The Senior Seminar is designed to serve as a capstone course to the history degree. This semester we will be examining the 1840s in America, a period of great activity: wars, inventions, gold and copper strikes, women’s rights activities, social reform, abolition, etc. Students will work with a variety of primary and secondary materials and be expected to comment on those works in class. In addition each student will produce a weekly report on primary documents, a short research paper, an annotated bibliography and an in-class presentation.

Prerequisite: Successful completion of HIS 3150 is required for admission to this course.

Attendance: Participation in a seminar is extremely important and attendance is required. Absences will cause a reduction in the final grade.

Grading:

- 7 weekly reports on primary documents 20%
- Book Review 10%
- Annotated Bibliography 15%
- In-class Presentation 30%
- Research Paper 25%

Reading:

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

- Henry Steele Commager, *The Era of Reform, 1830-1860*
  Krieger, 1982 ISBN 0898744989

- Sarah Hale, *Early American Cookery*

- Otis Singletary, *The Mexican War*

- A Packet of Reading Material
  A book published during the 1840s

Readings:

- Any AMH 2010 text
- Any Writing guide that includes the Chicago style
**Additional Readings:** Each student will be expected to do regular reading in the American Periodical Microfilm collection. Many of the newspapers, journals, and magazines published in the 1840s are in the library. This reading will form part of each week’s discussion. Some of this material is also available online.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 23</td>
<td>Introduction and Expectations: Brief survey of American History to 1840</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aug. 30</td>
<td>Library tour - special attention to the microform and microfilm collections of papers and magazines of the 1840s.</td>
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<td>Sept. 6</td>
<td>Politics and life in the 1840s. Read from <em>Era of Reform, American Cookery</em> and handouts.</td>
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<td>Sept. 13</td>
<td>The Literature and Arts of the 1840s - each student will read and report on one novel published in the 1840s.</td>
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<td>Sept. 20</td>
<td>Abolition Read: <em>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</em></td>
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<td>Sept. 27</td>
<td>Expansionist Fervor - Overland trails and land grabs. Read from handouts.</td>
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<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td>Technology: In the factory and in the mines. Read from handouts</td>
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<td>Oct. 11</td>
<td>Religious Fervor and Struggle for Women’s Rights. Read from <em>Era of Reform, American Cookery</em> and handouts.</td>
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<td>Oct. 18</td>
<td>Going to War - Mexico and Canada. Read: <em>Mexican War</em></td>
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<td>Oct. 25</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Nov. 1</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Nov. 8</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<td>Nov. 15</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 22</td>
<td>No Class - Thanksgiving</td>
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<td>Nov. 29</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td>Turn in final paperwork.</td>
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**Chronology:** America in the 1840s
1837-48  Horace Mann heads the Massachusetts Board of Education
1839-43  Hard times strike again
1840s    New York and Boston complete public water systems
1840     Liberty Party founded
          James Fenimore Cooper publishes *The Pathfinder*
          Richard Henry Danna, Jr., *Two Years Before the Mast*
          Edgar Allan Poe, *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque*
          Whigs win presidency under William Henry Harrison
          Upper and Lower Canada united
1841     John Tyler assumes the presidency after Harrison’s death
          Cooper, *the Deerslayer*
          Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Essays*
          Supreme Court settles *Amistad* case
          *Creole* case
          “Oregon fever” attracts settlers to the Northwest and intensifies expansionism
          Catherine Beecher, *Tretise on Domestic Economy*
1841-47  Brook Farm combines spirituality, work and play in a utopian rural community
1842     Knickerbockers baseball club formed
          Dorr Rebellion in Rhode Island
          Phineas T. Barnum opens Barnum’s American Museum in New York
          Charles Dickens, *American Notes*, based on visits to prisons and insane asylums in Massachusetts.
1843     Dorothea Dix petitions Massachusetts legislature regarding deplorable conditions of insane asylums
Millerites await the end of the world

Poe, “The Murders in the rue Morgue”

William Hickling Prescott, *Conquest of Mexico*

First typewriter invented

1843-44 John C. Fremont maps trails to Oregon and California

1844 Samuel F. B. Morse and the telegraph

James K. Polk elected president on an expansionist platform

A government grant develops telegraph line between Baltimore and Washington

Nativist riots peak in Philadelphia

Mormon leader Joseph Smith killed by mob

Alexander Dumas, *The Three Muskateers*

1845 Florida and Texas gain admission to the Union as slave states

Poe, *The Raven and Other Poems*

Start of the Irish potato famine and heavy Irish immigration

New England Female Labor Reform Association formed

New York City creates police force

Adventist Church founded

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

1846 War with Mexico begins

Elias Howe patents sewing machine

Seventh-Day Adventist church founded

Oregon Treaty negotiated

Bear Flag Revolt in California
Maine passes first statewide prohibition law

Founding of Smithsonian Institution

Charles Scribner’s Sons, Publishers, founded

Wilmot Proviso inflames sectional division

Herman Melville, *Typee*

Iowa admitted to the Union as a free state

1846-47  Mormon trek to the Great Salt Lake

1847  Lewis Cass proposes idea of popular sovereignty

McCormick opens farm equipment factory in Chicago

Cayuse Wars begin in Oregon

Little Brown, Publishers, established

Melville, *Omoo*

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Evangeline*

New Hampshire passes first ten-hour-day law

1847-57  Peak period of immigration before the Civil War

1848  Regularly scheduled steamship passage begins between Liverpool and New York City

Abortive revolutions in German states

John Noyes founds Oneida Community

Women’s Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York, calls for women’s suffrage

Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gives United States new territory in the Southwest

Free Soil party formed

Zachary Taylor elected president
Stephen C. Foster “Oh! Susanna”

James Russell Lowell, *Biglow Papers*

Wisconsin admitted to the Union as a free state

Karl Marx and Friedrick Engles, *Communist Manifesto*

1849

California gold rush transforms the west coast

California and Utah apply for admission to the Union as free states

Department of the Interior created

Modern safety pin invented

Astor Place Riot

Melville, *Mardi*

Elizabeth Blackwell, 1st woman medical graduate

John Greenleaf Whittier, *Poems*

Henry David Thoreau, *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*

Thoreau, essay on “Civil Disobedience”

Francis Parkman, *The California and Oregon Trail*