

HISTORY 581  
RESEARCH IN COLONIAL AMERICAN HISTORY

Prof. Hamilton  
Office: Humanities 352  
Office Hours: TR 12:30-2:00, T 4:30-5:30  
Or by appointment  
Phone: 460-7611

Spring 2008  
Section 501  
Humanities 354

email: mhamilton@jaguar1.usouthal.edu

**Course Description**

This is a research seminar in colonial American history. The purposes of the class are to introduce students to the major themes and issues of this discipline and to write a research paper using primary sources. We will focus on historiography—the ways that historians have interpreted colonial America—and methodology—the frameworks that historians use to structure their interpretations. Through discussion and research, students will learn how to develop a research topic, how to frame their ideas, how to fit these ideas into the existing literature, and how to pull this all together in a solid piece of original historical research.

**Format**

Since this is a graduate class, the emphasis will be on class discussion of readings and research. Students must come to class ready to discuss the issues and topics in the readings and their ideas about their research. Students will also be expected to read and comment on the work of their peers. Although each student will produce an original piece of research, as with most projects, it will be partly collaborative. No historian works completely alone; comments and critiques by peers are a necessary part of the creative process.

**Assignments**

The primary assignment for the course is the research paper, which will be a substantial piece of original work. Students will also turn in pieces of the paper as they work: an annotated bibliography, a draft historiography, and a draft of the complete paper. Two presentations will also be required: a preliminary report on research and final research report. In addition, each student will write a brief (one or two page) discussion of the argument and historiographical framework of the books and articles each week.

The annotated bibliography will consist of the major primary sources and secondary works on your topic and will be turned in February 12.

The short presentation will be 20 to 30 minutes long and will discuss the basic topic of the research, its historiographical context, and how this project contributes to the literature of the topic. The long presentation will be approximately 45 minutes and will

focus on the results of the research, the evidence and arguments, and your conclusions about the topic.

On April 1, the class will meet briefly to turn in the rough drafts of the paper. Each student will give a copy to each member of the class. The last three weeks of class will be devoted to the long presentations and a class critique of the papers. The final paper is due April 25, the last day of the semester, by 5:00 pm.

Assignments and course schedule may change as needed throughout the semester.

### **Grading**

Research Paper	50%
Weekly Participation	20%
Research Presentations	20%
Weekly Writing	10%

### **Attendance and Participation**

Attendance for every class period is expected. We will take a short break halfway through the evening, and students are expected to come back to class after break. Participation counts for 20% of your final grade; you must be present to participate.

### **Required Books**

Daniel Vickers, *Companion to Colonial America*

Kenneth Lockridge, *A New England Town*

John Ruston Pagan, *Anne Orthwood's Bastard*

Helen Rountree, *Pocahontas, Powhatan, Opechancanough*

Suggested books:

Strunk and White, *Elements of Style*

All books are available at the campus bookstore and on reserve in the library.

**Please Note:** Students needing special accommodations to complete the work for the course should speak to me at the beginning of the semester and contact the Special Student Services Office in the Student Center, Room 270. This office will determine the necessary accommodations to assist students. All information will be confidential.

**Class Schedule:**

- January 8: Introduction
- January 15: Vickers, "Indian History During the English Colonial Era"  
Rountree, *Pocahontas*
- January 22: Vickers, "Regionalism"  
Lockridge, *New England Town*
- January 29: Vickers, "Class," "Ecology"  
Gloria Main, "Inequality in Early America," 1977  
Gloria Main, "Probate Records as a Source," 1975  
Karen Kupperman, "The Puzzle of the American Climate," 1982
- February 5: No class; Mardi Gras
- February 12: Vickers, "Women and Gender"  
Pagan, *Anne Orthwood*  
Annotated bibliographies due
- February 19: Vickers, "Migration and Settlement," "African Americans"  
Daniel Scott Smith, "A Perspective on Demographic Methods," 1982  
Richard Archer, "New England Mosaic," 1990  
Kathleen Fawver, "The Black Family in the Chesapeake," in Meyers and Perrault, *Colonial Chesapeake*
- February 26: Short Presentations
- March 4: Short Presentations  
Draft historiographies due
- March 11: No class; Spring Break
- March 18: No class; work on research
- March 25: No class; work on research
- April 1: Drafts of papers due, 6:00 pm in class
- April 8: Presentations
- April 15: Presentations
- April 22: Presentations
- April 25: Final papers due