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### HSTR 200.02: Introduction to Historical Methods

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## History [HSTR] 200: Introduction to Historical Methods

Professor John A. Eglin (Office: LA 255; hours M 1-2 PM, T 2-3 PM, WF 10-11AM, or by appointment, or by happy accident. E-mail: john.eglin@umontana.edu)

“The past isn’t dead; it’s not even past.”

“The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.”

“History doesn’t repeat itself; historians merely repeat each other.”

“History isn’t what happened; history is what you can remember.”

This course, required of all history majors, will teach you everything you need to know to write a research paper, without actually writing a research paper. Our hope, of course, is that you will have numerous opportunities to write research papers over the next few years.

More specifically, you will learn about different varieties of history and different approaches to its subject matter. You will learn how historians work, how they frame questions, and how they apply these questions to their sources. You will learn about different kinds of historical source material: primary and secondary sources, yes, but also sub-categories within these. You will learn how to locate them, in the library, in databases, and online, how to evaluate them, and how to use them. Finally, you will learn how to cite sources, both to give credit where credit is due and to guide others in their own research.

Unlike many history courses you will take here, this course is driven by interaction. It will only work if you make it work. You should come to every class prepared, having completed the assigned reading and homework, expecting to participate and to be called upon to participate.

Half of your grade will be determined by weekly homework assignments (ten assignments worth five points each), and the other half (fifty points) by the take-home final examination.

There is a text for this course: William Kelleher Storey's *Writing History: A Guide for Students*, an accessible, engaging, and most importantly brief and succinct introduction to the nuts and bolts not just of historical research, but of the study of history more generally.

Attendance: As this course only meets once a week, regular attendance is essential. Unexcused absences will be penalized; excused absences will be policed. You should only miss class due to unpleasant circumstances beyond your control. You will only be allowed to make up assignments missed in the case of excused absences.

## Course Schedule

28 August 2014: Introduction and Pre-assessment.

4 September 2014: Finding a topic. WKS 1-21.

11 September 2014: Different kinds of sources: primary vs. secondary, archival vs. printed, popular vs. scholarly, etc. WKS 21-27, 32-33, 35-36.

18 September 2014: Framing a research question. WKS 27-30.

25 September 2014: Online Workshop: Secondary and reference sources. Class will meet in Fine Arts 210.

2 October 2014: Online Workshop: Primary sources. Class will meet in the Buckhous Room on the second floor (downstairs) in Mansfield Library.

9 October 2014: Local History. Meet in Archive Study Room, Mansfield Library.

16 October 2014: Government Document Workshop. Class will meet in the Buckhous Room in Mansfield Library.

23 October 2014: Taking notes. WKS 36-38.

30 October 2014: Quoting and paraphrasing. WKS 39-50.

6 November 2014: Citation: footnotes and bibliography. WKS 50-58.

13 November 2014: Organizing a paper. WKS 75-77.

20 November 2014: Writing. WKS 77-92.

4 December 2014: Course Evaluation; Distribution of take-home final.

**Final Examination due in History Department at Noon  
on Wednesday 14 December.**