What distinguishes the way that historians think from the ways of thinking of other disciplines? What makes history unique as an academic mode of inquiry? How do historians go about the business of their craft, choosing topics and approaches to researching and writing about them? How can human beings claim to know about the past, about events and phenomena that they have never personally experienced and can never experience? If the fundamental belief of historians is that humans better understand every phenomenon or topic by understanding its history and historical context, how do historians apply that belief to their own discipline and profession? This course will pursue these and other questions while students sharpen their ability to think historically, to reason critically about history, to read critically books and articles about history, and to unravel the strengths and weaknesses of scholarship produced by historians.

BOOKS TO PURCHASE

You are required to purchase the following seven (7) books, available at the University book store on campus. You might save money if you buy them from any on-line bookseller.


James M. Banner, Jr., and John R. Gillis, eds., *Becoming Historians* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), paperback, 312 pages


Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society* (Ann Arbor, MI:
University of Michigan Press, 2005), paperback, 320 pages


**REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

**Papers:**
There will be two kinds of papers required in this course.

1) Each week, beginning Week 2, the student will hand in at the beginning of class on Monday a *typed* paper of 500-750 words (2-3 typed, double-spaced pages), that contains the student’s reaction to the *current* week’s readings. This means that you will read the readings and write about them *in advance* of their being covered in class. Examples of approaches for the reaction papers would include disagreement with the reading, agreement with it, disputation of the premises of the author, questions that the student finds unanswered, (later in the semester) connection with prior readings, connection with the student’s larger historiographical essay project; these examples are illustrative only and are not meant to limit the student’s options. The student should try to move beyond reproduction of the readings’ arguments to some analysis or assimilation of the concepts and ideas presented.

No reaction paper will be due in Week 13 (Thanksgiving Holiday); thus, a total of 13 (thirteen) reaction papers are required.

Reaction papers *must* be handed in on time and in person; there will be no extensions. Reaction papers will be commented upon and returned but NOT graded. Successful completion of the 13 reaction papers will count for *twenty (20) percent* of the final grade.

2) Each student will choose a topic for a semester-long research project to result in a *critical historiographical essay* on an historical topic of the student’s choice. By **Monday of Week 3**, each student should select an historical topic about which that student would wish to learn more, turning in a one-page, typed, double-spaced description of the topic. The instructors will review those topics and provide guidance to help the student sharpen the focus and arrive at a “do-able” topic. Over the balance of the semester, the student will search for resources that pertain to that topic, using the research methods presented in Week 2. The historiographical essay is due the **NEXT-TO-LAST** class in Week 15, **Monday, December 5**. Each student should expect to
evaluate as many as 10 or 12 important books and/or journal articles that have framed the approaches historians have taken to the research topic and discuss critically the approaches taken by the profession, the strengths and weaknesses of those approaches, the reasons for continuity or change in historical interpretation, the questions definitively answered, and the questions left unanswered and thus promising for future research. Final historiographical essays should be 15-25 (fifteen to twenty-five) pages long. The historiographical essay will represent thirty (30) percent of the student’s final grade. I have posted examples of successful historiographical essays on the course BlackBoard site.

Footnotes should follow consistently one of the prescribed forms found in chapters 16 and 17 of the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 16th ed. (University of Chicago Press, 2010). When you consider attribution, consider the “Policies to Note” below.

**Exams:**
1) There will be a mid-term examination, seventy-five (75) minutes long, in class, on **Wednesday, October 19**. Its format will include thirty (30) minutes of identifications and a forty-five (45) minute essay. The mid-term will represent twenty (20) percent of the student’s final grade.

2) There will be a final examination, three (3) hours long, during the period prescribed by the Registrar for this course, on **Monday, December 19, 2011, 8:30-11:30 a.m.**, and it will cover all material in the course, with an emphasis on that covered since the mid-term. I reserve the right to offer a final examination that is shorter than 3 hours; a final announcement will be made later in the semester. The final examination will represent thirty (30) percent of the student’s final grade.

**POLICIES TO NOTE**
1. Because of the healthy enrollment in this year’s HSTY 250, the Department of History has appointed Mr. Ryan Chamberlain, a Ph.D. student, as co-instructor. Mr. Chamberlain will share fully with Prof. Ledford in all the important decisions of the semester, will be active in teaching and leading discussion, and will participate also in formulation of all grades. I ask all members of HSTY 250 to grant Mr. Chamberlain the full respect and deference that they would grant to Prof. Ledford or any other faculty member at CWRU.

2. This class will **start on time** and finish on time. The instructor will expect students to be just as courteous by arriving on time and being ready to begin at 9:00 a.m. The instructor will make all announcements important to the course at the beginning of class and will not repeat them, so it will benefit the student to arrive on time. Tardiness will count as non attendance.

3. Please turn off cellular telephones, PDAs, and other objects that ring, beep, vibrate, or otherwise distract during class time. Students whose devices distract will be asked to leave.

4. **Attendance, participation, and preparation policy.** Students are expected to attend all
classes, unless excused by an appropriate note from the University Health Service or the Office of Undergraduate Studies. All students should participate fully in the discussions. Students are also expected to come to class having completed the readings for the week. In other words, attendance and preparation are mandatory; a failing grade in the course may be assigned for failure to attend, even if graded written work is passing. Attendance is an additional requirement of the course and is as important as a student’s performance on tests, papers, and in discussion.

5. **Late paper policy.** The historiographical essay is due at the beginning of class on Monday, December 5, i.e., at 9:00 a.m., after which time it will be considered one day late. Late bibliographies will be penalized a letter grade for each day, or fraction thereof, late, without exception. Students know the due date now and should plan their semesters.

6. In accordance with University policy, grades of incomplete will be granted only in truly extenuating cases.

7. **Informal recitation session.** If there is an interest, Mr. Chamberlain is willing to offer a one-hour informal recitation session each week during his office hour for those students who wish to discuss the sophisticated theories and readings that we address in this course. This recitation session would supplement the lectures and readings and review the historical concepts addressed therein. Mr. Chamberlain will circulate a sign-up sheet in the first weeks of class to identify those students who might have an interest in such a weekly session.

8. **Plagiarism.** Students should have learned what plagiarism is and how to avoid it long before they seek and obtain admission to a university. Lest there be any confusion, however, I provide the following guidelines, which I adapt from Prof. Vernon Lidtke of The Johns Hopkins University:

The term plagiarism covers a multitude of sins. It involves the theft of words, ideas or conclusions from another writer. If an academic paper gives the impression that the writer is himself or herself the author of words, ideas or conclusions that are in fact the product of another person’s work, the writer of that paper is guilty of plagiarism. In the following cases, such a misleading impression is given:

1. Failure to give credit in a footnote for ideas, statements of fact, or conclusions derived from another writer.
2. Failure to use quotation marks when quoting directly from another writer, whether an entire sentence or only a phrase is quoted. In addition, all quotations must always be footnoted.
3. Close and extended paraphrase of another writer even if credit is given in a footnote.
4. Footnoting directly to a source that is quoted or cited by another author but that has not been examined by the writer of the term paper, unless proper credit is given in a footnote.

These examples do not exhaust the forms that plagiarism may take. Plagiarism is committed
whenever and however a writer appears to take credit for work done by another. An entire paper may be plagiarized, as when a student submits a paper written by someone else, or plagiarism may be limited to a single page. While plagiarism may be more or less extensive in a paper, it is always a fraud, and it is always a most serious offense.

Plagiarism need not be deliberate; it may be committed unintentionally through carelessness or ignorance. Since accidental plagiarism in a paper is indistinguishable from deliberate dishonesty, a student must be alert to avoid the sort of carelessness or ignorance that may leave him or her open to a charge of having plagiarized another’s work. The safest rule to follow is: *When in doubt, footnote.*

The penalty in this course for plagiarism is a grade of “F” on the paper, and it will be calculated as a zero (“0”) into the student’s final grade. All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean of Undergraduate Studies as prescribed in the current *General Bulletin* and *Student Handbook*.

9. If you **encounter difficulties or have a complaint**, talk to one of the instructors. We cannot help you if you do not ask!

**SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS AND READINGS**

**Week 1 (Aug. 29, 31): What is History?**

**Readings:**

**Week 2 (Sept. 5, 7): Tools of the Trade.**

**NO CLASS, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, Labor Day Holiday**

**Readings:**

**Week 3 (Sept. 12, 14): History and Historians.**

**Readings:**
Week 4 (Sept. 19, 21): The Historical Project in America, I.

Week 5 (Sept. 26, 28): The Historical Project in America, II.

Week 6 (Oct. 3, 5): The Historical Project in America, III.

Week 7 (Oct. 10, 12): History of/in the United States.
Readings: Fitzpatrick, *History’s Memory*, complete

Week 8 (Oct. 17, 19): Novick’s Historians
**MID-TERM EXAMINATION, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 19**

Week 9 (Oct. 24, 26): Historians Behaving Badly.
**NO CLASS MONDAY, OCTOBER 24, Fall Break** (reaction paper due Wednesday, Oct. 26)
Readings: Hoffer, *Past Imperfect*, complete
AHA Standards, Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct
http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm
AHA curriculum: Plagiarism: Curricular Materials for History Instructors
http://www.historians.org/governance/pd/Curriculum/plagiarism_intro.htm

Week 10 (Oct 31, Nov. 2): History and Theory.
Readings: Hayden White, “Introduction,” from *Metahistory*, 1-42, posted on Blackboard

Week 11 (Nov. 7, 9): Historians Grapple with Theory

Week 12 (Nov. 14, 16): History and Gender.
Readings:
Week 13 (Nov. 21, 23): The Historian’s Life.
Thanksgiving Holiday, Wednesday, November 23, No Class
Readings: Grafton, “History Under Attack,” January 2011 Perspectives, on Blackboard
Townsend, “History Under the Hammer,” January 2011 Perspectives, on Blackboard
Townsend, “Job Market Sagged Further in 2009-10,” January 2011 Perspectives, on Blackboard
Townsend, “New History PhDs Surged to Second-Highest Level in 32 Years,” March 2011 Perspectives, on Blackboard
Townsend, “History Faculty Salaries Fall Behind Inflation and the Rest of Academia,” May, 2011 Perspectives, on Blackboard
Townsend, “What the Data Reveals about Women Historians, May 2010 Perspectives, on Blackboard

Week 14 (Nov. 28, 30): Contested History.
Readings: Brundage, The Southern Past, complete.

Week 15 (Dec. 5, 7): History Has a History Too.
HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY DUE, MONDAY, DECEMBER 5

FINAL EXAMINATION, MONDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2011, 8:30-11:30 A.M.