

## Hist 978:

# Teaching College History: An Introduction to Undergraduate Pedagogy

Professor Leonora Neville

lneville@wisc.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1-3:25

Tuesdays 3:30-5:25

Embracing the art of teaching as one of the key skills of a good historian, and acknowledging that the desire to teach is one of the main motivations for graduate study, this new two-credit course aims to translate passion for history and humanities education into practical skills for classroom success.

The course has three main goals:

**1. Give students practical readiness for teaching while in graduate school**

We will explore how to run discussion sections to maximize positive impact on student learning, create meaningful learning experiences for all students, grade effectively, fairly, and efficiently while minimizing time commitments and frustrations. This course should help lessen the burden of graduate student teaching by helping students learn how to preemptively avoid problems and enable undergraduate success.

**2. Apply research on student learning to the teaching of history**

Learning and teaching are the subject of a substantive and successful body of research. Much of the research on how people learn can be leveraged to create far more effective practices for teaching history. We will study the results of research on learning and discuss how it may be applied to the project of teaching history.

**3. Prepare effectively for the challenges of teaching contemporary undergraduates**

We need to be able to teach *all* the students who come to us for education. In general, today's college students have not been taught research or writing in high school. Their high school education generally as focused on exam preparation, with little or no attention on critical thinking, writing, or to how to transfer skills and knowledge to different contexts. Contemporary undergraduates enter the classroom with a wide variety of preparation levels and prior experiences. We will develop techniques for reaching all students where they are and helping them develop as historians and thinkers.

## Common Readings

William Cronon, "Only Connect...": The Goals of a Liberal Education," *The American Scholar* (Autumn 1998): 73-80

Susan Ambrose, et.al., *How Learning Works: 7 Research-based Principles for Smart Teaching*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010)

Elizabeth Barkley, *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010)

John C. Bean, *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking and Active Learning in the Classroom*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2011)

## Class Activities & Assignments

### Understanding Learning Activities

- Weekly common readings
- Discussion of readings & their application to history teaching

### Course/Section Design Activities

- Description of learning goals
- Assignments, with plan for integration of component skills
- Assessment rubrics for participation & writing assignments
- Syllabus ground-rules
- Statement of teaching philosophy

### Discussion Leadership Activities

- Visit 2 sections over the course of the semester
- Lead 20 minute discussion in class. Select readings, create lesson plan, and lead discussion.
- Lead 20 minute discussion in a section. Use readings or assignments developed by TA, create lesson plan, lead discussion.
- Review and discuss videos of discussion leaders

## Assessment

Class Participation 30%

Course/Section design activities 10% each

Leading discussion in class 10%

Leading discussion in section 10%

## Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

1/21 Week 1: An Inclusive Classroom of Excellence

1/28 Week 2: Prior Knowledge and Classroom Climate  
Ambrose Chapter 1 & 6; Barkley 110-126

2/4 Week 3: Student Motivation  
Ambrose Chapter 3; Barkley pages 3-15, 79-94

2/11 Week 4: What happens in learning  
Ambrose Chapters 2, 4 & 5

2/18 Week 5: Component Skills and Integration of Skills in History  
William Cronon, "Only Connect...: The Goals of a Liberal Education," *The American Scholar* (Autumn 1998): 73-80  
Analysis of syllabi

2/25 Week 6: Rubrics, Feed-back & Assessment  
Bean Chapters 14, 15 & 16, Ambrose Appendix C & D  
**Due:** Description of learning goals

3/4 Week 7: Active Learning  
Ambrose chapter 7, Bean 1-14, 149-160; Barkley 16-38, 94-109

3/11 Week 8: Student Engagement  
Barkley 149-362 (select relevant examples)

3/25 Week 9: Helping Students Read Difficult texts  
Bean 161-182

4/1 Week 10: Teaching critical thinking in discussion  
Bean 183-210

4/8 Week 11: Teaching research in history  
Bean 224-263  
**Due:** Assignments, with plan for integration of component skills

4/15 Week 12: Lecturing for effective learning  
**Due:** Assessment rubrics for participation & writing assignments

4/22 Week 13: Student led discussions; review of video of undergraduate discussions;  
**Due:** Syllabus ground-rules

4/29 Week 14: Student led discussions; review of video of undergraduate discussions;

5/6 Week 15: Discussion of Teaching Philosophy statements  
**Due:** Statement of teaching philosophy