

**HISTORY SEMINAR  
THE BLACK DEATH**

**Spring 2016  
(21:510:490)**

**Wednesday 6:00-9:00 p.m.  
Hill Hall, 106**

Dr. Nükhet Varlık  
varlik@andromeda.rutgers.edu  
Office Hour: Wednesday 2:00-3:00 pm  
Office: Conklin Hall, 327

**Overview**

This course is the second part of the History Senior Seminar. This semester, you will be entirely involved in research and writing, building upon the research projects you developed last semester. The course will be largely based on your independent work. However, there will be group meetings as well as individual meetings to monitor the progress of your papers and to offer guidance. Your ultimate goal is to produce a polished paper at the end of the semester (approximately 25 pages, including bibliography and notes).

I understand that each project has its own unique challenges, so the progress of students may vary slightly. The schedule and goals given below are the basic milestones you will be expected to meet. If you feel like your research is progressing faster than what is sketched here, you should feel free to move to the next task. Each time, you move on to working on a new goal, please keep me posted.

All communication for this class will be maintained on Blackboard's discussion forums, which will allow the entire class to participate. Part of your participation grade will come from your active involvement on Blackboard discussions.

You will be expected to monitor your own progress on the basis of goals identified below. At the end of January, February, and March, you will submit a progress report detailing the progress you have made and how well you meet the goals for each phase. The progress reports will be submitted on Blackboard's discussion forums and will be open to the entire class so you can find out about the progress of your classmates and your classmates can learn about your progress. Progress reports will be graded (5 points for each). Failure to submit on time will be penalized (1 point taken off for every late day).

## Grading

Participation and discussions	10%
Progress reports	15%
Paper Drafts	25%
Final paper	50%

## Grading Standards

90-100	%	A (a genuinely outstanding achievement)
80-89	%	B (above average achievement)
70-79	%	C (comprehension of the subject at an appropriate university level)
60-69	%	D (unsatisfactory performance, barely passing)
Below 60%		F (failure)

## Course Policies

Attendance at all regularly scheduled meetings of this class is mandatory. Rutgers catalog states that “the recognized grounds for absence are 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.” More than one unexcused absence will result in a full letter grade penalty. More than two unexcused absences will result in automatic failure. It is your responsibility to come to class and see that you are marked present for the classes you attend. In the event that you have a medical, legal, or family-related problem that might lead to an extended absence, you need to meet with me in person and bring necessary documentation as evidence of your problem. Only then, we can discuss whether or not your absence(s) can be excused. An email message explaining your problem will NOT be considered as an excuse for your absence. Ultimately, it will be the instructor’s judgment to decide whether an absence can be excused or not.

Students are also expected to arrive to class on time. Arriving late to class will count as half an absence.

Academic dishonesty of *any sort* will not be tolerated. It is your responsibility to comply with the University’s Policy on Academic Integrity, which falls under the Code of Student Conduct. The policy and the consequences of violating it are outlined here: <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/office-dean-student-affairs/academic-integrity-policy>. I strictly follow the University’s rules regarding plagiarism and other academic irregularities. Please consult me if you have any questions about what is and is not appropriate regarding the use of sources or citation. All students are required to sign the Rutgers honor pledge. You must include this pledge on all major course assignments submitted for grading: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to amendment or change at the discretion of the instructor.

## I. PREPARATION AND ORGANIZATION STAGE

**1/20**            **Group meeting**  
Introduction; discussion of paper and expectations; milestones to meet

**1/27**            **No class**  
Work on readings; rethink whether sources will allow addressing research questions (if not, revise proposal accordingly)

Goals to meet by the end of January:

- Bibliography of the prospectus expanded
- All primary sources read
- At least half of all secondary sources read
- Student has notes taken from readings (primary and secondary)
- Student has revised the prospectus (if applicable)
- Student ready to structure the outline of the paper

Requirement:

- Submit progress report 1 detailing whether you have met each goal for January.

## II. PLANNING THE STRUCTURE OF THE PAPER AND START WRITING

**2/3**            **Individual meetings**

**2/10**           **No class**

Submit draft outline—2/13

**2/17**           **Group meeting**  
Revising outlines; writing the introduction

**2/24**           **No class**  
Work on revising outline; writing introduction

Submit revised outline—2/27

Goals to meet by the end of February:

- Student has a complete paper outline
- Introduction is drafted
- All primary sources are read
- All secondary sources are read

Requirement:

- Submit progress report 2 detailing whether you have met each goal for February.

### III. WRITING

**3/2 Individual meetings**

Submit introduction 3/5

**3/9 No class**

\*\*\*\*\* SPRING BREAK \*\*\*\*\*

**3/23 Group meeting**  
Brief presentations

**3/30 No class**

Goals to meet by the end of March:

- Revised introduction
- Having a full draft of the paper

Requirement:

- Submit progress report 3 detailing whether you have met each goal for March.

## IV. POLISHING

Submit full draft 4/2

**4/6            Group meeting**  
Editing your own work; commenting on the work of classmates

**4/13           Individual meetings**

Submit revised full draft 4/16

**4/20           No class: work on final paper**

**4/27           No class: work on final paper**

Goals to meet by the end of April:

- Have a polished final draft
- Bibliography finalized
- Maps, figures, illustrations, and their captions ready
- Paper had been revised and edited
- Paper proofread thoroughly

Requirement:

- Submit final paper electronically on May 11 –by 8:59 pm. Failure to submit the final paper on time will result in AUTOMATIC FAILURE in the course. It is an absolutely firm deadline. MAKE SURE NOT TO MISS IT!!