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Office Hours: Monday (3:00-5:00pm) and Thursday (3:45-4:45pm)

History 300: Research Methods
Fall 2009
Tuesdays and Thursdays (2:25-3:40pm)
Liberal Arts Building (LAB) 201

“Whether Knight’s Company was a band of men whose loyalty to the Union was beyond their loyalty to the South; whether it was a band of Confederate deserters who simply ‘hid out’ in the brush to avoid army service—those are questions that will be debated in Jones and Jasper Counties of Mississippi when the headstones of the last combatant has been long overgrown with moss.”

— New Orleans Item, 20 March 1921

This class is an introduction to the fundamentals of historical research and writing. Its goal is plain—to teach to you to think and work like a historian. You will learn to ask intelligent and meaningful questions about the past, to collect and scrutinize evidence from primary and secondary sources, and to marshal the fruits of your research in a major research paper. Along the way, you will construct timelines and bibliographies, write source analyses and a book review, and present your work orally.

There are many ways to learn the historian’s craft. I have chosen to teach you how historians work by having you examine—in great detail—the controversies swirling around Newton Knight and “The Free State of Jones.” We will begin with an exploration of the primary sources concerning the Jones County and the Civil War and then move on to a discussion of the amateur and professional histories written from the 1890s through the present. While working through these materials, you will complete several short exercises designed to teach you how to work with primary and secondary sources. These assignments will also allow me to gauge your critical thinking and writing skills and help you to improve in these areas before you tackle your research paper.

You are free to chose the subject of your research paper. There are, however, some important factors you should consider in selecting a topic. First, you should think about the strengths of our library’s collections and the availability of materials. A topic on ancient Egypt might seem interesting, but without a strong collection primary sources you may founder. You should also consider your own background and training—it is easier to tackle research projects in which you have some prior knowledge. Finally, you might take the professor’s areas of expertise into consideration. Put simply, I will be able to offer more assistance on papers that are close to my research fields (the American South, slavery, the Civil War and Reconstruction). Again, you are free to select a topic, but you should make every effort to select one that is manageable and practical.

Required Readings: In addition to the course packet, there are three required readings for the class.

Bynum, Victoria E. The Free State of Jones: Mississippi’s Longest Civil War. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.
Jenkins, Sally and John Stauffer. The State of Jones. New York: Doubleday, 2009.
Rampolla, Mary Lynn. A Pocket Guide to Writing in History. New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2007.

Assignments: *This is a difficult class!* I expect you to do a great deal of reading, research, and writing because there is no other way to learn how historians work. Although the workload is heavy, you may ease your burdens through proper planning. Take advantage of the breaks in your schedule. Read ahead and take thorough notes. Begin working on the exercises and the research paper as soon as possible. Keep Benjamin Franklin’s words close to your hearts: “*Lost Time is never found again; and what we call Time-enough, always proves little enough.*”

In order to track your progress, I am requiring you to save all your assignments—including your rough drafts—in a three-ring binder. You must submit this binder with each assignment. There are several components to your final grade, all of which must be completed for you to pass the class:

Exercise One (Timeline): One of the most basic skills of a historian is taking primary source evidence—which is often drawn from various sources and is often in complete disarray—and arranging it in chronological order. Using the evidence from the Official Records of the War of Rebellion, along with letters and newspaper clippings, construct a timeline of events in Jones, Jasper, and Smith counties during the Civil War.

Your timeline should be formatted as follows: On the left side of the page, create a column that lists dates. There should be a corresponding column to the right that lists major events. Please note that you may not be able to fix precise for some events, but you should be as precise as possible. Under each entry in the “events” column, you must list the source for the entry. Base your entries on the example provided below.

23 March 1864	Col. Robert Lowry and the 6 th Mississippi began operations in southeastern Mississippi.
	SOURCE: William N. Brown to Gov. Charles Clark, 5 May 1864.

Your timeline does not need to include all the information from the primary sources—focus on the major events. Your timeline should be type-written and should be two full pages in length. The timeline is due at the beginning of class on 27 August 2009.

Exercise Two (Primary Source Analysis): No primary source should be accepted uncritically. Many primary sources contain factual errors and they often contradict—and are contradicted by—other sources. As a historian, you will have to make judgments about whether or not to trust a primary source.

Read the following primary sources, which were either written by Civil War veterans who served in Mississippi or by journalists who interviewed veterans:

Duckworth, W. A. “A Republic within the Confederacy and other Recollections of 1864.” Annals of Iowa 4 (1914): 342-51.
Frost, Meigs O. “South’s Strangest ‘Army’ Revealed By Chief: Newt Knight, Aged Leader, Speaks After Fifty Years.” New Orleans Item, 20 March 1921.
Galloway, G. Norton. “A Confederacy within a Confederacy.” The Magazine of American History 16 (July 1886): 387-390.

Write a two paragraphs source analysis for each of these primary sources. You should answer the following questions: When was the source created and by whom? Why is author of the source credible (or not)? Is the source supported or contradicted by other primary sources? If so, how and by which ones? For some pointers on analyzing primary sources, see pages 9-11 of Rampolla’s Pocket Guide.

You do not need to weave the individual source analyses into a coherent essay, nor do you need to write an overarching introduction and conclusion to this project. Simply identify the source you are discussing with one of the bibliographical entries listed above, then write your analysis.

The exercise is due at the beginning of class on 3 September 2009.

Exercise Three (Primary Source Analysis): Make a photocopy of one of the primary sources you will be using for your study. If the primary source is large, (a voluminous government report or biography), you should select an especially revealing chapter or portion of a chapter. Once you

have selected a source, write a one-page source analysis of this document. In writing your source analysis, make certain to discuss how this source may contribute to your final research paper. Your essay is due at the beginning of class on 10 September 2009. Please note that will spend that class session discussing your primary source exercises.

Exercise Four (Bibliography): You are required to submit a bibliography of the primary and secondary sources that you will use in your research paper. For tips on formatting a bibliography, see Rampolla, pages 121-133. The bibliography is due at the beginning of class on 22 September 2009.

How many sources do you need? Your bibliography (and your final essay) must include a minimum of five primary and five secondary sources. If you are using newspapers, you cannot count each issue of the paper as a separate primary source; each newspaper title counts as one source. For example, the New York Times of 3 November 1856 and 8 December 1858 would count as a single primary source. Likewise, individual items in a manuscript collection count as one source. The manuscript collection—not individual letters and diaries—count as a single source. Thus, two letters from the papers of Jefferson Davis would count as one primary source.

Exercise Five (Website Critique): The Internet is a useful tool for historians, but like any source it must be used carefully. This assignment requires you to write a two-page evaluation of a historical website of your choosing (preferably one related to your research topic). Your evaluation must identify the website's creator(s) and his/her/their credentials. Stated differently, who created the site and why should you trust them? You must also discuss the quality and quantity of the material presented. What kind of materials are presented? Is it trustworthy? To whom is it useful (teachers, the general public, academics)? For additional pointers on this project, see pages 16-17 of Rampolla, along with the attached grading rubric. Your critique is due at the beginning of class on 20 October 2009.

For examples of websites dealing with historical subjects, see:

Maryland State Archives – Study of the Legacy of Slavery in Maryland

<http://www.mdslavery.net/>

Freedmen and Southern Society Project

<http://www.history.umd.edu/Freedmen/>

Exercise Six (Book Review): Historians routinely critique the work of their colleagues. Whenever we read a journal article or monograph we identify the major argument, assess the strength of the reasoning and research, and situate the piece in the context of the existing literature.

Write a three page review that compares and contrasts Bynum's Free State of Jones and Jenkins's and Stauffer's The State of Jones. In writing your review, you should consider how these authors framed their studies (i.e., How are they organized? When do they begin and end? Which subjects do these address and ignore?). You should also consider the motives they ascribe to Newton Knight and his followers. Finally, you should discuss their use of sources.

The book review is due at the beginning of class on 27 October 2009.

Why have assigned these exercises in addition to the final project? These exercises are designed to help you develop the skills needed to write a research paper. You may also think of them as diagnostic tools. I have designed these exercises to gauge your skills and to identify your strengths and weaknesses before you tackle the final essay.

Final Research Paper: You will write a research paper of ten to twelve pages based on a range of primary and secondary sources. Your evidence must be cited using properly formatted footnotes (see Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History) and your paper must include a bibliography. A rough draft of your essay is due at the beginning of class on 12 November 2009. This rough draft will be returned the beginning of class on 17 November. The final version of the essay is due at the end of business (5:00pm) on Monday, 7 December.

Oral Presentation: You will make a brief (ten to fifteen) minute presentation of your work at the end of the semester. You are required to attend all presentations. Students who record an unexcused absence during the presentations will have their presentation grade reduced by half.

Grading: The assignments are weighted as follows:

Exercise One (Timeline)	05%
Exercise Two (Source Analysis)	05%
Exercise Three (Source Analysis)	10%
Exercise Four (Bibliography)	10%
Exercise Five (Website Critique)	10%
Exercise Six (Book Review)	10%
Final Research Paper	35%
Oral Presentation	15%

Course Policies: Writing assignments are due at the beginning of class on the date indicated. Essays must be submitted as hard copies (electronic copies of papers will not be accepted). Late papers will be accepted, but they will be penalized 25 points per business day that they are overdue. If you submit a late paper, it must be submitted to me or to the History Department administrative assistant, who will stamp the essay and place it in my mailbox. **DO NOT PLACE LATE ESSAYS (or anything else) UNDER MY OFFICE DOOR.** Any work slid under my door will not be accepted.

Your papers must be typewritten, with 12 pt. font (Times New Roman) and double-spaced lines. The header of your paper should be single-spaced and in the following format:

[Your Name]
History 201: United States History
First Writing Assignment
9 September 2009

Do not place a title on your papers—it is unnecessary and tends to “pad” the length. Your paper should have 1” margins on the top and bottom and 1.25” margins on the left right margins. Evidence must be cited using footnotes. Use of alternate forms of citation, such as the MLA format, is not acceptable. Finally, your essays must be stapled (no “dog ears,” paper clips, or binders) and the pages numbered! **Papers that do not meet these standards will be accepted, but you will incur a 25 pt. penalty.** If you have questions about the proper format of your essay, please see me during my office hours.

The university’s policies concerning academic integrity will be enforced in this course. According to the Student Handbook and Undergraduate Bulletin, students caught cheating on their examinations or papers may be given an “F” on the work involved or for the course. Students may also be referred to the Dean of Students for additional disciplinary action and may be subject to probation, suspension, or expulsion. If you have questions about plagiarism, please see me during my office hours.

Out of respect for your classmates, you will refrain from disruptive behavior (arriving late, cell phone conversations, text messaging, listening to music, reading newspapers, eating, sleeping, etc.). Students who consistently arrive late or disrupt class will have their attendance score lowered to zero. Repeat offenders will be dismissed from the class. **THIS CONSTITUTES YOUR WARNING!**

Students with Disabilities: If a student has a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and requires accommodations, he/she should contact the Office for Disability Accommodations (ODA) for information on appropriate policies and procedures. Disabilities covered by ADA may include learning, psychiatric, physical disabilities, or chronic health disorders. Students can contact ODA if they are not certain whether a medical condition/disability qualifies.

Address: The University of Southern Mississippi
Office for Disability Accommodations
118 College Drive #8586
Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Voice Telephone: (601) 266-5024 or (228) 214-3232
Fax: (601) 266-6035

Individuals with hearing impairments can contact ODA using the
Mississippi Relay Service at 1-800-582-2233 (TTY) or e-mail Suzy
Herbert at Suzanne.Herbert@usm.edu.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week One

20 August: Class Introduction

Discussion of the following articles:

Michael Cieply, "Civil War Fires Up Literary Shootout," New York Times,
30 July 2009.

Chris Talbott, "Book Sheds Light on Obscure 'American Patriot,'" Hattiesburg
American, 13 July 2009.

Students should schedule meetings with professor to discuss paper topics.

Week Two

25 August: Special Collections at the University of Southern Mississippi
Class will meet in McCain Archives and Library, Room TBA.

27 August: Sifting through the Evidence—Primary Sources on "The Free State of Jones"
Discussion of primary sources used in the timeline.
Exercise One due at the beginning of class.

Week Three

1 September: Using Library Catalogs and Databases
Class will meet in the lobby of Cook Library.
Project descriptions due at the beginning of class.

3 September: History, Memory, and the Problem with Primary Sources
Exercise Two due at the beginning of class.

Week Four

8 September: Using Government Documents and Microfilm
Class will meet in the lobby of Cook Library.

10 September: Working with Primary Sources
Exercise Three due at the beginning of class.

Week Five

- 15 September: Creating a Bibliography – Tips and Techniques
There are no readings for today's class. Spend time reading ahead or doing research on your final project.
- 17 September: Class Cancelled – Professor Attending Conference
Spend time researching and writing your bibliographies.

Week Six

- 22 September: Enter the Professionals – Bynum's The Free State of Jones
Bynum, pp. 1-46
Rampolla, pp. 25-28
Bibliography due at the beginning of class.
- 24 September: Enter the Professionals – Bynum's The Free State of Jones
Bynum, pp. 47-92

Week Seven

- 29 September: Writing a Book Review – Tips and Techniques
Bynum, pp. 93-148
Rampolla, pp. 31-33
- 1 October: Academic vs. Popular History – Jenkins's and Stauffer's The State of Jones
Jenkins and Stauffer, pp. 1-42

Week Eight

- 6 October: Academic vs. Popular History – Jenkins's and Stauffer's The State of Jones
Jenkins and Stauffer, pp. 43-85
Students should schedule progress report meetings with professor.
- 8 October: Fall Break

Week Nine

- 13 October: The Ethics of Historical Research and Writing
Class discussion (teleconference) with Professor Victoria Bynum
Jenkins and Stauffer, pp. 86-161
- 15 October: Class will not meet. Spend time conducting research.

Week Ten

- 20 October: *Exercise Five (Website Critique) due at the beginning of class.*
- 22 October: Academic vs. Popular History – Jenkins's and Stauffer's The State of Jones
Jenkins and Stauffer, pp. 161-231

Week Eleven

- 27 October: Organizing and Outlining
Exercise Six (Book Review) due at the beginning of class.
Students should schedule a meeting with the professor to discuss their progress.
- 29 October: Class will not meet. Spend time conducting research and writing.

Week Twelve

3 November: Problems and Pitfalls
Bring your notes, outlines, questions, and troubles to class for a discussion of some of the common problems in writing a research paper. Solutions (and fresh cookies) will be offered to the dispirited.

5 November: Class will not meet. Spend time conducting research and writing.

Week Thirteen

10 November: Class will not meet. Spend time researching and writing.

12 November: The Best Writing is Rewriting—The Art of Revision
Rough drafts due at the beginning of class.

Week Fourteen

17 November: Discussion of Common Problems in Research Papers
Rough drafts will be returned at the beginning of class.

19 November: Class will not meet. Spend time revising papers and preparing presentations.

Week Fifteen

24 November: Research Presentations

26 November: Thanksgiving Holiday

Week Sixteen

1 December: Research Presentations

3 December: Research Presentations

FINAL PAPER DUE AT THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS (5:00pm) ON 8 DECEMBER 2009. Electronic versions of your paper will not be accepted. If I am not in my office, please have administrative assistant in the History Department Office place your essay in my mailbox. Do not slide your paper under my office door; papers slid under my door will not be accepted.

University of Southern Mississippi
Department of History

HIS 300
Website Critique Rubric

Student Name: _____ **ID #** _____ **Date:** _____

Term: _____ **Website Name:** _____

Website:

http:// _____

Licensure: **YES** **NO** **Campus: Hattiesburg** **Gulf Coast**

Criteria	Unacceptable (F-D)	Acceptable (C)	Proficient (B)	Exceptional (A)	Score	Total Points
Evaluation of Authorship and Type of Website	Did not identify author or type of site.	Adequately identified author and type of site (primary or secondary).	Accurately identified author and type of site (primary or secondary).	Insightfully identified author of site and type of site (primary or secondary).		15
Evaluation of Ease of Use & Search Capability	Did not evaluate ease of use and search functions.	Adequately evaluated ease of use and search functions, without examples.	Accurately evaluated ease of use and search functions, with useful examples.	Insightfully evaluated ease of use and search functions, with effective examples.		15
Evaluation of Quality of Content	Did not evaluate quality of historical content on site.	Adequately evaluated quality of historical content on site, without examples.	Accurately evaluated quality of historical content on site, with useful examples.	Insightfully evaluated quality of historical content on site, with effective examples.		25
Evaluation of Website as Historically Useful	Did not evaluate value of site for research in history.	Adequately analyzed value of site for research in history, without advice for use.	Accurately analyzed value of site for research in history, with advice for use.	Insightfully analyzed value of site for research in history, with effective advice for use.		25
Organization (Intro, Body, Conclusion)	Little or no structure; frequently confusing.	Identifiable structure is present but inconsistently executed.	Identifiable structure is present and consistently executed.	Identifiable structure is purposeful, interesting, and effective.		10
Mechanics	Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage are severely deficient.	Isolated errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or usage reduce clarity and credibility.	Free of serious errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage.	Free of errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage. Word choice aids clarity, vividness, and credibility.		10
Total	SEE BACK FOR WRITTEN COMMENTS.					100

Oral Presentation Grading Rubric
Dr. Max Grivno—History Department

Name: _____ Student ID: _____

Date: _____ Course: HIS _____ Assignment: _____

Criteria	D-F (Unacceptable)	C (Minimally Acceptable)	B (Proficient)	A (Advanced)	Score
Content	Central idea/purpose is not stated; content is erroneous or irrelevant; support for assertions is largely absent.	Central idea/purpose is stated; content is accurate but not always relevant; support is offered but inadequate for some assertions.	Central idea/purpose is clearly stated; content is accurate and relevant; credible support is provided for each assertion.	Central idea/purpose is vividly stated; content is accurate, thorough, and directly on point; strong support is provided for each assertion.	Score: ____ (out of 40)
Organization (Intro, Body, Conclusion)	Little or no structure present. Presentation is confusing to the audience; no logical sequence of ideas; frequently off topic.	Identifiable structure is present but inconsistently executed; may contain several statements out of place and occasionally deviate from topic.	Identifiable structure is present and consistently executed with few statements out of place.	Identifiable structure is presented in a purposeful, interesting, and effective sequence and remains focused.	Score: ____ (out of 20)
Language	Grammar, pronunciation, and/or word choice are severely deficient.	Isolated errors in grammar, pronunciation, and/or word choice reduce clarity and credibility.	Presentation is free of serious errors in grammar, pronunciation, and/or word usage.	Presentation is free of errors in grammar and pronunciation; word choice aids clarity and vividness.	Score: ____ (out of 10)
Adaptation to Audience and Context	Content and/or style are frequently inappropriate to the audience and/or context. Presentation falls well outside set time parameters.	Content and/or style are occasionally inappropriate to the audience and/or context. Presentation falls slightly outside set time parameters.	Content and/or style are consistently appropriate to the audience, and/or context. Presentation meets set time parameters.	Content and/or style are consistently appropriate and targeted to audience and context. Presentation makes full, effective use of time and stays within time parameters.	Score: ____ (out of 10)
Vocal Delivery	Vocal delivery is too soft to hear, too fast to understand and/or long, unintended silences and speech disruptions (repetitions; filled pauses, e.g., “um”) frequently distract audience	Vocal delivery is audible. Rate, volume, or speech disruptions only occasionally distract from audience comprehension.	Vocal delivery is clear and distinct. Rate, volume, and tone facilitate audience comprehension.	Vocal delivery is varied and dynamic. Speech rate, volume, and tone enhance listener interest and understanding.	Score: ____ (out of 10)
Nonverbal Delivery	Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement, and/or facial expressions are inappropriate and significantly distracting.	Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement, and facial expressions neither enhance nor hinder effectiveness significantly.	Some but not all of the following apply: Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement or facial expressions enhance the presentation.	Most or all of the following apply: Eye contact, posture, attire, gestures, movement or facial expressions enhance the presentation.	Score: ____ (out of 10)

Research Paper Grading Rubric
Dr. Max Grivno—History Department

Student Name: _____ ID# _____ Date: _____

Course: HIS 300 Term: _____ Paper Title/Topic: _____

Criteria	Unacceptable (F-D)	Acceptable (C)	(Proficient) B	(Excellent) A	Score	Total Points
Argument/ Thesis	Argument/thesis is not stated.	Argument/thesis is stated.	Argument/thesis is clearly stated.	Argument/thesis is vividly stated.		30
Evidence/ Support	Historical evidence for assertions is largely absent; content is erroneous or irrelevant.	Historical evidence is offered but inadequate for some assertions; content is accurate but not always relevant.	Credible historical evidence is provided for each assertion; content is accurate and relevant.	Strong historical evidence is provided for each assertion; content is accurate, thorough, and directly on point.		25
Organization (Intro, Body, Conclusion)	Little or no structure present. Paper is frequently confusing to the reader because of lack of organization.	Identifiable structure is present but inconsistently executed; may contain several statements out of place and occasionally deviate from the topic.	Identifiable structure is present and consistently executed with few statements out of place.	Identifiable structure is presented in a purposeful, interesting, and effective sequence and remains focused.		15
Style	Style is inadequate for the assignment; contains frequent awkward or poorly constructed sentences.	Exhibits some vague word choice or inappropriately general terms; some sentences are wordy, unfocused, or choppy; may inappropriately depend on jargon.	Prose is accurate and effective, but may sometimes be too general; sentences are mostly clear and well-structured, with only occasional awkward or ineffective constructions.	Shows a clear command of English prose: words are used precisely and sentences are clearly structured and fully focused. Shows a high level of specificity and sophistication.		10
Mechanics	Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage are severely deficient. Citations are severely deficient.	Isolated errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or usage reduce clarity and credibility. Citations are deficient.	Free of serious errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage. Citations are mostly correct.	Free of errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, and usage. Word choice aids clarity, vividness, and credibility. Citations are correct.		20

Total:

IMPORTANT NOTE: Papers which do not acknowledge a source with the proper citation form (**plagiarism in any form**) will fail the assignment and possibly the class (see the syllabus for further information).

Assignment Pts x ____ =

See back for written comments.