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## **HIST 297: HISTORY COLLOQUIUM**

MWF 9-9:50 // Monroe 233 // Fall 19  
fernsebner297.umwblogs.org

### **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the methods historians use to analyze the past. We explore the ways history has been written—also known as historiography—and the diverse approaches scholars in the field have embraced.

In this course, we will collaboratively analyze a range of historical essays as well as a case study on one historical event, namely “The Boxer Uprising” of 1900—an event that brought the world’s attention, and many of its armies, to China. In doing so, we will explore diverse lines of analytic inquiry in the field of history as well as methodological debates and critiques.

All students will also develop their own historiography project for the course. They will explore the leading historiography on a topic of their choice, developing a well-honed bibliography and 8-10 page critical essay that explores the analyses of leading historians in the field.

This course will help students become familiar with different historical approaches while also building skills in secondary research and analysis, writing, public speaking, and digital technologies.

### **297 Course Objectives (looking for résumé language?):**

This course aims to teach the fundamentals of historical research and analysis, including:

1. Understanding of the discipline’s methods, processes, and their diversity
2. Ability to communicate in a group setting
3. Ability to synthesize research findings
4. Ability to utilize technological resources in research, data analysis, and presentation

**Course Website:** <http://fernsebner297.umwblogs.org>

Note: We don’t use canvas. See the site above for all course announcements, handouts, etc. Readings, if published articles, can be found via our library’s online catalog and databases.

### **Required Texts**

Cohen, Paul. *A History in Three Keys: The Boxers as Event, Experience, and Myth*. New York: Columbia UP, 1997.

Yang, Gene Yuen. *Boxers and Saints* (Boxed Set). New York: First Second, 2013.

All other readings will be available via the library catalogs & its online databases (Quest / JSTOR, etc.) or, if noted, on our course website. Note: Electronic texts are only permitted for this course if they have page numbers matching the print edition—one can't cite an e-book without page numbers, so be careful!

**Required Software:** Zotero. Available via free download at: <http://www.zotero.org>

### **Grading**

Class Participation (incl. peer evals): 15%

Digital Work / Blog Posts: 10%

Book Review (2-3 pgs): 10%

Historiography / Literature Review Project:

    Topic Statement and Annotated Bibliography (2-3 pgs): 15%

    Literature Review (8-10 pgs, draft and final avg'd 40-60): 35%

    4-Minute Presentation: 5%

    Final Presentation: 10%

Note: In order to receive a passing grade for the course, students need to demonstrate a serious engagement with each of the course's assignments. Your professor reserves the right to determine what "serious engagement" entails.

### Grade Framework:

A: Unusual excellence (93 or higher = A; 90-92 = A-). B: Distinctly above average (87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-). C: Average quality (77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-). D: Below average quality (67-69 = D+; 60-66 = D). F = Failure, no credit (0-59 = F).

### **Assignments**

Class Participation – This class is a workshop for building hard skills in research, analysis, and speaking. So for a successful semester, you should plan on attending regularly and also participating in each class. Try out ideas, ask questions, and also practice skills in listening and dialogue. Questions or concerns? Come see your professor.

Attendance policy: You may miss three classes without penalty. After three classes, your participating grade will drop by a half letter grade (5 points) for each additional absence. Consistent absence will also risk failure for the course itself.

Note: this policy doesn't distinguish "excused" from "unexcused" absences. Rather than have you have to fetch notes or feel a need to share personal matters, you are granted three occasions to use your own discretion for missing class. Do be sure to use these three days wisely, as penalties will follow beginning with the fourth absence. Also note that in-class exercises or class content can't be "made up" later.

Bigger stuff: if you fall into one of those times in life in which you are dealing with a more serious situation or crisis (e.g. significant health problem) that may affect you for more than a day or two out of

the semester, please let me know as soon as possible and we can discuss strategies for you regarding difficulties in continuing or completing the course.

Digital Work/ Blog Posts – You will each create a Domain of One’s Own and then a website on it to be used as a project log and professional portfolio over the course of the semester (and potentially beyond). Blog post assignments related to our readings and analysis are posted on the syllabus, see specific weeks for deadlines.

Book Review – A book review on an academic historical study that we read together and discuss in class ahead of writing the review. We’ll explore the methods and structure of analytic book reviews.

Historiography / Literature Review Project – Every student will choose a topic and a subfield of historical analysis and explore the leading works that have shaped it. (E.g., gender and sexuality in late imperial China; diplomatic history in the late Qing dynasty; social history of 20<sup>th</sup> c. China, etc.) Note: one’s topic does not need to be devoted to China. Use this assignment to explore any topic of your own interest, but make sure it is focused and also devoted to the leading academic, peer-reviewed scholarship, starting with the most recent works.

Assignments for the Historiography Project:

Topic Statement and Annotated Bibliography: A 2-3 page annotated bibliography that includes a short paragraph (150-200 word) statement of your literature review topic’s focus, then an annotated bibliography of a minimum of 10 peer-reviewed, academic works (at least 8 of which should be books). Annotations should be approximately 150 words each. For helpful guidelines, see: <http://guides.library.cornell.edu/annotatedbibliography> (note: you need to use Chicago / Turabian, not APA for citations).

Literature Review Project: An 8-10 page analytic essay that explores the dynamics of a subfield of historical literature on a topic, its evolution, debates, shifting approaches, and more, while also raising its own analytic questions. This essay will be completed in two drafts to help students work closely on both analysis and writing. The two drafts will be worth 40% and 60% of the final grade for the assignment, respectively.

4-Minute Presentation: A short but formal presentation in which students will introduce their literature review project and also introduce one of the key scholarly books they’ve scouted as a leading example to help them in their project.

10-Minute Final Presentation: A longer formal presentation in which students will share the take-aways of their completed first draft of the literature review while also continuing to work on skills in public speaking, time-management, and use of visuals for presentations, while also receiving feedback for their final drafts.

### **Attendance and Late-to-Class Policy**

You may miss three classes without penalty. After three classes, your participation grade will drop by a half letter grade (5 points) for each additional absence. Consistent absence will also risk failure for the course itself.

Note: this policy doesn't distinguish "excused" from "unexcused" absences. Rather than have you have to fetch notes or feel a need to share personal matters, you are granted three occasions to use your own discretion for missing class. Do be sure to use these three days wisely, as penalties will follow beginning with the fourth absence. Also note that in-class exercises or class content can't be "made up" later.

Three times late to class = a full absence.

Bigger stuff: if you fall into one of those times in life in which you are dealing with a more serious situation or crisis (e.g. significant health problem) that may affect you for more than a day or two out of the semester, please let me know as soon as possible and we can discuss strategies for you regarding difficulties in continuing or completing the course.

### **Late Work**

Graded assignments (papers, bibs, presentations) are to be handed in in hard copy form or be ready to be presented at the start of class on the day they are due. Assignments turned in any time after the start of class on the day they are due are considered late.

Late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade per day late. After three days, they will not be accepted. Late assignments must be submitted via email (for a time-stamp) as well as in their original form. No extensions will be given except by prior arrangement.

What this means is that you want to set up your calendar now and plan your workload ahead. And if you're running into problems talk to me ahead of the due dates (sfernseb@umw.edu)

In-class assignments, blog posts, and ungraded homework tasks will not be accepted late. Presentations will not be rescheduled except by prior arrangement. Computer failure and printer problems don't constitute an excuse for late papers (or late job app's), so back up your work and print things ahead of time.

### **Writing and Speaking Center Visits**

All students are required to visit the Writing Center and the Speaking Center for full consultations on one written and one speaking assignment. The writing assignment visit should be for the literature review first draft; the speaking center visit should be in preparation for your final 10-minute presentation.

Be sure to make your appointment well in advance. Both centers book up fast, and failure to obtain an appointment will not count as an acceptable reason for a missed visit. Each failure to attend one of these visits will reduce the relevant assignment's final grade (literature review, final presentation) by ten points.

### **Requirements for Written Assignments**

All assignments should adhere to the department's standard style. 1" margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font, course number and title, instructor, and date (single spaced in the top left corner), a title, pages numbered consecutively (except for title page if using), and footnotes plus a bibliography conforming to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. Make sure your papers have citations—book reviews without parenthetical citations as needed or literature reviews without footnotes aren't likely to receive a passing grade.

Looking for a guide to citations? <http://libguides.umw.edu/c.php?g=424169&p=2897942#6812498>

## **Mid-Semester Deficiency Reports**

These are sent to any student who has a C- or lower average for the course.

## **Accommodations**

The Office of Disability Resources has been designated by the University as the Primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you already receive services through the Office of Disability Resources and require accommodations for this class, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Please bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise.

If you have not contacted the Office of Disability Resources and need accommodations, I will be happy to refer you. Their phone number is 540-654-1266.

## **Honor Code**

I take it seriously and trust you. It's also a matter of mutual respect between you and your classmates. So in your work for this course, I trust that you also care about our Honor Code that we value at UMW. I'll be very disappointed if a student plagiarizes or cheats. And I will bring the case to their peers at the Honor Council. So if you have any questions about when you need to cite a source as you compose your work for this class (hint: if you're borrowing any ideas that aren't common knowledge, you should be), please contact me sooner rather than later. You can also visit our course website for more info, as well as the UMW Honor Council website at <https://academics.umw.edu/academicintegrity/>

Please write and sign the University of Mary Washington honor pledge ("I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work") on every written assignment.

## **Recording and Distribution of Class Materials**

Any audio or visual recording by students of class meetings, lectures, discussions or other class activities is allowed only under terms and conditions as approved by UMW's office of Disability Resources (ODR). If you are entitled to audio or visual recording through ODR, please communicate with me before any recording occurs. The results of a recording may only be used for personal use, unless I authorize use by other students in the course. Recordings and course material may not be reproduced, exchanged, or distributed. At the end of the semester, you are required to destroy any recordings made in this course.

## **Title IX Statement**

Faculty at UMW are committed to supporting students and upholding the University's *Policy on Sexual and Gender Based Harassment and Other Forms of Interpersonal Violence*. Under this policy and Title IX, discrimination based on sex or gender is prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex or gender based discrimination, we encourage you to report it. While you may talk to me, please understand that as an employee of the University, I am required to report to UMW's Title IX Coordinator what you share. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, see the contacts below for assistance. They can connect you with support services and help you explore your options. You may also seek assistance from UMW's Title IX Coordinator.

## **Title IX Resources**

Title IX Coordinator  
Office of Title IX  
Fairfax House  
540-654-5656

<https://diversity.umw.edu/title-ix/>

### **Confidential: On-campus**

Talley Center For Counseling Services  
Lee Hall 106  
540-654-1053  
<https://students.umw.edu/counseling/>

Student Health Center  
Lee Hall 112

### **Confidential: Off-campus**

Rappahannock Council Against Sexual Assault  
rcasa.org // 24-hr services: 540-371-1666

Empowerhouse  
540-373-9373

## **Other Resources**

- Writing Center: <http://academics.umw.edu/writing-fredericksburg/>
- Speaking Center: <http://academics.umw.edu/speaking/speaking-center/>
- Digital Knowledge Center: <http://dkc.umw.edu/>
- History Dept News and Events - <http://cas.umw.edu/historyamericanstudies/>
- Talley Center for Counseling Services - <https://students.umw.edu/counseling/>
- UMW Academic and Career Services - <http://academics.umw.edu/academicandcareerservices/>

**Note: This syllabus is subject to change. Be sure to keep an eye on our course website and your UMW email for announcements.**

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1**

#### **8.26 Course Introduction**

Discussion of course themes and goals, introduction to “historiography,” primary and secondary sources.

#### **8.28 Exploring the Field of History –**

Reading (R): Conal Furay and Michael Salevouris, “The History of History” [Online]  
Discussion (D): Introduction to Literature Review Assignment as a semester project

#### **8.30 History in Three Keys – How is Meaning Made in the Telling of History?**

Readings (R): Cohen, “Preface” (xi-xviii) and “Prologue” (1-13)

Assignment (A): 1) Read Cohen. Take notes on your readings above and bring them to class. Be prepared to summarize the main points of Cohen’s preface and prologue. Students will be selected at random to do so. Make sure you have specific and precise notes. 2) Also be prepared to talk about your approach to taking notes on readings (whether it be as prep for class discussion, for research, or other related academic or professional purposes.)

### **Week 2**

#### **9.2 Labor Day – No Class Today**

#### **9.4 Workshop – Domain of One’s Own / Intro to the Course Digital Assignment**

Bring computers to class today if you have one

#### **9.6 Boxers Uprising as Narrative History**

R: Cohen, pp. 14-56. A: Be prepared to tell the story of the Boxer Uprising to your classmates-- random students will be asked to tell the history of the event in class. Take notes as needed as you read (though you won’t be allowed to use them in class.) Practice on your roommate, a friend, and/or to a good cup of a coffee, but make sure you know the history.

### **Week 3**

#### **9.9 Boxers: Context and Experience**

R: Cohen, 59-95.

#### **9.11 Lenses on Popular Culture and Gender**

R: Cohen, 96-145.

Blog Post #1: What are the standards for quality academic or professional history? How is this different from popular history? How do we tell the two apart? Why do the standards matter?

Note: all blog posts are due by midnight the night before the date of their deadline (e.g. this one's due 11:59 on Tuesday, 9.10)

### **9.13 Workshop: Literature Review Assignment**

A: Bring computers to class.

## **Week 4**

### **9.16 Military History**

R: Robert M. Citino, "Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction," *American Historical Review* (October 2007): 1070-1090.

A: Blog post #2: What are the key categories of historical analysis and/or approach that Citino draws in his review of military history as a field? What are the fundamental conclusions he draws or key arguments he makes? What quote or quotes (be brief—just one or two lines) do you find illustrates these best? Be sure to use citations in your post. What aspect of his discussion did you find most intriguing? Further questions you would draw?

### **9.18 The Past as Fodder for the Present**

R: Cohen, "Prologue: The Mythologized Past," pp. 211-222; Chp. 8 ("Anti-Imperialism and the Boxer Myth"), pp. 239-260.

### **9.20 Jack Bales: Library Databases and Searches**

**\*\*Meet at Simpson Library, Room 225 – Please be sure to be on time\*\***

A: start exploring potential sources for a literature review project - prepare questions y to ask Jack Bales regarding a hunt for relevant sources as he demonstrates search techniques in class today. What kinds of sources can he help you find?

## **Week 5**

### **9.23 Recasting Myths and Reviewing Reading for Argument**

R: Cohen, Chp. 9 ("The Cultural Revolution and the Boxers"), pp. 261-288 and "Conclusion," pp. 289-297.

### **9.25 Book Reviews – Genre and Approach**

A: Blog post #3: What is the topic—i.e. what focused category of historiography--are you considering as the focus for your literature review? What interests you in historians' work on this subject of study? Briefly introduce one key work of peer-reviewed, academic scholarship published in the last twenty years on the topic.

### **9.27 Plagiarism**

R: -- "Defining Plagiarism," American Historical Association - <https://www.historians.org/teaching-and-learning/classroom-content/resources-on-k-16-teaching/plagiarism-curricular-materials-for-history-instructors/defining-plagiarism>

-- Michael Nelson, "The Good, the Bad, and the Phony: Six Famous Historians and Their Critics," VQR 90, no.3 (2002). <http://www.vqronline.org/essay/good-bad-and-phony-six-famous-historians-and-their-critics>

## Week 6

### 9.30 Zotero Workshop

A: **Cohen Book Review Due in Class (hardcopy)**

A: Bring computers to class today

### 10.2 Discussion: Reading a HIST 485 Literature Review

R: Claire Tuley, "Modern Chinese History and Culture Through the Cinematic Lens: A Review of Secondary Sources." Unpublished literature review for HIST 485, Department of History, University of Mary Washington, 8 October 2010.

### 10.4 Discussion: US Women's and Gender History

R: Cornelia H. Dayton and Lisa Levenstein, "The Big Tent of Women's and Gender History: A State of the Field," *Journal of American History* 99, no. 3 (December 2012): 793-817.

## Week 7

### 10.7 Workshop: Evaluating Secondary Sources

Bring computers to class today

### 10.9 Discussion: Boxers and Saints

R: Gene Luen Yang, *Boxers* (first half)

Blog post #4: How should we evaluate and/or utilize a work of historical fiction such as Gene Luen Yang's *Boxers and Saints*?

### 10.11 Workshop: Final Steps on Nailing down the Topic

## Week 8

### 10.14 Fall Break – No Class Today

### 10.16 Discussion: Boxers and Saints

R: Gene Luen Yang, *Boxers* (second half)

### 10.18 Workshop: Bibliographies

A: **Topic Statement & Annotated Bibliography of Sources Due**

## Week 9

### 10.21 Environmental History

R: Ted Steinberg, "Down to Earth: Nature, Agency, and Power in History," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (June 2002): 798-820.

Blog post #5: How do more recent fields (e.g. women's & gender history, environmental history, others?) add to the study of history? Where or how do we see them engaging with older and ongoing fields of history? How do these diverse subfields compare in their strengths & limits?

**10.23 Digital Workshop**

Bring computers to class today

**10.25 Workshop: Oral Presentations**

**Week 10**

**10.28 4-Minute Presentations**

**10.30 4-Minute Presentations**

**11.1 4-Minute Presentations**

**Week 11**

**11.4 Open Office Hour**

Make an appointment in advance to see me if you need to talk about your project. Otherwise, get ahead on your reading, writing, and/or use the time to visit the writing center.

**11.6 Workshop: Writing Glitches**

**11.8 Literature Review Workshop**

A: Bring your literature review's thesis and a completed outline to class today for a peer-review workshop (2 copies)

**Week 12**

**11.11 Writing Workshop**

A: Bring your literature review's introduction paragraph to class today (2 copies) for a peer-review workshop

**11.13 Resumes, Internships, and Interviews**

Bring a draft of your resume to class today

**11.15 Literature Review Due**

**A: A completed draft of your literature review is due (2 hard copies) at the start of class.**

**Week 13**

**11.18 Workshop: Presentations and HIST 298 on the Horizon**

**11.20 10-Minute Presentations**

Literature Review Peer Feedback Due

**11.22 10-Minute Presentations**

**Week 14**

**11.25 10-Minute Presentations**

**11.27 Thanksgiving Break – No Class Today**

**11.29 Thanksgiving Break – No Class Today**

**Week 15**

**12.2 10-Minute Presentations**

**12.4 10-Minute Presentations**

**12.86 HISA Research Symposium**

Assignment: attend any session of the research symposium. Send, via email, a review of the three student presentations you witness.

**Finals Week**

Final Literature Review Due – 3 items required: return rough draft with professor's comments, completed peer review form, and printed hard copy of final revised draft – Friday, 12/13, 8:30 am at Dr. Fernsebner's Office (Monroe 225). No late submissions permitted. Missing rough drafts will result in a 10 point penalty on the full final grade.