

Practicing Historical Research  
AS.100.388 (01)

Gilman 377

MW 4:30 PM – 5:45PM  
Spring 2025

Dr. Pawel Maciejko  
Office Hours By Appointment

**TA: Nick McKenna**  
**Office Hours By Appointment**

## Description

In this second part of a two-semester sequence students work on producing individual research projects grounded in original primary source research.

## Academic Integrity

Undergraduate students enrolled in KSAS and WSE assume a duty to conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to the University's mission as an institution of higher learning. Students are obliged to refrain from acts which they know, or under circumstances have reason to know, violate the academic integrity of the University. For full details of this policy and actions taken for violation see <https://studentaffairs.jhu.edu/policies-guidelines/undergrad-ethics/>.

## Student Accommodations

All students with disabilities who require accommodations for this course should contact the course instructor or TA at their earliest opportunity to discuss their specific needs. It is preferable that students request their accommodations at the start of the semester and share their eligibility letter with their faculty member. Students submitting their letter later in the semester are still eligible to receive approved accommodations, but there could be a delay in accommodations being implemented. Students with a disability who are requesting accommodations must be registered with Homewood office of Student Disability Services (101 Shaffer Hall; 410-516-4720; [studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu)) to receive accommodations.

## Requirements

Book for Purchase: Jules Benjamin, *A Student's Guide to History*, Bedford/St. Martin's.

## Assignments

1. Statement of Research Question (10%)
  - a. Write a two-paragraph summary of your research topic. In your first paragraph, outline the historical question you are interested in exploring, and the historical context surrounding your topic. Explore why you are interested in this question, and what your working thesis is, if you have one. In your second paragraph, map out your research strategy: What primary and secondary sources will you need to address this problem? How will you access these sources?  
**Upload to Canvas in word.doc form by Wednesday Feb. 15 by 11:59PM**
2. Primary Source Bibliography and Evaluation (20%)
  - a. Using the following guidelines adopted from Jules Benjamin *A Student's Guide to History*, (p. 112-3) write an annotated bibliography of your primary sources. Your bibliography must include at least 3 primary sources. **Upload to Canvas in word.doc form by Friday March 3 by 11:59PM**

### **Guidelines for Evaluating your primary sources**

- **Who created the source? What impact might the creator's political, religious, or cultural beliefs have on the source?**
- **Why and for whom was the source created? How does its creation and intended audience impact its production?**
- **What is the source's relevance to your topic? How might it serve to support (or even challenge) your thesis?**
- **How does the source compare to other sources?**
- **What have other scholars concluded about the source? How do their conclusions relate to your topic?**

### 3. Abstract (10%)

- a. Using the following guidelines adopted from Wendy Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks*, (p.57) write a one-paragraph abstract outlining how you approach your research question.

Upload to Canvas in word.doc form by Friday March 17 by 11:59PM

### **Guidelines for Abstract**

- **Context – offer information on the historical period, the geographic region, the social conditions surrounding the question being investigated.**
- **Claim for significance - announcement about the uniqueness of the subject or your approach to it.**
- **Argument/Thesis –state what your analysis revealed, what you will argue**
- **Proof – offer a few lines on your evidence**

### 4. Research Outline (10%)

- a. Using the following guidelines adopted from Jules Benjamin A Student's Guide to History, 143-145) write an outline of how you will organize your arguments and evidence.
- b. Upload to Canvas in word.doc form by Friday March 31 by 11:59PM

### **Guidelines for Research Outline**

- **Working title of the paper**
- **Introduction with thesis statement**
- **Background information to set up context for research question**
- **Key points with supporting evidence**
- **Conclusion**
- **See Benjamin, *The Writing Outline of the Paper* for an illustration**

### 5. Research Paper Draft (ungraded, but required)

Upload to Canvas by Wednesday April 26 by 1:15PM (note the difference in submission time)

### 6. Peer Evaluation (10%) (thoughtful completion of exercise =100%)

- a. Use the rubric posted on Canvas to offer review of peer's paper.  
Upload to Canvas by Friday April 28 by 10:00AM (note the difference in submission time)

7. Research Paper (40%)

Upload to Canvas by Monday May 15 by 11:59PM

**ALL class meetings and one-and-one meetings with me and TA are MANDATORY.** Please feel free to meet with me or the TA outside the mandatory meeting times.

*Checklist for submitting drafts and papers*

- √ Aim for weekly benchmarks.
- √ Submit papers on time. **10% deduction for late submissions.**
- √ Use font size 12 (including punctuation marks, i.e. full stops, comma) and use only two space at the end of each sentence. Use double line space and do not add extra space between paragraphs.
- √ Properly cite all ideas and texts that are not your own. **Cite using footnotes in Chicago Manual of Style 15<sup>th</sup> Edition format.** (See note on plagiarism and Benjamin, Student's Guide for illustration)
- √ Include a bibliography of sources consulted. Format your bibliography using Chicago Manual of Style 15<sup>th</sup> Edition. (See Benjamin, *Student's Guide* for illustration)
- √ **Upload all papers to Canvas in word.doc form by due date. Emailed submissions are not accepted.**

## Weekly Schedule

- M. Jan. 27**                      Borges, Jorge Luis. "The Library of Babel." In *Labyrinths: Selected Stories and Other Writings*, edited by Donald A. Yates and James E. Irby, 51–58. New York: New Directions, 1962.
- Eco, Umberto. "De Bibliotheca." In *Libraries*, by Candida Höfer, 7–14. Munich: Schirmer/Mosel, 2005.
- W. Jan. 29**                      Farge, Arlette. *The Allure of the Archives*. Translated by Thomas Scott-Railton. Foreword by Natalie Zemon Davis. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013.

### A. — Hammering Out Your Topic

**M. Feb 3** Jules R. Benjamin, *A Student's Guide to History*, 14th ed.  
(Boston:Bedford/St. Martin's, 2018), p.88-94. (Chapter 6, Read all the sections: from Beginning the Research Process to Planning a Research Strategy)

Benjamin, *Student's Guide*, p.25-50 (Chapter 3 Read all the sections from Primary Sources to Artifacts)

**W Feb. 5** **Guest Librarian:** Sian Evans, Librarian for History, Africana Studies, and History of Science & Technology, Sheridan Libraries. The meeting will take place at Macksey Room in the Library

**M Feb. 10** **Guest Librarian:** Mackenzie Zalin, Librarian for Classics, Comparative Thought and Literature, Jewish Studies, and Modern Languages and Literatures, Sheridan Libraries. The meeting will take place at Macksey Room in the Library.

## B. — Scholarly Debates & Historiographical Interventions

**W. Feb. 12** Ann Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense*, Princeton 2009, Chapters One-Three.

**M. Feb. 17** Read 3-4 reviews of Stoler's book

## C. — Beginning the Research Process

**W. Feb .19** Visit to Alan Mason Chesney Medical Archives. **Please note the class will meet from 3-5pm**

**M Feb 24** No Class Meeting Research & Writing Time  
Continue researching & writing – work on your primary sources and

learning the historical context of your topic

**Guidelines for the Research Process (adapted from Benjamin, *A Student's Guide*, p. 89)**

- Browse course materials and historical bibliographies, visit museums, anything related to history, and find a topic that interests you
- Do some initial secondary literature reading to narrow your topic into one aspect that is manageable for the scope of your project (a 20-page research paper)
- Come up with a debatable question that is relevant to your topic and is worthy of examination
- Think of a question that is in conversation with your initial readings using the three approaches outlined above
- Do some more reading of secondary literature to explore possible answers to your question and help you identify the kinds of sources you will need

## D. — Doing Primary Research

**Guidelines for Evaluating your primary sources**

- Who created the source? What impact might the creator's political, religious, or cultural beliefs have on the source?
- Why and for whom was the source created? How does its creation and intended audience impact its production?
- What is the source's relevance to your topic? How might it serve to support (or even challenge) your thesis?
- How does the source compare to other sources?
- What have other scholars concluded about the source? How do their conclusions relate to your topic?

### **Class Meeting**

**\*\*\*Revised Research Statement Due by 11:59PM\*\*\***

**W Feb 26**

**Guest Dr Mohsin Rao Noor**

**M March 3**

Visit to the Ephemeral Renaissance Collection in the Stern Center at Evergreen. Guide: Dr Earle Havens

**\*\*\*Annotated Primary Source Bibliography Due\*\*\***

**Required One-and-One Meetings with Dr. Maciejko** to discuss Research Statement & Primary Sources

Continue researching & writing – work on your primary sources and learning the historical context of your topic

## **Refining Your Research Statement**

### Guidelines for Abstract

- **Context** – providing information on the historical period, the geographic region, the social conditions surrounding the question being investigated
- **Claim for significance** - announcement about the uniqueness of the subject or your approach to it
- **Argument/Thesis** –state what your analysis revealed
- **Proof** – offer a few lines on your sources and evidence

**W March 5** Visit to Special Collections and Archives, University of Baltimore

**M March 10** **No Class Meeting Research & Writing Time** Continue researching & writing – work on your primary sources and learning the historical context of your topic

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## E. — Writing Your Research Paper

### Guidelines for Research Outline

- **Working title of the paper**
- **Introduction with thesis statement**
- **Background information to set up context for research question**
- **Key points with supporting evidence**
- **Conclusion**
- **See Benjamin, *The Writing Outline of the Paper* for an illustration**

**W. March 12** **Class Meeting**  
Argument & Structure  
Benjamin, *Student's Guide*, p. 128-172 (Chapter 7 sections from Asserting your thesis to Example of Research Paper)

Research & Writing– Work on your paper outline

**M. March 24** **\*\*\*Research Paper Outline Due by 11:59PM\*\*\***  
Work on Research Paper Draft

**W. March 26** **Required One-and-One Meetings with TA** to discuss abstract & research paper outline

Work on Research Paper Draft

**M. March 31**      **Required One-and-One Meetings with TA** to discuss abstract & research paper outline

Work on Research Paper Draft

By the end of this week aim to have written at least five (5) pages of your research paper

**W. April 2**      **No Class Meeting Research & Writing Time** - Research Paper Draft

**M. April 7**      **No Class Meeting Research & Writing Time** - Research & Writing Time - Research Paper Draft

By the end of this week aim to have written at least ten (10) pages of your paper

**W. April 9**      **No Class Meeting Research & Writing Time** – Research Paper Draft  
Required One-and-One Meetings with TA to discuss paper draft

**M. April 14**      **No Class Meeting Research & Writing Time** – Research Paper Draft  
Required One-and-One Meetings with TA to discuss paper draft

By the end of this week aim to have written at least fifteen (15) pages of your paper

**W. April 16**      **No Class Meeting Research & Writing Time** – Research Paper Draft

By the end of this week aim to have written full 20-page draft of your paper

**\*\*\* Draft of paper due for peer review by 1:15PM\*\*\***  
**(Note the time difference, this allows for the papers to be circulated to peers)**

**M April 21**      **Class Meeting**  
Peer Review Exercise  
**Upload your peer review by 10:00AM (before class time)**

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**W April 23**      Revise your paper and prepare for final submission

**M April 28**      Revise your paper and prepare for final submission



**\*\*Final Paper Due Monday May 8 by 11:59PM\*\***