Research Seminar and Tutorial in English History  
CAS HI 432  
Fall 2017

Instructor Information

A. Name
B. Day and Time
C. Location
D. Telephone
E. Email
F. Office hours

Dr Michael Thornhill
Thursdays, times as noted (except Friday 8 Sept)
By appointment

Course Overview

The Seminar begins with a five-week ‘Research Methods’ phase aimed at showing how primary evidence is deployed in historical argument. An introductory lecture considers the relationship between the past and the present, and surveys the evolution of key historiographical trends in modern English – and British – history. Consideration is then given to how various types of sources have illuminated different aspects of the past (approached via the state, geographical location, and through human agency), and this is dovetailed with practical guidance in historical investigation for some of the main archives in London. The Seminar then aims to apply the technical skills being developed to an appropriate research topic, which in turn must tie in with the themes and issues covered in the core class on the history track of this program (‘London: Imperial Capital to Global City’). The outcome will be an upper level undergraduate research paper that demonstrates an ability to find relevant historical information, both primary and secondary, that deploys this information persuasively both in terms of organization and judgement, and which ultimately approaches historical problems with creativity and intellectual independence.

Course Methodology and Assessment

The course is taught over the whole semester. The ‘Historiography and Research Methods’ phase (weeks one to five) is assessed by a one-hour resources and historiography quiz, which is worth 20% of the final grade. Students will be examined on historiographical trends and the appropriateness of various archival repositories and electronic research databases for particular fields of historical study. A further 20% of the final grade will be awarded for a 600-word research proposal, submitted at the start of class 7. This proposal will be peer discussed in draft form via student presentations in class six. The eventual statement should identify a realistic research topic, give a sense of the historiography in which the topic fits and, finally, detail secondary and primary sources to be consulted. A fully realized and practicable research statement will gain the highest
marks. A 4,000-5,000-word research paper, presented in an appropriate scholarly style, is worth 60% of the overall grade. This is submitted on Monday 4 December by 1pm.

During the ‘Research and Writing Phase’ (weeks six to fourteen), students will spend more time in tutorials to review individual concerns and issues as their research paper progresses. Student tutorials can last up to 60 minutes in length. The tutor and teaching assistant will both review the progress of the research paper. These tutorials will assist in the preparation and communication of the final research paper by means of mini assignments, which will be agreed upon in a collaborative manner. This may include a review of methods used, sources consulted, or how a student’s argument/thesis is being developed.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Classes
All Boston University London Programme students are expected to attend each and every class session, seminar, and field trip in order to fulfill the required course contact hours and receive course credit. Any student that has been absent from two class sessions (whether authorised or unauthorised) will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their continued participation on the programme.

Authorised Absence:
Students who expect to be absent from any class should notify a member of Academic Affairs and complete an Authorized Absence Approval Form 10 working days in advance of the class date (except in the case of absence due to illness for more than one day. In this situation students should submit the Authorised Absence Approval Form with the required doctor’s note as soon as possible). The Authorised Absence Approval Request Form is available from: http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester/

Please note: Submitting an Authorised Absence Approval Form does not guarantee an authorised absence

Students may apply for an authorised absence only under the following circumstances:

- **Illness (first day of sickness):** If a student is too ill to attend class, the student must phone the BU London Student Affairs Office (who will in turn contact the student’s lecturer).
- **Illness (multiple days):** If a student is missing more than one class day due to illness, the student must call into the BU London Student Affairs Office each day the student is ill. Students must also provide the Student Affairs office with a completed Authorised Absence Approval Form and a sick note from a local doctor excusing their absence from class.
- **Important placement event that clashes with a class (verified by internship supervisor)**
- **Special circumstances which have been approved by the Directors (see note below).**

The Directors will only in the most extreme cases allow students to leave the programme early or for a significant break.
**Unauthorised Absence:**
Any student to miss a class due to an unauthorised absence will receive a 4% grade penalty to their final grade for the course whose class was missed. This grade penalty will be applied by the Academic Affairs office to the final grade at the end of the course. As stated above, any student that has missed two classes will need to meet with the Directors to discuss their participation on the programme as excessive absences may result in a ‘Fail’ in the class and therefore expulsion from the programme.

**Religious Holidays**
Boston University’s Office of the University Registrar states:

‘The University, in scheduling classes on religious holidays and observances, intends that students observing those traditions be given ample opportunity to make up work. Faculty members who wish to observe religious holidays will arrange for another faculty member to meet their classes or for cancelled classes to be rescheduled.’

**Special Accommodations**
Each student will need to contact the Office of Disability Services to request accommodations for the semester they are abroad. Students are advised by BU-ODS not to expect the same accommodations as they receive on campus.

BU London can only uphold special accommodations if we have received the appropriate documentation from the BU-ODS. We cannot accept letters from other universities/centres.

All disabilities need to be known to the ODS in Boston if they are to be used as a reason for requiring a change in conditions, i.e. reduced internship hours or special accommodations for the internship schedule.

**Lateness**
Students arriving more than 15 minutes after the posted class start time will be marked as late. Any student with irregular class attendance (more than two late arrivals to class) will be required to meet with the Associate Director for Academic Affairs and if the lateness continues, may have his/her final grade penalized.

**Required Reading**
The primary reading text for each session is indicated in the class schedule section and will either be handed out or available following the appropriate link. In addition to these, students are expected to read the following texts in order to gain a basic understanding of the course. These books will be available through the BU London library.


Additional reading may be found on Blackboard: [https://lms.bu.edu](https://lms.bu.edu)
Class Schedule
* denotes compulsory class readings (either online or on the BU course webpage)

Part One – ‘Historiography and Research Methods’

Class 1: Friday 8 September, 2pm to 5pm
Introduction: How the present engages with the past

How to understand the ‘bias’ of a source; embracing ‘bias’ for what it tells us about the past; what our interpretation of the bias says about the present; different theoretical frameworks for understanding history; scholarly fashions as to what types of history have greater explanatory importance.
* Richard J. Evans, ‘The History of History’ chapter in In Defence of History

Class 2: Thursday 14 September, Wadham College, Oxford, 10.45am to 1pm
The individual: Biography and history

[Guest lecturer, Dr Alex May, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography / Faculty of History, Oxford University]

The changing role of ‘national’ biography publishing projects; writing women into the past; history from below; the uses of family history; anthropology and sociology in historical understanding; what the sources can’t tell us; what is missing from the archival records; the uses of diaries, private papers, oral history and film and sound archives.
* http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/default.asp (National Register of Archives: on-line catalogue)

Class 3: Thursday and Friday 21 and 22 September, Lancaster and Liverpool trip
How Liverpool as a city engages with its imperial, industrial and cultural past; the role of memory, rhetoric and place; the function of narrative and public memory in museums, galleries and memorials.

Class 4: Thursday 28 September, 2pm to 5pm
The State: Using ‘official’ records

The grand narrative—how history has been invented to create national traditions; the role of ‘great events’; the changing scope and nature of state activities and how this is reflected in the preserved records; Britain as a European power in the national archives; Britain and the non-European world at a governmental level; social and economic history as seen by the ruling elites; government propaganda materials; how to search the National Archives on-line catalogue; using parliamentary records; the History of Parliament project.
* http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/catalogue/researchguidesindex.asp
Class 5: Thursday 5 October, Researching London / How to write a research proposal

Urban history as a rapidly expanding field of historical studies; the development of suburbs and the responses of modernist ‘intellectuals’ to them; postmodernism and cultural history. The class will also include detailed instructions on how to write a research proposal (drafts of which will be presented in class 6)


Part Two – ‘The Research and Writing Phase’

Class 6: Thursday 19 October, 2pm to 5pm
A ‘Resources and Historiography’ quiz (one hour) will take place at the start of the class followed by student presentations of draft proposals

[Final version of proposal submitted at class 7 tutorials. The tutorial times for subsequent meetings will be assigned during this session. Students will be paired if they are researching similar topics and where a cross-fertilisation of ideas might be possible.]

Class 7: Friday 27 October, 2pm to 5pm
Student tutorials

Class 8: Thursday 2 November, 2pm to 5pm
Student tutorials

Class 9: Thursday 9 November, 2pm to 5pm
Group session: student presentations
On progress to date.

Class 10: Thursday 16 November, 2pm to 5pm
Student tutorials

Class 11: Thursday 23 November, 2pm to 5pm
Group session – Guidance on when and how to cite primary and second sources

All students must submit 500 words of polished writing in advance with a range of primary and secondary source citations being deployed.

Class 12: Thursday 30 November, 2pm to 5pm
Student tutorial Students must submit their research papers by 1pm Monday 4 December following this session.

Class 13: Thursday 7 December, 2pm to 5pm
Group seminar: Stocktaking
Students discuss their key findings amongst their peers. Marked papers will be returned in this class.
Grading

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism: http://www.bu.edu/london/current-semester

* Final Grades are subject to deductions by the Academic Affairs Office due to unauthorised absences.

Michael Thornhill
31 July 2017