

LABOR AND BUSINESS IN AMERICAN HISTORY: A WRITING SEMINAR
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Labor history and business history offer two distinct, and sometimes irreconcilable, interpretations of the United States' economic past. Rather than take one narrative as “correct” and the other as “incorrect,” this course will use the interpretative differences of the two disciplines to understand how historians write history and how disciplinary questions, contexts, and assumptions frame the practice of writing.

Papers:

Over the course of the semester students will write papers of many different lengths and styles culminating with a longer research paper will be on a topic of the student's choosing.

All sources must be footnoted in the proper *Chicago Manual of Style* format. For more information on footnoting, please see http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html and Kate Turabian *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertation*. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

Reading:

Good writing begins with reading. We will spend a great deal of attention not only on content but how historians use sources to make arguments.

We will use *Writing History* as an informal textbook for the course.

Attendance:

Active and constructive participation is expected.

Grading:

Participation:	20%
Chapter Summaries 1:	5
Outline and Bibliography:	5
Close Reading:	5
Chapter Summaries 2:	5
Book Review:	5
Group Book Review:	10
First Page and Last Paragraph:	5
Rough Draft:	10
Op-ed:	5
Position Piece:	5
Final Paper:	20

CLASSES:

January 24: Historiography and Research in Labor and Business History

January 26: Reading and Writing History

Writing History, chap. 6-8

Lizabeth Cohen, "From Town Center to Shopping Center: The Reconfiguration of Community Marketplaces in Postwar America," *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 101, No. 4 (Oct., 1996), pp. 1050-1081.

January 31: Summary

Julia Ott, *When Wall Street Met Main Street*

February 2: Asking Good Questions: Structure and Agency

Walter Johnson, "On Agency," *Journal of Social History* 37.1 (2003) 113-124.

Joe Trotter, "African-American Workers: New Directions in U.S. Labor Historiography," *Labor History* 35.4 (Fall 1994): 495-523

Robin D.G. Kelley, "'We Are Not What We Seem': Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of American History* 80.1 (Jun 1993), 75-112.

Ellen Fitzpatrick, "Rethinking the Intellectual Origins of Labor History," *AHR* (April 1991): 422-428

Naomi Lamoreaux, Daniel M. G. Raff, and Peter Temin, "Beyond Markets and Hierarchies: Toward a New Synthesis of American Business History," *American Historical Review* (April 2003): 404-433.

February 7: Reviews: The Market Revolution

Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution*, selections

Chapter summaries due in class (~100 words per chapter)

February 9: Library Visit

Writing History, Chap. 1

Learn how to conduct research in the archive and the library

February 14: Reviews

Douglas Egerton, "Markets without a Market Revolution: Southern Planters and Capitalism," *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 16, No. 2, Special Issue on Capitalism in the Early Republic (Summer, 1996), pp. 207-221

A Symposium on Charles Sellers, "The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846," *Journal of the Early Republic*, Vol. 12, No. 4, Winter, 1992, 445-476

Plus one more review that you must find and bring to class

February 16: Kheel Center trip

Writing History, Chap. 2-4

Find primary sources for research paper and for close reading

February 21: Problem and Outline

Writing History, Chap. 5-6

Outline and Bibliography

February 23: Primary Sources

Writing History, Chap. 9

Close reading of primary source from Kheel (250 words)
Notes from source

February 28: Slavery and Finance

Harold Woodman, *King Cotton and His Retainers: Financing and Marketing the Cotton Crop of the South, 1800-1925*

Chapter summaries due in class (~150 words per chapter)

March 1: Writing and Editing

Writing History, Chap. 10

Review of *King Cotton* due with discussion (1000 words)

March 6: The City and Finance

Sven Beckert, *Monied Metropolis*, introduction, Part I, Part III.

Group Review of *Monied Metropolis* and *King Cotton* due (1100 words)

March 8: First Page and Last Paragraph Discussion

First page and last paragraph due (~350 words)

Self-directed editing; Self-edit page due at end of class (in class)

March 13: The Corporation

Alfred Chandler, *Strategy and Structure*, Introduction, 1, 2, 3, 4

Revised First Page and Last Paragraph due (~350 words)

March 15: The Corporation, II

Alfred Chandler, *Strategy and Structure*, 6,7

Making the argument for change: memo to corporate leaders on how they should change the organization of their businesses (based on Chandler) (500 words)

March 20, 22: Spring Break

March 27: Rough Draft discussion

Rough draft due in class (3750 words excluding footnotes)

March 29: Reading for Parallels

Susan Benson, *Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940*

April 3: Opinion: Work

Op-Ed using Benson's history to discuss retail work and business today (750 words)

April 5: Financial Crisis

Robert Collins, "The Economic Crisis of 1968 and the Waning of the "American Century"" *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 101, No. 2 (Apr., 1996), pp. 396-422

Barry Eichengreen, Peter Temin, "The Gold Standard and the Great Depression," *Contemporary European History*, Vol. 9, No. 2 (Jul., 2000), pp. 183-207

Christina Romer, "What Ended the Great Depression?," *The Journal of Economic History* , Vol. 52, No. 4 (Dec., 1992), pp. 757-784

Michael A. Bernstein, "The Great Depression as Historical Problem," *OAH Magazine of History* , Vol. 16, No. 1, *The Great Depression* (Fall, 2001), pp. 3-10

Michael A. Bernstein, "A Reassessment of Investment Failure in the Interwar American Economy," *The Journal of Economic History*, Vol. 44, No. 2, *The Tasks of Economic History* (Jun., 1984), pp. 479-488

April 10: Opinion: Finance

Position piece on lessons of financial crisis due (750 words)

April 17: Presentation 1

April 19: NO CLASS

April 26: Presentation 2

May 1: Presentation 3

May 3: Writing and History: Learning From Revisions

May 10: Final Paper due