

Perspectives in History: The Underground Railroad

Fall 2019

Section Q1; 21:510:315

Mondays, 6-9 pm

CONKLIN-352

Prof. Singer

Office: 326 Conklin Hall

Office Hours:

Mondays, Wednesdays 11:30-12:30

and by appointment

Email

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Course Description

“Perspectives in History” courses focus on oral and written analysis of primary and secondary sources related to a given historical topic. This class will be looking at the Underground Railroad in a way you may not have in the past, especially when it comes to the localized focus of our subject. This is a research writing class + a history class rolled into one - and can actually be fun! Whether you are a confident researcher and/or writer, or still feel like writing a research paper is simply something to get over with, this course will improve your communication skills, critical thinking, and writing habits. If you’re a history major, “Perspectives” is a valuable course in preparation for the capstone research seminar.

Learning Goals

One goal is to continue to grow our understanding of this country’s history through the study of its African-American history. In this writing intensive course, students will also learn (or continue) to distinguish between secondary and primary sources; analyze different types of evidence using critical thinking skills; construct a historical argument; and embrace the *process* of writing.

Academic Integrity

Included in plagiarism is: cutting and pasting from the web without citing; leaving out in-text citations; submitting substantial portions of your past work for credit without prior approval. Engaging in plagiarism will result in a failing grade. If you are unsure if something needs to be cited - just cite it, ask questions, and then we can discuss it. You can access the web page regarding Rutgers’ policy using the following link or on our Sakai menu. <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

***The department REQUIRES that the following honor pledge is written and signed on examinations and major course assignments submitted for grading: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”

Grades

Essay #1 20%

Essay #2 30%

Class Participation (includes annotations) = 25%

Short Writing assignments/annotations = 25%

Grading Scale:

A	(4.0)	OUTSTANDING
B+	(3.33)	VERY GOOD

B	(3.0)	GOOD
C+	(2.33)	ALRIGHT
C	(2.0)	ACCEPTABLE
D	(1.0)	POOR
F	(0)	FAILURE

The Writing Center

The Writing Center (<http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>), located in Room 126 of Conklin Hall, offers writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers-Newark campus. Their tutors work to help students become more independent readers and writers capable of responding well to the demands of writing within the university. Please inform your students that The Writing Center is available to them free of charge and encourage them to take advantage of their services to strengthen their reading, writing, and research skills.

Students with Disabilities

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation.

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS website at <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information, please visit the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, Suite 219 or contact odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

Violence Protection and Victim Assistance

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or 4 (Rev. 6/19) harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 10.3.12) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does not have this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)-353-1918, or at run.vpva@rutgers.edu. Learn more about the office here: <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/vpva>

Frequently Asked Questions

1. If the syllabus reads for example, "Feb. 14, Discussion of Bugs Bunny Does Dallas" what does that mean?

It means that when you walk through the classroom door on that lovely afternoon of February 14th you will be prepared to discuss said oeuvre. If a writing assignment is due, then that has to come into the classroom with you as well. Please post all assignments by the end of the day that they are due on *Discussion Board* under the appropriately titled threads - unless directed otherwise.

2. *If I'm absent the day an assignment is due am I off the hook?*

Nope, the assignment is still due that day unless you have a true "excused absence." * **Each class day that an assignment is late, the grade will be lowered.** So, if the assignment that was due the 14th received a B but wasn't turned in until the next class, it would receive a C+. (No minus grades at Rutgers, folks)! If extenuating circumstances arise, notify me BEFORE the fact. And please don't email me to ask what you missed. That's what the syllabus and Announcements on Blackboard are for.

*Rutgers defines "excused absences" as, "illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions"

3. *Am I really REQUIRED to check Blackboard Announcements daily?*

Yup, it's an integral part of the class. I will post any updates to assignments there. Consider *Announcements* on Blackboard your ongoing assignment sheet: you need to read it in order to do your assignments correctly. I also post information that might be useful for your particular projects when I find it. And of course, there are my witty comments that you would miss if you neglected to check in.

4. *Do you really care how my writing assignments look?*

I care very much. Papers will be in Chicago style format; Times New Roman font, size 12; double spaced; pages numbered; with type of assignment added to information on left of first page, e.g., "Final Paper." This means 1-inch margins and no double space between paragraphs! Tell your computer to "single space" paragraphs. See the *Libraries* menu on our Blackboard shell for a link to a sample Chicago paper and feel free to use <http://citationmachine.net/>

6. *So, like, does attendance really count?*

It like really does. We discuss things in class that are relevant to your work. Missing a class is missing a lesson and you will fall behind quickly. Any student who misses *four* or more sessions (because this is a once a week class) through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F. An "excused" absence means you have informed me of the VERY good reason you will be/were absent. It counts subjectively, in that I consider you a student who wants to be in class. That can make a difference. But it is *still* an absence. **By the way, if you are late to class 4 times that will equal 1 absence.**

7. *Is the on-line class optional?*

Nope. We will hold class once or twice on **Blackboard** using *Discussion Board*. It's on the syllabus. Missing a class on **Blackboard** is an absence, just as if you failed to come to regular ol' class.

8. *When you say I should email you with any questions, do you really want me to?*

You may email me about ANYTHING. (Of course, you should check Announcements first to see whether your question has already been answered in that forum. I will also provide a thread on *Discussion Board* that is just for questions. Sometimes we don't even know we don't know something until someone else asks it! You know?). I read my email regularly and will always respond, no matter what, so that you know I received your email. If you haven't heard from me within a day, then I probably didn't get your email. Make sure, as well, that you empty your "trash" now and again. It fills up quickly and rejects important emails!

9. *Hey, speakin' of email, can't we just kinda say whatever when writin' you. You actually have email rules?*

I am afraid so. When you email me, you will use full sentences, *nt txt msg* style. You will not address me as, "Hey" or "Yo," or ask me to do anything *ASAP*. And you will sign your name to the email. These are common sense rules when communicating with most anyone via email - such as instructors and employers.

11. *What's the big deal about talking and texting in class? This is college, don't I get more freedom now?*

Not really. While you are now free and encouraged to express yourself during class discussion, you are not free to have a private conversation with another student or “text-mate.” It is rude and you will miss something in the process.

Miscellaneous Important Stuff

Start keeping track right away of everything you read and think; record in a notebook or computer file. And always have a notebook in class. I prefer you don’t use laptops in class but if you must then please use them only as needed.

Please bring all readings to class - electronically or on paper - along with your annotations. Make sure you have a library account, or you will not have access to many of these readings.

If any tech issues arise, let me know immediately. Please don’t come to class unprepared because “the link didn’t work.” You can often Google the item and find it somewhere else on the web, as well.

When the syllabus says “Discussion of…” you should have watched, listened or read said items and come to class prepared to *discuss* them. One tool for preparation will be your **annotations**. These are required notes that you take on everything you read, listen to, and watch, then post on Discussion Board by 9am the day of class, and then bring to class. You’ll first want to take notes as you read, and then you can organize those notes so you have something to post, and ultimately contribute, to class.

Your annotation post will take the form of 3 sentences for each assignment (minimum - please go further if you’d like!): 1. something you found appealing about what you read/heard/saw; 2. something you found upsetting/silly/disagreeable; 3. something you didn’t know until you experienced the piece in question. You will receive an A for each annotation with which you perform this task fully; a C for minimal effort; and an F if you don’t “show up.”

Required Text

Underground Railroad in New York and New Jersey (The Underground Railroad) Paperback - June 26, 2006 by William J. Switala

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard

Course Schedule

Subject to change of course...

Week 1	Mon., Sep. 9		Introductions; Pass out syllabus Discuss annotating requirement (see critical thinking questions) Review next week Start read-around of Preface
Week 2	Mon., Sep. 16	Online class	Chap 1 due Monday; Review rubric online. Post annotations on <i>Discussion Board</i> . (This is what you will do each time for assigned readings and viewings)
Week 3	Mon., Sep. 23		Chap 3 due Mon; Also read Blackboard article on research writing. Post those annotations! 1 st essay details
Week 4	Mon., Sep. 30		Follow-up form due Mon. for chap 4. As usual, bring annotations after posting. Class discussion.
Week 5	Mon., Oct. 7.		Chap. 5 due Mon.; Also read Blackboard article on evaluating

		sources. Bring in 1 source that might be useful for Essay 1. (Review textbook bibliography)!
Week 6	Mon., Oct. 14	Chap. 6 due Mon. draft workshop
Week 7	Mon., Oct. 21	Chap. 7 due Mon.; receive notes from me on Essay 1
Week 8	Mon., Oct. 28	Chap. 8 due Mon.; Midterm period. Essay 1 due.
Week 9	Mon., Nov. 4	Chap. 9 due Mon; As usual bring annotations after posting. Class discussion.
Week 10	Mon., Nov. 11	Chap. 10 due Mon; Bring in – and have posted –proposal for your essay 2. Will discuss in class in workshop format. (See paper requirements on Blackboard <i>Assignments</i>). Also bring completed research exercise as per guidelines posted in <i>Assignments</i> . Must be answered in full sentences.
Week 11	Mon., Nov. 18	Read <i>Notes</i> from text for Mon;
Week 12	Mon., Nov. 25	Bring in Follow-up Form on book. (See <i>Course Documents</i>). Bring in “Peer Review Sheet” from <i>Course Documents</i> . Also bring in your draft of your final paper. Must be at least 3 pages with 3 sources maximum at this point. Workshop.
Week 13	Mon., Dec. 2	One on one review of papers
Week 14	Mon., Dec. 9	Complete annotated bibliography - see <i>Assignments</i> for guidelines. Be prepared to speak about your favorite source.

**SECOND ESSAYS
DUE DECEMBER 16**

Final Exam week begins December 16 <https://tls.newark.rutgers.edu/academic-scheduling/academic-scheduling-resources/final-exam-schedule-fall-2019>

Miscellaneous sources (will be used in class and/or are useful for research)

“Telling the Stories of The Underground Railroad in Niagara Falls,” *Niagara Falls Underground Railroad Heritage Center*

<https://www.niagarafallsundergroundrailroad.org/>

“Aboard the Underground Railroad,” *National Park Service*

<https://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/underground/states.htm>

“Spotlight on History: The Underground Railroad in New Jersey, Morris County, and Madison,” by Doug Simon

<https://www.rosenet.org/DocumentCenter/View/3391/February-2016-Newsletter?bidId=>

Dr. Cheryl LaRoche Presents "Free Black Communities and the Underground Railroad: The Geography of Resistance" at Columbus Library

<https://www.nypl.org/blog/2014/02/06/dr-cheryl-laroche-free-black-communities>

“African Americans,” *Rise Up North, Newark*

<http://riseupnewark.com/chapters/chapter-1/african-americans/>

NOTES:
