**HIS 2934 Fall 2012 3 Credit Hours**

**Writing History: The American Revolution**

**MWF (50 minute); T/Th (80 minute)**  
Instructor: Office: E-Mail:  
Office Hours:

**Course Description:** This course introduces students to the discipline of History by working with them on developing their skills in critical thinking, reading, and writing. The focus in *Writing History* is on historical inquiry and the production of clear, effective written prose. As such, it acts as an official substitute for ENC 1102.

**Course Goals:** *Writing History* was created to allow students who are interested in pursuing a degree in History the opportunity to acquire the skills necessary to succeed in their academic journey. Students in the course will learn about the discipline of History, what is required to conduct historical research, and the methods and writing styles used by historians. The main goal is to improve the students’ critical thinking, reading, and writing skills with a series of themed writing assignments and peer review exercises, leading to the production of a globally-revised piece of written prose.

**Gordon Rule/WAC Credit:** Writing-to-learn activities have proven effective in developing critical thinking skills, learning discipline-specific content, and understanding and building competence in the modes of inquiry and writing for various disciplines and professions.  *Writing History* is one of two courses eligible to fulfill the state-mandated lower-division Gordon Rule writing requirement and also meets FAU’s Intellectual Foundations Program Written Communications component. Furthermore, the course meets the University’s Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) requirements, which promote the teaching of writing across all levels and all disciplines. **You must achieve a grade of "C" (not C-minus) or better to receive Gordon Rule/WAC credit for this course.**  If this class is selected to participate in the university-wide WAC assessment program, you will be required to access the online assessment server, complete the consent form and survey, and submit electronically a first and final draft of a near-end-of-term paper.

**Course Materials:**

Breen, T. H. *The Marketplace of Revolution: How Consumer Politics Shaped American Independence*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Cogliano, Francis D., and Kirsten E. Phimister, eds. *Revolutionary America, 1763-1815: A Sourcebook*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in*

*Academic Writing*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2010.

Storey, William Kelleher. *Writing History: A Guide for Students*. Third Edition.

New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.  
Supplementary readings available on Blackboard (http://bb.fau.edu)

**Online Guides to Supplement Course Texts:**How to Succeed in Lecture: Some Tips on Taking Notes  
 <http://www.historyguide.org/guide/notes1.html>   
Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: A Guide for College Students <http://academic.bowdoin.edu/WritingGuides/>   
Citation Guide: The Chicago Manual of Style Online  
 <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>

On Peer Review: Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT)

[http://techtv.mit.edu/genres/25-humanities-arts-and-social-sciences/videos/ 14629-no-one-writes-alone-peer-review-in-the-classroom-a-guide-for-students](http://techtv.mit.edu/genres/25-humanities-arts-and-social-sciences/videos/%2014629-no-one-writes-alone-peer-review-in-the-classroom-a-guide-for-students)

**Course Outcome:** A student successfully completing this course will have:

1. Gained experience in identifying and working with primary and secondary sources.
2. Learned about the methods by which Historians conduct research and produce written results. This includes engagement with library resources, both print and electronic.
3. Gained experience in developing and supporting a thesis statement.
4. Learned what kinds of evidence can be used in historical writing and how to use this evidence to its best potential.
5. Acquired experience in the peer-review and global revision processes that are essential to historical research and writing. You will receive substantive comments on all written work through both instructor and peer comments.
6. Demonstrate the abilities to identify, understand, and edit for global organization, style, and the patterns of error recurrent in their own writing. To help you achieve this goal, you will learn a system of error tracking to identify and correct your patterns of error
7. Added to their skills in critical thinking, reading, and writing by producing approximately 6000 words of writing throughout the course of the term.

**Intellectual Foundations Program Category 1 (Writtent Communication) Statement**This course has been accepted as an official substitute for ENC 1102, and helps to fulfill the Interllectual Foundations Program Written Communication requirement. Students who complete the Written Communication requirement will be able to:

1. Produce clear writing that performs specific rhetorical tasks;

2. Respond critically to a variety of written materials in order to position their own ideas and arguments relative to the arguments and strategies of others;

3. Use writing not only to communicate but also to think critically–examining assumptions that underlie the readings and their own writing;

4. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical standards that apply to the use of external sources in one's writing

**Assignments and Grade Breakdown:**

**Attendance, Participation, & Peer Review 10%**

Attendance is both necessary and mandatory, as this course is quite interactive. Students must demonstrate through discussion that they understand basic questions raised by the historical process, and are able to effectively evaluate their own writing and that of their classmates through the peer review process. Missing class means missing important material and experience; more than three unexcused absences will result in the complete loss of Attendance points (a full letter grade deduction).

**Primary Source Analysis I (250 words) 5%**

**Primary Source Analysis II (500 words) 15%**

Primary sources (defined as sources created contemporary to the time period under study) are the foundation of historical analysis and critical thinking. Novice history students must familiarize themselves with the types of questions historians ask when approaching their sources. The first Primary Source Analysis will serve as a diagnostic tool and as an introduction to the collaborative peer review process. The second Primary Source Analysis will require students to demonstrate more formally their ability to recognize and write about the following: the purpose behind the document’s creation, the argument or strategy employed in the author’s agenda, the presuppositions held by the document’s author, including their historical (and our modern) epistemologies (ways of defining truth), and the source’s relationship to associated or contrasting primary documents. By addressing these factors in their written analysis, students will argue the case for the primary source’s utility and functionality as a viable resource for their research. Successful papers will be those that fully articulate and support a well-thought out argument expressed in a thesis, demonstrate effective use of carefully chosen textual support, and communicate ideas in clearly written, organized prose that is free of error. More specific criteria and/or rubrics for particular assignments will be distributed when appropriate.

**Secondary Source Analysis (750 words) 15%**

Secondary sources are defined as works of scholarship based on an analysis and contextualization of primary sources. For this assignment, students will learn how to locate scholarly articles using the University Library’s electronic and print resources, and then to narrow those results to address a more specific topic. Students will write an analysis of one scholarly journal article, explaining what they have learned about the merits and problems of that article’s structure, thesis, argument, motivation, and primary source base. As with the Primary Source Analysis, students will argue the case for the secondary source’s utility and functionality as a viable resource for their research. Successful papers will be those that fully articulate and support a well-thought out argument expressed in a thesis, demonstrate effective use of carefully chosen textual support, and communicate ideas in clearly written, organized prose that is free of error. More specific criteria and/or rubrics for particular assignments will be distributed when appropriate.

**Academic Book Review (750 words) 15%**

Students will learn how historians actively engage with and evaluate one another’s scholarship by reading and discussing the course’s primary historical monograph (Breen’s *Marketplace of Revolution*). The academic book review is an extension of the Secondary Source Analysis, and calls for students to develop and express their own assessment of one scholar’s work given their growing historical knowledge. Successful papers will be those that fully articulate and support a well-thought out argument expressed in a thesis, demonstrate effective use of carefully chosen textual support, and communicate ideas in clearly written, organized prose that is free of error. More specific criteria and/or rubrics for particular assignments will be distributed when appropriate.

**Historiography essay (750 words) 20%**

The study of historiography is premised on understanding the diverse ways in which the past has been presented and understood, whether as a result of changing social trends or of scholarly approaches. This assignment builds on the knowledge and skill sets of the previous assignments, requiring students to locate articles by two authors who take a different approach to a shared historical topic or who establish contrasting arguments on a shared set of questions. The student should be able to write a summary of each individual author’s thesis and compare their contrasting approaches. Most importantly, the student will learn to articulate and support his or her own thesis about which article makes the most convincing case.

**Paper prospectus (500 words) 20%**

Upper-division history classes will often require research papers upwards of 1,500-2,000 words. The final exercise for students in *Writing History* will prepare them for this undertaking. Students will develop a detailed plan of action for a potential research paper, including a narrative introducing a topic of their choice; a brief review of the known literature; a statement of their hypothesis and major research questions; and a bibliography. The prospectus must demonstrate the students’ proficiency in or mastery of the core elements of all previous assignments.

**Additional Course Policies and Guidelines:**

**Conduct in Class:** Students are required to arrive on time and prepared for class meetings.  Latecomers are instructed to enterin an unobtrusive manner.  Make sure **pagers, cellular phones,** etc. are turned off during class as they will distract others.  This last rule is in accordance with FAU policy concerning electronic devices in class.  As this is an intensive class devoted to developing core critical thinking and critical writing skills, let us work together in a respectful and constructive manner. Those who create a disturbance in class or otherwise show disrespect for their classmates or the process will be ordered to leave.

**Late Papers Policy:** Due dates for the paper assignments are located in the syllabus.  Late papers will not be accepted except in the case of emergencies.  In the case of medical/family emergencies, proper documentation is required in order for the paper to be accepted for grading. Computer/Printing problems are not emergencies.

**Course W.A.C. Objectives:** One of the myriad goals for this course is to have students who successfully complete the course be able to:

* produce both finished writing and preparatory writing (e.g., multiple drafts of formal writing, journal writing, written responses to other texts, etc.);
* use writing to engage actively with course material;
* employ critical thinking based on well-reasoned assumptions;
* demonstrate the distinction between learning-to-write activities from writing-to-learn activities;
* recognize and practice writing as a recursive process that demands substantial reworking of drafts (global revision) to revise content, organization, clarity, argument structures, etc., as distinct from editing and correction of surface error (local revision);
* demonstrate enhanced learning through global and local revision that is based on "learning-centered" grading criteria;
* demonstrate the ability to respond to readings, including student texts, during class-wide or small-group discussions and/or in informal writings;
* demonstrate disciplinary forms and styles of writing that include proper citation format;
* demonstrate the abilities to identify, understand, and edit for global organization, style, and the patterns of error recurrent in their own writing.

**Plagiarism**

The Undergraduate Catalog describes academic irregularities, which, on the first occurrence, can result in a grade of “F” for the course and a notation on a student’s record, and, on the second occurrence, can result in expulsion from the University. Among these is plagiarism.

Plagiarism is a form of theft. It means presenting the work of someone else as though it were your own, that is, without properly acknowledging the source. Sources include published material and the unpublished work of other students. If you do not acknowledge the source, you show an intention to deceive.

Plagiarism is an extremely serious matter. If your instructor suspects that you have plagiarized all or part of any of your work, she or he has the right to submit that work to SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection service.

**Disability policy statement**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who, due to a disability, require special accommodation to properly execute course work must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) -- in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 240 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8010) -- and follow all OSD procedures.

**Code of Academic Integrity policy statement**

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations: <http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf>

**Schedule of Class Meetings**

**Week One: The Historian’s Task**Topic: Introductions, Defining terms, Guide to resources

Writing Assignments: Foundational writing assignment; in-class reviews.  
Readings: Storey, Chapter 1; Graff & Birkenstein, Preface & Introduction

**Week Two: Working with the Sources: Identification and Interpretation**Topic: Primary sources—what they are and how they may be used

Writing Assignments (in-class): Primary Source Analysis I

Readings: Breen, Chapter 1, Storey, Chapters 2 & 4; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapter 1

**Week Three: Working with the Sources: Critical Reading to Critical Writing**Topic: Primary sources—from critical reading to critical writing  
Writing Assignments: Primary Source Analysis II (rough draft)  
Readings: Breen, Chapters 2-3; Storey, Chapter 3; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapter 2 & 7

**Week Four: Finding One’s Voice: Working with Secondary Sources**Topic: Secondary sources—familiarizing oneself with the existing discourse

Writing Assignments: Secondary Source Analysis (rough draft)  
Readings: Breen, Chapters 6-7; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapter 3; Storey, review Chapters 1-4

**Week Five: Developing the Thesis**Topic: Asking the right questions of the sources and of oneself; devising and revising a thesis.  
Writing Assignments: Primary Source Analysis II (final draft)   
Readings: Breen, Chapter 8; Storey, Chapter 5; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapter 4, review Chapter 7

**Week Six: Constructing the Argument**Topic: Building and rebuilding one’s argument  
Writing Assignments: Academic Book Review (rough draft)  
Readings: Breen, review entire book; Storey, Chapter 6; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapters 5-6

**Week Seven: Mastering the Details I: Grammar and Style**Topic: Mastering the basics  
Writing Assignments: Secondary Source Analysis (final draft)  
Readings: review secondary source articles; Storey, Chapter 7

**Week Eight: Mastering the Details: Writing Conventions in History**Topic: Critical Writing for Historians  
Writing Assignments: Academic Book Review (final draft)

Readings: Storey, Chapters 7, 8, and 9; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapters 8 & 10

**Week Nine: Writing History with Purpose: Narrative Styles**Topic: Beyond description; various approaches to writing history.  
Writing Assignments: Historiography Essay (rough draft)  
Readings: Storey, Chapters 7, 8, and 9; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapter 9

**Week Ten: Learning from Oneself: The Revision Process**Topic: Learning to critique one’s own writing effectively  
Writing Assignments: Paper Proposal (rough draft)  
Readings: Storey, Chapter 10

**Week Eleven: Learning from Others: The Peer-Review Process**Topic: Learning to critique other’s writing; accept and make use of critiques  
Assignment: Peer reviews

Readings: Peer writing assignments

**Week Twelve: Learning from Others: The Peer-Review Process**Topic: Learning to critique other’s writing; accept and make us of critiques  
Assignment: Peer reviews

Readings: Peer writing assignments

**Week Thirteen: Finalizing the Process**Topic: The never ending revision process; “polishing the apple”  
Writing Assignments: Historiography Essay (final draft)

Readings: Storey, review Chapter 10; Graff & Birkenstein, Chapter 14

**Week Fourteen: Self-Assessment and Building upon Foundation**Topic: Strategies for building upon the foundation; applicability of skills in other disciplines.  
Writing Assignments: Paper Proposal (final draft)