

Literacy and Family History

ENG W462 – 01 & C682 – 01 • Spring 2009 • SB G34 • M/W 4:30 – 5:45 p.m.

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Office Hours: M, T, W 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. and by appointment

Overview

In this course you will be doing research and writing your own family history, using various field work guidelines and methodologies for archival research. We'll meet weekly as a class at the Allen County Public Genealogy Library (ACPL) to use the vast resources available to us there. You'll be exploring not just your family history, but various issues and methods for composing that history (i.e. the mode and audience of your history is open ended. So you might opt to write a digital video, website, print booklet, or something else).

Moreover, the class will have a service learning component as we work with the Lake James History Project (LJHP) in writing a history of the lake's inhabitants from the early 1900s to the present. Members of LJHP have interviewed and collected data from families in residence and elderly members of the lake. They are working to organize their collected data and create a publishable manuscript to be submitted to various oral history archives in the NE Indiana area, including ACPL.

Objectives

Students who complete this course will demonstrate that they know how to:

- Adhere to accepted ethical and legal principles
- Use appropriate rhetorical tools and technologies tailored for specific audiences and purposes
- Integrate verbal and visual elements in composing family history projects
- Evaluate, interpret, and document archival materials
- Collaborate with a non-profit organization (the LJHP) in producing something that meets their needs
- Keep an active research journal in which they reflect on the process of writing their own family histories and of helping the LJHP write their manuscript

Text and Materials

Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater. *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*, 3rd edition, 2007
ISBN: 0-312-43841-9

USB flash drive or other data storage device

Assignments & Details

Entrance Essay and Interview: in this assignment you'll write about your views of genealogical and archival research. You'll describe what your expectations are for the course and what you hope to gain from doing a family history and working with LJHP members.

Family History Project Proposal: after being introduced to the archives and doing a bit of research into your family history, you'll write a proposal for the family history "deliverable" you'd like to produce. The proposal will include descriptions of the project, intended audience(s), mode, methods for the work you'll do, a timeline for completion, and any other relevant information.

Family History Project (Deliverable): after your proposal has been approved, you'll do what you proposed you'd do. You'll research, write, create, design, and compose your family history project for a specific audience. The mode (i.e. genre) for this project is open. You may opt to write a "traditional" history or booklet to give to family members; you may create a digital video or database; you may create a website; you may do a multi-genre style paper; or you may think of something even better. Your project must have both text and visuals.

LJHP Proposal: once we've met with members of the Lake James History Project and heard about their goals and potential projects, you'll select one area to research and/or write in collaboration with them. You'll write a proposal to be approved both by me and by them for what you'll do and produce in the remainder of the term.

LJHP (Deliverable): you'll research and write what you said you'd do. Projects include taking existing archives and compiling them into readable and attractive chapter sections for the manuscript; deeper research into the history of Lake James prior to 1900 and then writing about what you find; research and writing about thematic topics that they've yet to explore such as Native Americans who inhabited the lake, the railroad's impact on lake life, camps or hotels that existed, and the life of the original surveyor of the lake.

Research journal or blog: an important part of doing research of any sort is keeping track of your progress (or pitfalls) with copious notes. Similarly, an important part of doing service learning is writing about the experience to learn and reflect. Also, we'll be doing some theoretical reading in the class (not a huge amount, don't worry) and you'll need a place to hash through that information. Hence the research journal or blog. You'll keep a running narrative of your experiences in a form that can easily be "handed in" for grading.

Exit Essay and Interview: at the end of the term, you'll revisit your entrance essay/interview and write a follow-up reflection. You'll think about how you've changed from the experience, what you've learned, what you've gained, and how your views about genealogical and archival research have changed.

Graduate Annotated Bibliography: (graduate students only) you'll research 10 to 15 resources and scholarly articles related to service learning, write annotations for them, and submit a formal annotated bibliography.

Graduate Discussion and Class Facilitation: (graduate students only) you'll select two different Mondays during the term to be in charge of directing class discussion. These days may be directly related to your annotated bibliography in the form of a small presentation of a scholarly article, and you'll prepare discussion topics that make connections between service learning and family history writing.

Requirements & Grading

Undergraduate Requirements:

Assignment	Percentage
Entrance Essay & Interview	5%
Family History Project Proposal	35%
Family History Project Deliverable	
LJHP Proposal	35%
LJHP Deliverable	
Exit Essay & Interview	5 %
Research Journal or Blog	20%

A = 90 – 100%
B = 80 – 89%
C = 70 – 79%
D = 60 – 69%
F = 0 – 59%

Graduate Requirements:

Assignment	Percentage
Entrance Essay & Interview	5%
Family History Project Proposal	30%
Family History Project Deliverable	
LJHP Proposal	30%
LJHP Deliverable	
Exit Essay & Interview	5 %
Research Journal or Blog	10%
Grad Annotated Bibliography	10%
Grad Class Facilitation	10%

A = 92 – 100%
B = 82 – 91%
C = 72 – 81%
D = 62 – 71%
F = 0 – 59%

Course Policies

Attendance and Participation: Simply put, it is imperative that you attend class and come prepared either for discussion (Mondays on campus) or for research and writing (Wednesdays at the library). You are allowed three absences in the class. There are no excused or unexcused absences; either you are here or you are not. After the third “freebie” your grade will be lowered by 3% per absence.

On Mondays, class will be held on campus from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. in SB G34. On Wednesdays, class will be held from 4:30 to 5:45 p.m. at the main branch of the Allen County Public Library (ACPL) at 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, IN 46802. I will drive to the library around 3:30 each Wednesday, if you need transportation. I encourage you to carpool with classmates. Parking is located in the lowest level of the library off of Wayne Street. Parking is free for those with a library card and can be validated inside.

Late Work: I reserve the right to refuse to read exercises and projects submitted late. If I accept late work, it is subject to a deduction of points.

Public Nature of Classroom: Because you will submit work and work collaboratively, you are expected to select assignment topics that you are comfortable sharing. Also, because our class will be meeting in the ACPL, a public area, I expect you to conduct yourself as professionals and as representatives of the university.

Ethics and Plagiarism: check the IPFW 2006-2008 Undergraduate Bulletin for policies regarding plagiarism and academic honesty. Because of the nature of this class, we’ll be exploring different ways to give attribution to primary and secondary sources, interviews, and graphics. You are expected to submit your own work in the course.