



Boston University Study Abroad London

Research Seminar and Tutorial in English History

CAS HI 432 (*Core course for the History Track of the London History and Literature Programme*)

Co-requisite: CAS HI 246 *London since 1666: Imperial Capital to World City*

Pre-requisite: *First-Year Writing Seminar* (e.g., WR 100 or 120)

Instructor Information

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Course Description

This “Writing-Intensive” course harnesses the source criticism mindset of the historian to develop the two most fundamental characteristics of a university educated person : the ability to think critically and then to express this thinking in logical and nuanced prose. Taking the ‘Historical Consciousness’ and ‘Research and Information Literacy’ skills learned in *CAS HI 246 London since 1666*, this core course applies them via the writing of an extended paper on a historical topic. This topic (of the student’s choosing) must broadly connect with English and/or British history after 1666, both internal and external. This course has CAS WR 120 or its equivalent as a prerequisite. Targeted writing assignments and regular feedback is a feature throughout.

Part one provides a platform for students to deepen, test and formulate their crystallising ideas for their research project in weekly seminars. To this end, students will reflect on how their topic relates with broader historiographical trends. Instruction will be given in recognizing and analysing different types of historical writing via critical reading exercises. For instance, the relationship between biography and history is explored via a guest lecture from a historian-editor on the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Consideration is also given to the changing role of the state in Britain and the official papers it produces. As part of this instruction, students must identify record groups of potential use in their projects. We will then visit the National Archives and consult some of the sources selected. The first phase of the course concludes with a two-day field trip to Liverpool. With its rich imperial, industrial and cultural past, this visit is used to reflect upon non-traditional sources in public history, such as memorials, galleries, and museums, as well as considering “history from below” and the problems of a relative lack of sources for certain sections of society. Students are assessed on phase one of the course via a ‘research proposal’ (with feedback on a draft preceding final submission) and an hour-long test.

The second part of the course focuses on research and writing skills, underpinned by the historian’s craft of interrogating and evaluating primary and secondary source materials. To this end, we use the study abroad experience in Britain by adopting a teaching method associated with Oxford and Cambridge universities: the tutorial. This entails three one-to-one or paired teaching sessions during which students must orally present their considered writing to their instructor, and then defend and

critique it in discussion. Feedback on the writing will be given at these meetings, as well as in the collaborative learning environment of seminars amongst a small group peers. The main creative outcome of the course will be an upper level undergraduate research paper on a British-related historical topic chosen by the student, and advised by an instructor with an interest in the subject and its explication.

Course Objectives and Hub Learning Outcomes

These course objectives fulfil the academic requirements for two Hub Capacities:

Communication Area: 'Writing Intensive' and

Intellectual Toolkit Area: 'Critical Thinking.'

1. Students will demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the main historiographical trends in British history since the writing of history was professionalised in the UK in the late nineteenth century.
2. Students will identify a manageable research topic from material covered in *CAS HI 246 London since 1666: Imperial Capital to World City* and apply the topic to relevant historiographical debates discussed in phase one of the course. [WIN LO2]
3. Students will demonstrate an ability to identify relevant primary and secondary source materials and write persuasively regarding their purpose in their projects, using the modes of expression expected in a history research proposal. [WIN LO1]
4. Students will conduct an appropriate level of research in primary and secondary source materials, and evaluate these materials in the context of the times in which they were produced using the "source criticism" mindset of the historian. [WIN LO2] [CRT LO1]
5. Students will test their historical arguments in class, using media and modes of expression appropriate for formal presentations, while also discussing the validity of historical arguments produced by their classmates. [WIN LO1] [CRT LO2]
6. In class discussion, students will be able to demonstrate the use of deductive modes of inference when writing historical arguments. [CRT LO1]
7. In class discussion, students will be able to distinguish empirical claims about matters of fact from normative or evaluative judgments, and recognize the ways in which emotional responses can affect reasoning processes. [CRT LO1]
8. Students will write a considered and well-structured 5000-word research paper concerning an issue relating to the modern history of Britain, based on extensive use of primary and secondary materials. [WIN LO1] [CRT LO1]
9. The ultimate objective of the course is to encourage a searching mind and intellectual independence.

Approach to Learning

Seminars

The seminars in phase one of the course are aimed at delivering Course Objectives 1, 2 and 3. Instruction will be given on the main historiographical trends in British history since the professionalization of the subject in the late nineteenth century. This will be tied in with broader trends (e.g. the Rankean revolution), and students are required to reflect on how their research topics relate to sub-disciplines of history, as well as connect with major historiographical debates. Guidance will also be given on how to write a history research proposal. A key part of this relates to a literature review, and there will be a chance for students to apply their critical reading in this regard in the mid-session test. The seminars in the second phase of the course have two main functions. First, they are the primary mechanism for delivering Course Objectives 4-8: critical thinking and regular writing tasks are set to prompt interaction between the instructor and a small

group of student peers with the aim of developing a shared understanding of key concepts, the testing ideas and arguments, and – perhaps most critically – the improvement of writing skills in the style deployed by historians. The seminars will also contribute to the final grade via class participation. Secondly, the seminars serve as a regular touchpoint with the core class, CAS HI 246, in that seminar sessions 4, 9 and 13 are co-led by Dr Michael Peplar so as to reinforce the BU London History Programme’s holistic learning objectives.

Field Trips

There are three field trips. The first is to the National Archives (in Kew, London) and is aimed at familiarising the students with the practicalities of conducting research in what can seem, at least initially, an intimidating environment. The second field trip is to Oxford and includes a seminar on the relationship between biography and history by a member of Oxford University’s History Department, together with a walking tour to explore Oxford’s impact on British national life. The cornerstone of an Oxford education is the tutorial. We use this field trip to reflect on the social confidence required to perform in this setting and ask whether it promotes inequalities in British society. A third field trip extends over two days in the port city of Liverpool, and is aimed at taking students out of the Oxford-Cambridge-London triangle and instead considers how the northwest of England was pivotal to Britain’s imperial and industrial rise. The trip is also used to reflect on how the peoples of the British Isles impacted the world, politically, economically and culturally. Landmarks connected with the Beatles naturally feature. Another key purpose of all these field trips is to talk one-to-one with the TA and/or instructor about the research projects and their presentation.

Tutorials

This course utilises a world-renowned teaching method associated with Oxford and Cambridge universities. The tutorial is a personalised learning experience which centres on an hour-long discussion between one or two students and the instructor. It is used on this course in three strategically-placed sessions – 8, 10 and 12 – to explore the more esoteric nature of students’ research projects, as well as to provide extensive feedback on writing skills in terms of cogency and fluency of argument, the use of appropriate diction, and the like. (If two students are working in similar areas, it may be beneficial to conduct the tutorial in a pair; otherwise, the session will be one-to-one.) Individual feedback is provided as part and parcel of these tutorials, albeit with the core aim of encouraging intellectual independence. The field trip to Liverpool also includes provision for a one-to-one session with the TA to gain formative feedback on the “research proposal” prior to its submission in the following session.

Assessment Methods

Class participation:	10%
Test	15%
Research Proposal	15%
5000-word paper:	60%

Class Participation (10%)

This is an active learning course which requires students to prepare for class with set readings and/or written assignments. The relationship and types of language used between broader critical thinking skills and the historian’s “source criticism” mindset (see Course Objectives 5, 6 and 7) will be a key feature of class discussions and thus a central element in the awarding of class participation grades. Writing skills, in particular, will be critiqued in group discussion, with students commenting on the quality of each other’s topic sentences, the use of diction, the interrogation of primary sources, the deployment of secondary sources, when to cite, the cogency of argument between paragraphs, etc.

Test (15%)

The first half of the in-class hour-long test is aimed at measuring the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of historiographical trends in British history since the professionalization of the subject in the late nineteenth century. The second part of the test has a 'source criticism' component (based on a primary source hitherto unseen in the class), as well as a question which connects back to a student's research project. The percentage awarded will count towards the final grade.

Research Proposal (15%)

This assignment is both formative and summative. It is formative in that students are required to submit a formally-worded research proposal at a juncture in the course which allows for progress to be assessed and individual feedback provided. It is also formative in that students can refine and reuse elements of the assignment in their final paper. At the same time, the research proposal is summative in that a percentage grade is awarded which counts towards the final letter grade. The format of the Research Proposal is in the style of a graduate school application or a research grant application. As such, it requires the articulation of a succinct title (with special reference to key words); a statement of the main objectives of the research; a statement of why the research is needed (e.g. does it fill a gap or reevaluate earlier work based on new sources); a literature review; and an identification of primary sources to be consulted. A final section asks about the expected outcomes. Instructions on the format, style and length of all these elements are posted in Blackboard, and are by extension the key to understanding how this assignment will be graded.

5,000 word paper (60%)

Students will write a considered and well-structured research paper concerning an issue relating to the the modern history of Britain (within the periodization covered by CAS HI 246), based on extensive use of primary and secondary materials. The paper, submitted by 1pm on the Monday prior to Session 13, should be 5,000 words in length or 20 double-spaced pages (plus or minus 5%), 1.5-spaced, and in 11-point font. The scholarly apparatus of citations and bibliography should not be included in the word count. Instructions on the formatting of the scholarly apparatus are posted on Blackboard.

Grading

The following Boston University table explains the grading system that is used by most faculty members on Boston University's Study Abroad London Programmes.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Honour Points</u>	<u>Usual %</u>
A	4.0	93-100
A-	3.7	89-92
B+	3.3	85-88
B	3.0	81-84
B-	2.7	77-80
C+	2.3	73-76
C	2.0	69-72
C-	1.7	65-68
D	1.0	60-64
F	0.0	Unmarked

Grading Criteria

'Incomplete' or **I** grades are not permitted because of the obvious difficulty in making up missed work once the student has left the country. All work must be completed on time. We also do not allow **'Audits'** (AU), **'Withdrawals'** (W), or **'Pass/Fail'** (P) grades.

The grades reflect the quality of the work. Lecturers and students should use the following criteria for an understanding of what each grade means.

A This exceptional grade is assigned only to work that has persistently outstanding quality in both substance and presentation. The student must demonstrate a sustained capacity for independent thought and extensive study, producing rigorous and convincing analyses in well-ordered prose.

A- Awarded to work that is clearly focused and analytical, and based on wide reading. The student must cover all the principal points of a question and systematically develop a persuasive overall thesis, allowing for one or two venial omissions or inapt expressions.

B+, B, B- This range of grades indicates that the student has shown some evidence of original thought and intellectual initiative. The student has cited sources beyond the class materials, and shown a degree of originality in perception and/or approach to the subject. The work will show thoughtful management of material, and a good grasp of the issues. The differences between a B+, a straight B and a B- may reflect poor presentation of the material, or mistakes in punctuation, spelling and grammar.

C+, C, C- Work in this grade range is satisfactory, but uninspiring. If the work is simply a recitation of the class materials or discussions, and shows no sign of genuine intellectual engagement with the issues, it cannot deserve a higher grade. Should an essay fail to provide a clear answer to the question as set, or argue a position coherently, the grade will fall within this range.

Quality of presentation can lift such work into the upper levels of this grade range. Work of this quality which is poorly presented, and riddled with errors in grammar, spelling and punctuation, will fall into the lower end of the range. To earn a C grade, the work must demonstrate that the student is familiar with the primary course material, be written well enough to be readily understood, be relevant to the assignment, and, of course, be the student's own work except where properly cited.

D A marginal pass can be given where some but not all the elements of the course have been completed satisfactorily.

F The failing grade indicates the work is seriously flawed in one or more ways:

- Obvious lack of familiarity with the material
- So poorly written as to defy understanding
- So brief and insubstantial that it fails to properly address the subject
- Material presented is not relevant to the assignment
- Demonstrates evidence of plagiarism (see following section in Academic Conduct Code)

Please refer to the Academic Handbook for detailed grading criteria and policies on plagiarism. This can be accessed via Blackboard Learn: <http://learn.bu.edu>

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

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 fulfil 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 Authorised 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/report-absence/>

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 in to the 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 Disability & Access Services to request accommodations for the semester they are abroad. Students are advised by BU-DAS 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-DAS. We cannot accept letters from other universities/centres.

All disabilities need to be known to the DAS 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 penalised.

Required Reading

There are two set texts for Phase One of the course. One (Evans) considers the assumptions and methods of history, addressing the nature of source materials, the role of causation and the functioning of evaluative judgment. The other (Cannadine) serves as an entry point into recent historiographical debates, in which students must locate their research topics. By reading these set texts, students will gain an understanding of the historian's craft and its intimate connection with broader critical thinking skills. These books are available in the BU London Library.

Richard J. Evans, *In Defence of History* (2001 edn)
David Cannadine (ed.), *What is History Now?* (2004)

Students will be given membership of The London Library for the duration of the course. See <https://www.londonlibrary.co.uk/>

Course Chronology

** denotes compulsory class readings (either online or on the BU course webpage)*

Part One – 'Historiography and Research Methods'

Session 1, Seminar: [Weekday] [Time]

Introduction: How the present engages with the past

- This session utilises the assigned reading to discuss and reflect on the professionalization of history in Britain in the late nineteenth century, and how this was influenced by the Rankean revolution emanating from Germany.
- Consideration is given to the invention of national history in the age of industrialization, democratization and great power rivalries.
- Benedetto Croce's observation that 'all history is contemporary history' serves as a peg for a discussion of shifts away from traditional political history in the century since the First World War.

* Richard J. Evans, 'The History of History' chapter (pp. 15-44) in *In Defence of History*.

Session 2, Seminar and Field Trip: [Weekday] [Time]

The State: Using 'official' records / Visit to National Archives

- This session explores how increases in state interventionism from the late nineteenth century have helped change the view on what political history is, from an old "grand narrative" approach to everything from "milk to homosexuality".
- Students must come to this session with some preliminary ideas as to what their research project will be on, and they must locate and explain their ideas in the context of at least ONE of the chapters in the Cannadine set text.
- As a way of comprehending the changing scope of state activities, students will investigate whether any primary source materials relevant for their projects are available at the UK National Archives. To this end, students will be given guidance on using the on-line catalogue of the National Archives.
- The second part of the class will focus on practical matters relating to visiting the National Archives at Kew, including getting registered and calling up documents.
- See Course Objective 2 and 3.

* David Cannadine (ed.), *What is History Now?* (2004)

The whole book must be consulted in order to establish which chapters are most relevant to a student's research proposal.

Session 3, Seminar and Field Trip: [Weekday] [Time] (Wadham College, Oxford)

***Biography and History* (led by Dr Alex May, Research Editor, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Faculty of History, Oxford University)**

- This session includes a presentation on the changing role of national biographical publishing projects, recent developments in the writing of women into the past, and, more broadly, the relationship between biography and history.
- There will also be practical guidance on locating biographical sources, as well as what these kinds of sources can and cannot tell us.
- A walking tour of Oxford in the afternoon will locate the university and its alumni in British national life.

Session 4, Seminar: [Weekday] [Time]

***Researching London* (led by Dr Michael Peplar) / *How to write a research proposal* (led by Dr Michael Thornhill),**

- In order to underscore the connection between this course and co-requisite course *CAS HI 246 London since 1666*, this session includes a presentation – coupled with practical guidance – on London's main archives delivered by Dr Michael Peplar.
- The session will also provide guidance on the writing of a "research proposal", due for submission at the start of class 6.
- Students must come to the session with a draft bibliography of primary and secondary sources which are of potential use to their projects. They must also try and establish the distinctive contribution made by key secondary sources – books and articles – to their proposed topics.

Session 5, Field Trip: [Days]

Liverpool as a Classroom (led by Teaching Assistant)

- This session uses a two-day field trip to England's north-west to explore the connections between London, capital and imperial metropole, with Liverpool, a key city in the evolution of empire, industry and post-imperial culture.
- Utilising museum and gallery visits, walking tours, and informal discussion, this TA-led field trip considers how Liverpool as a city engages with its imperial, industrial and cultural legacy.
- Special emphasis is placed on the role of memorialisation in creating public narratives, both regional and national.
- During the course of the visit students will have an allotted time to meet with the TA and have a one-to-one discussion of their research proposal. To facilitate effective use of this time, students must bring with them a draft of their proposal.

* Tristram Hunt, *Ten Cities that Made an Empire* (2014), chapter 10

Part Two – ‘The Research and Writing Phase’

Session 6, Mid-Term Test and Seminar: [Weekday] [Time]

***Planning the logistics of research* (seminar to follow test)**

Submission of “Research Proposal”

This session begins with a one-hour ‘Resources and Historiography’ test.

- Students are tested on their knowledge and understanding of issues discussed in Classes 1-5. The test also contains questions which allow students to apply creatively their individual learning connected with their research projects.
- In the seminar element of class, students will discuss the practical application of their research proposals as regards timetables and other logistics for consulting source materials. It should be stressed that in this course especially there is a strong connection between student achievement and effective time management. Realism in terms of what is actually achievable is essential.
- By discussing these issues as a group, students are encouraged to plan archive and library trips together.
- All students must identify primary source materials they plan to consult prior to the next session.

Session 7, Seminar: [Weekday] [Time]

Applying “source criticism” to primary sources

Return of graded “Research Proposal” and Test

- Students will have already begun to research and present primary source material in the HI 246 primary source seminars. Students will further develop the skill of applying “source criticism” to their primary source selections in this session.
- Students must be prepared to present to the class a primary source. They should summarise why they have selected the given choice in terms of its broader importance, while also identifying a specific aspect of it for close attention.
- Both individually and collectively, we will then consider certain key questions e.g. how to understand the ‘bias’ of a source; how to embrace this ‘bias’ for what it tells us about the past; we will also reflect on our interpretation of the bias and what this says about the present.
- This source criticism learning will also be applied to the ‘Critical Thinking’ terminology outlined in Course Objectives 6 and 7.

- This group discussion is intended as preparation for the draft writing due to be discussed in tutorial session the following week.

Session 8, Tutorials: [Weekday] (times as needed)

- Students meet one-to-one with course instructor to discuss in detail draft paragraphs which utilise both primary and secondary sources.
- Students may also meet with TA prior to or after meeting with course instructor to go over any other research and writing related issues.

Session 9, Seminar: [Weekday] [Time]

- As with session 4, this session is also attended by Dr Michael Peplar to help deepen connections between the core course, *London since 1666*, and the research projects.
- Students must present three paragraphs of circa 200-250 words each.
- In group discussion, special attention will be paid to the following: the use of topic sentences; the deployment and interrogation of primary and secondary source materials; the effectiveness of citations; the quality of prose (on matters such as sentence structure and use of diction); and the cogency of arguments between paragraphs.

Session 10, Tutorials: Thursday (times as needed)

- This one-to-one meeting will follow up in issues raised in sessions 7, 8 and 9 and applied to progress since those meetings.

Session 11, Seminar: [Weekday] [Time]

- The focus will be on top and tailing the research paper. Guidance on type of content in introductions and conclusions is included on Blackboard.
- Students must present a draft introduction of circa 500-750 words (e.g. two to three paragraphs) and be prepared to discuss work presented by other students.

Session 12, Tutorials: [Weekday] [Time]

- This final one-to-one meeting will follow up on issues raised in sessions 7, 8 and 9 and applied to progress since those meetings.

Submission of research papers by 1 pm on the following Monday

Session 13, Seminar: [Weekday] [Time]

Return of graded papers

- The CAS HI 246 lecturer, Dr Michael Peplar, will attend this final session to again help draw connections with the core class.
- Each student gives a ten-minute presentation on their research topics, methodologies, and key findings.
- Marked papers will be returned in this class.

General bibliography

This research-intensive course has a small bibliography relating to Part One (The 'Historiography and Research Methods' phase). Students are expected to develop their own extensive bibliographies connected with their own projects.

Cannadine, David *et al* (ed.), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004-present)

Cannadine, David (ed.), *What is History Now?* (2004)
Evans, Richard J., *In Defence of History* (2001)
Hunt, Tristram, *Ten Cities that Made an Empire* (2014)
National