A Manual for Writers.

## THE EXTENDED CRITIQUE

The extended critique should be prepared in triplicate, one copy for the instructor, one for the author of the paper, and one for yourself. It should run approximately five to seven pages in length and should be organized to bring out both good and bad points. In evaluating the paper and writing the critique, the critic should consider the following items:

1. SCOPE AND CONTENT. Does the paper cover the topic adequately? Does it achieve the author's purpose? Does it raise and answer the right questions? Does it contribute anything to historical knowledge or interpretation? If so, what?
2. ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE. Does the paper have a unifying theme? If so, what is it? Does the paper have a suitable introduction and conclusion? If not, how could they be improved? Does the paper achieve a proper balance between narrative and analysis? Is it logically coherent and easy to follow? Does it contain contradictions or material that is irrelevant to the central theme? How else could the organization be improved?
3. WRITING STYLE. Is the writing clear, concise, readable, and free from jargon and clichés? Is the language precise? Does it really say what the author intends it to say? Does the discussion move easily from one point to another? Does it hold the reader's interest? Is the writing free from grammatical errors, misspellings, awkward constructions, and vague impressions? Is it correctly punctuated? Does the author use the active voice as much as possible? How could the writing be improved?
4. SOURCES AND USE OF EVIDENCE. Has the author found and consulted the available source materials? Has she evaluated them correctly and made proper use of them? Is her paper based on reliable sources? Does she ignore or discount evidence that might upset her central thesis? Do her conclusions follow from the evidence presented?
5. FOOTNOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY. Do the footnotes and bibliography follow the proper form? Are there enough footnotes? Are there too many? Are they properly used? Does the author put material in the footnotes that should be in the text, or vice versa? Above all, are the footnotes accurate? Do they actually refer to sources that support the statements in the text, and does the author quote correctly and refrain from taking statements out of context? To determine these things, the critic must do some detailed checking of the footnotes

against the sources.

6. INTERPRETATION AND GENERALIZATION. Does the author make an effort to interpret his material and discuss the significance of his findings? Does he place his topic in chronological perspective and relate it to broader developments? Are his generalizations and conclusions supported by the evidence? Does he provide any new insights? Is he reasonably honest, fair, and impartial, or does he allow his own biases and prejudices to color his findings?

7. OVER-ALL EVALUATION. On balance, is the paper good, bad, or mediocre? What are its strong points? What are its major deficiencies? How should it be revised? If properly revised, would you recommend that it be published by a scholarly journal? Why or why not?