



Morehead State University
Department of History, Philosophy, Religion, and Legal Studies
Caudill College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences

PRACTICING HISTORY/HISTORY 250/FACE-TO-FACE
Section 001: 3:15-5:55 Mondays Rader Hall 103
Fall 2010

Instructor: Dr. John Hennen j.hennen@moreheadstate.edu

Rader Hall 305 783-2767

Office hours: MWF 10:30-11:15

TTH 1:30-12:30

W 1:00-3:00

Or by appointment or when the door is open

HIS 250. Practicing History (catalogue description)

(3-0-3); I, II.

Entry level course for majors and minors. Students complete book reviews, automated library searches, discuss career options, learn about historiography, and use historical methods in writing and oral communication.

Statements of analytical principle for the course

*For nearly every historical incident, there is an official version, in which the sides are clear In each case, however, there is more than one story. There are more than two stories. The true stories of why and how events unfolded are always complex, and they come down to the fears, loves, angers, and hopes of the individual participants.---- Aran Shetterly, *The Americano* (Algonquin, 2007):*

*The justice which we have established in our society has been achieved, not by pure individualism, but by collective action. ----Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Irony of American History* (Univ. of Chicago, 2008; orig. publ. 1952) p. 10.*

The reason for learning history is so you can walk through your life without being a dumb ass. -----Dr. Thomas Kiffmeyer, @ 2002

REQUIRED BOOKS FOR THE CLASS:

Davidson, James West and Mark Hamilton Lytle. *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*. Volume II, sixth edition. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010.

Benjamin, Jules R. *A Student's Guide to History*. Eleventh Edition. Boston/New York: Bedford-St. Martin's, 2010.

DURING CLASS MEETINGS, RADER HALL 103 IS A CELL PHONE/TEXTING-FREE ZONE. PLEASE TURN THEM OFF.

THIS IS A COURSE in historical analysis, research, writing, and presentation of research findings. History 250 is a gateway between lower and upper level courses and emphasizes not simply the retention of historical facts and chronology (though important), but the understanding of historical patterns in social, economic, cultural, and political contexts. You will be studying various research materials, including primary and secondary sources, computer databases, historical websites, historical journals, and microfilm. You will contribute to group (shop) exercises and formulate individual and collective analysis of and responses to selected topics in post-Civil War United States history (from *After the Fact*), as we use case studies to learn historical methodologies and interpretation. You will also participate in exercises based on material in the Benjamin book, which will be designed to introduce and familiarize you to the mechanics of research, writing, and documentation of historical research.

A RESEARCH PAPER, for which you will develop a personal research agenda and arrive at your personal interpretation of a self-selected topic, based on rigorous analysis of a range of historical treatments of your subject over time (i.e., the *historiography* on your topic), is a major requirement of the class. However, **students must perform well in all the course requirements to earn a good or excellent grade**. This includes participation (sometimes in writing) of our uses of supplementary reading, documentaries, film, television, or YouTube clips, discussion, presentations, library field exercises, etc. at various times during the semester. **I will evaluate your participation grade through a variety of objective/quantitative measures and some qualitative means. Participation amounts to about ¼ of your final grade.**

ATTENDANCE is required. When you enrolled in History 250, you entered into an informal contractual agreement with the people of Kentucky, with MSU, with me and my department, and with whoever is paying your share of tuition and costs. That agreement commits you to faithful attendance, participation, and acceptable completion of all course requirements. Since you are a mature and responsible citizen and student, I know you will live up to this commitment. If you violate the letter or spirit of the contract, that is your choice but you will accept the consequences of that choice. A basic condition of the contract over which you have complete control, free of my objective or subjective evaluation of your work, is attendance. We meet only once a week; therefore more than **one** unexcused absence will have a negative effect on your grade. Excused absences (illness, weather emergencies, family emergencies) must be documented and will require some kind of extra assignment. **The class begins at 3:15 and ends at 5:55. We will take a short break during each class.**

LATE ASSIGNMENTS will be penalized unless you have made special arrangements for a **short** extension based on illness, emergency, etc. Late assignments must be brought to my office—if I am not in, slide

them under my office door. Do not give them to me in class. Do not put them in my departmental mailbox in 354 Rader, and do not give them to work studies, office managers, or other faculty members to turn in for you. That is not part of their job. Save backups of all work you do that will be turned in— this protects you in the unlikely but possible event that I lose your assignment. Any written assignments over one page must be stapled or lose 10%. **I will not---repeat, NOT, accept any written assignment by e-mail attachment unless by prior agreement for cause.**

Any written work must conform to the rules of academic honesty. PLAGIARISM (stealing someone else’s written work and claiming it as your own) is remarkably easy to identify and will be punished to the fullest extent allowable under the academic fraud policies of the University and the Department of History, Philosophy, Religion, and Legal Studies. Of course you will discuss your work and assignments with other students for their insights and interpretations, but any written work you turn in must reflect your independent effort and interpretation and be written in your own words. Written assignments will require that you fully identify (or, document/give credit with historical footnotes or endnotes) the sources you use. I will provide specific guidelines for any written assignments. *If you are not sure what constitutes academic dishonesty, read The Eagle: Student Handbook, or ask your instructor. The MSU policy is located at <http://www.moreheadst.edu/units/studentlife/handbook/academicdishonesty.html>*

GENERAL SUMMARY OF REQUIREMENTS (we will discuss additional specifics when necessary in class. I will provide specific requirement checklists for your major research paper, which will be 12-15 pages of text.)

- I. Research paper (**due at the beginning of class on November 15**) and revised paper (**due at the beginning of class December 6**), 150 points/50%
- II. Historiographical essay and outline for your paper (**due at the beginning of class on November 1**) 30 points/10%
- III. Research proposal for paper, with bibliography to date (**due at the beginning of class on September 13**) 30 points/10%
- IV. Evaluation (completed in class on December 13) 15 points/5%
- V. Participation, including a written review of one chapter in *After the Fact* (75 points)/25%

ASSIGNMENTS AND COURSE SCHEDULE. BRING *After the Fact* with you to class through October 4. Bring *A Student’s Guide to History* with you to class each week. We will be doing a series of workshops many weeks based on material in the *Student’s Guide*. As the semester moves along, feel free to suggest areas you want to cover in these workshops.

Aug 23	Discussion of the course; some document analysis; possible research topics; survey of some on-line resources
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Aug 30	<p><i>After the Fact</i>, prologue, “The Strange Death of Silas Deane”; Chapter 8, “The View from the Bottom Rail,”and, Chapter 9, “The Mirror with a Memory.”</p> <p>Handout guidelines for research proposal</p>
Sept 13	<p><i>After the Fact</i>, Chapter 10, “USDA Government Inspected,” and Chapter 11, “Sacco and Vanzetti.” Research proposal and preliminary bibliography due at the beginning of class. Bring in at least two published documents or books-----no online materials for this assignment----and be prepared to explain how you plan to use them in your research.</p>
Sept 20	<p><i>After the Fact</i>, Chapter 12, “Dust Bowl Odyssey,” and Chapter 13, “The Decision to Drop the Bomb.” I will return your research proposals, with my critique and recommendations. Your original idea may be fine or it may need to be amended.</p>
Sept 27	<p><i>After the Fact</i>, Chapter 14, “From Rosie to Lucy,” and Chapter 15, “Sitting-In”</p>
Oct 4	<p><i>After the Fact</i>, Chapter 16, “Breaking into Watergate,” and Chapter 17, “Where Trouble Comes.” I will hand out guidelines for your required written review of one chapter in <i>After the Fact</i>, due October 11. I will also distribute some short readings on historiography.</p>
Oct 11	<p>Discussion of readings on historiography, TBA. At this meeting I will schedule you for an individual meeting with me during which time we will discuss you research topic, your plan, and your progress to date. These meetings will take place either on Oct 12, Oct 13, Oct 18, Oct 19, Oct 20, Oct 21, or Oct 22.</p> <p>Your review of one chapter of <i>After the Fact</i> is due at the beginning of class.</p>
Oct 18	<p>We will not meet as a class today. Use the time wisely.</p>
Oct 25	<p>Scheduled: visits from my colleagues in the History program, to discuss with you their experiences in the fields of history. Be prepared with questions about the field in general or perhaps your specific research topic. They will have some useful suggestions.</p> <p>I will review the guidelines for your historiographical essay based on research for your paper (3-4 pages, due Nov. 1)</p>
Nov 1	<p>Historiographical essay due at the beginning of class. Workshop focus, TBA.</p>
Nov 8	<p>Everyone should be ready to present a five-minute summary of their project to the class.</p>
Nov 15	<p>RESEARCH PAPER DUE. At this meeting, I will schedule you for an individual meeting with me during which time I will return your paper with recommendations for the revised paper, due on December 6. These meetings will take place on Nov 18, Nov 19, Nov 22, Nov</p>

	23, Nov 29, Nov 30, and Dec 1.
Nov 22	Viewing of <i>Lone Star</i> , a dramatic story relevant to this class.
Nov 29	Research/writing/revision on your own. I will be available in my office from 1-5 if you want to schedule an individual conference on your work.
Dec 6	Revised papers due at the beginning of class.
Dec 13 3-5 pm	Papers returned; evaluations

Grade scale: 90-100%=A; 80-89%=B; etc.