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HIST 190 Writing & History

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SYLLABUS¹: Writing and History: Saga Iceland, Fall 202X²

Queens College, HIST 190, 3 credits

Instructor: Professor Billado

Professor's email³: tracey.billado@qc.cuny.edu

Office hours: Tue & Thu 3:00 – 4:30 p.m. in Powdermaker 352 and by appointment



A 13th-century illumination from an Icelandic saga manuscript

COURSE DESCRIPTION, THEME, and REQUIREMENTS

COURSE DESCRIPTION: History 190 fulfills the College Writing 2 requirement and builds on the work of English 110 (College Writing 1), in order to *teach the conventions of academic writing in the discipline of history*.⁴ Special attention will be paid to problems of evidence, argument, and authority. Concentrating on one historical theme, you will consider a discrete set of primary and secondary sources and practice analyzing sources and constructing arguments in clear, correct, and formal academic prose.

COURSE THEME: Sections of History 190 vary in topic from semester to semester and section to section. This iteration of *the course focuses on Saga Iceland, which refers to the historical culture of medieval Iceland from c. 900-1250 C.E.* In order to facilitate student research projects, we will work with materials on academic writing and the practice of history, alongside the materials of history as a discipline: primary and secondary sources from/about the selected culture.

REQUIRED TEXTS: *You do not need to purchase any textbooks for this course.* The required readings are all available through Blackboard or the Queens College library.⁵ Research materials will be available through the Queens College library and/or through selected internet sites.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY: *You will need daily access to a high-speed internet connection on a desktop or laptop computer.* You must have your QC email and CUNY credentials activated and

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² This syllabus is subject to change. Revisions will be posted on Blackboard and announced in class.

³ When you email, include the course number and name in the email's subject heading. I will reply to email generally within the next business day. See below for instructions on email etiquette.

⁴ Other departments with courses that fulfill the College Writing 2 course requirement include Biology, Comparative Literature, English, European Languages and Literatures, and Music.

⁵ For help in adding OER/ZTC resources to this syllabus, I thank Dr. Leila Walker, the Emerging Technologies and Digital Scholarship Librarian at the Queens College Rosenthal Library.

be familiar with Blackboard (referred to as “Bb” in this syllabus), the Learning Management System used at Queens College. See further information below about each of those systems, including how to find help with any of the technology systems in use at Queens College.

REQUIRED COURSEWORK: This course has a heavy workload of reading and writing. You should schedule *at least six hours per week outside of class time* to complete the coursework for each week. There are 100 points that will constitute your final grade for this course, broken down as follows:

- **CLASS WORK (50%, several assignments worth 1 to 5 points each):** These assignments include homework and work completed during class sessions. These assignments will be graded based on effort, improvement, and completion time. See the schedule below for due dates/times and see the Blackboard section “Course Contents and Assignments” for further directions/details for each assignment.
- **RESEARCH PROJECT (50%, broken down as follows):** See the schedule below for due dates/times and see the Blackboard section “Research/Writing Resources” for all directions. NOTE: You must pass each element of the research project before you can proceed to work on the next element of the project.
 - **Research proposal (10% of research project): (200-250 word topic description and research question plus a bibliography of primary and secondary sources)** You will write a topic description and research question and attach to it a properly formatted list of the materials you will use for your research project. Your source choice(s) must fit the criteria in the instructions AND be approved by your professor in advance of the due date.
 - **Primary source summary (10% of research project): (600-900 words)** You will write a very brief summary of your primary source(s).
 - **Annotated bibliography (15% of research project): (1000 words plus bibliography)** You will write a 200-word annotation for each of your secondary sources.
 - **Historiographical essay (20% of research project): (1500-2100 words)** You will write an essay that analyzes all the secondary sources in your chosen historiographical “conversation,” that explains how the readings relate to one other, and that shows how each author contributes to a significant historiographical discussion of your topic.
 - **Primary source analysis (20% of research project): (1800-2400 words)** You will write an essay that analyzes your primary source(s)’s historical value(s) with regard to your research question, in which you present your conclusions about that research question based on your reading and analysis of your chosen primary source(s).
 - **Final research paper (20% of research project): (3000-4500 words)** You will revise and edit the pieces of your research project into a coherent research essay.
 - **Presentation and discussion(5% of research project):** You will create a formal, four- to five-minute video presentation of your research findings on Flip and then participate in a class discussion of your and your classmates’ projects.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: This course is intended to help you achieve the following goals, *which are at the core of the history major* at Queens College:

- You will learn to analyze historical primary sources by identifying types of sources, the origins of those sources, their intended audiences, the probable motives of their authors, and their author's assumptions and biases.
- You will learn to identify the thesis (argument) in a work of historical scholarship.
- You will learn to locate, evaluate, and properly cite historical research materials.
- You will learn to articulate a substantive, contestable, and specific thesis (argument) in your research papers and support that thesis with properly documented historical evidence using academic language.
- You will study the past and present of history (as genre, as discipline, and as profession) and learn to incorporate into your research papers reflections on how that past and present affect the writing of history.

PREREQUISITES, REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED, and RECOMMENDATION FOR HISTORY MAJORS: This course:

- has the *prerequisite* of English 110;
- *satisfies the Pathways requirement for College Writing 2*; and
- is *highly recommended* to serve as your 3-credit elective as a *history major*.
- This course does *not* fulfill any requirement under LASAR or PLAS.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION and POLICIES

CUNY POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion. In this class, any portion of any assignment that closely resembles material found in print, on the internet, or in an essay by another author will be considered plagiarism and receive a zero. Plagiarism will be reported to the QC Academic Integrity Officer. Plagiarism is also likely to result in an F for the course, and may result in expulsion from the college. Read more [here](#).

OFFICE HOURS: My office hours are for you! Please come by if you have any questions about course content or need help with an assignment.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION: You may contact me through email (see the address at the top of this syllabus). Because email from outside accounts often gets lost in spam folders, if you would like me to receive your email and send a reply, make sure you use your QC email (see below for how to get your email account). You can generally expect a response to your email within the next business day (note that this excludes weekends). See below for email etiquette.

BLACKBOARD and QC EMAIL: You need to check Blackboard and your Queens College email *daily* to keep up with this course. Readings, assignments, and announcements will be posted there throughout the course, and most assignments must be turned in through Blackboard. Posted announcements will automatically be sent to your QC email address. If you have not done so, you must first set up a [CAMS](#) account to get email and access to Blackboard. After you have your CAMS account, to login to Blackboard, go to the [CUNY Portal](#) and pull down the login menu on the top right of the screen. When you login to the CUNY Portal, you will see a link to Blackboard to the right of the screen. After clicking that link, you will find a list of your current courses on the right. If you have trouble, see the resources [here](#) and the tutorials on Blackboard.

INFORMATIONAL TECHNOLOGY SERVICES (ITS): Virtual IT support is available during the following times: Mon – Thur: 9 am – 10 pm; Fri: 9 am – 9:30 pm; via several methods: [live chat](#),

[email](#), and phone callback: 718-997-4444. Be prepared to give your name, phone number, QC email address, and a brief description of the problem with which you need help.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should register with and provide documentation to the Office of Special Services, Frese Hall 111. The Office of Special Services will provide a letter for you to give your professors indicating the need for accommodation and the nature of it. This should be done during the first week of class. For information about services available to Queens College students, contact the Office of Special Services (718-997-5870) or visit their [website](#).

HELP WITH WRITING/ESL: If you think that you need extra help with ESL, grammar, vocabulary, punctuation, style, or any other writing issues, check in with the QC Writing Center in the first week of class to schedule regular visits with a tutor, especially before writing assignment due dates on the syllabus. The Writing Center operates out of Kiely Hall 229 and is also operating virtually. For more information, see [here](#).

RELIGIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS: If you need an extension to an assignment deadline for a religious observance, simply notify the instructor in an email.

OTHER LINKS FOR HELP and SUPPORT:

- **Emergency funds:** The Queens College Carroll and Milton Petrie Student Emergency Grant Fund can provide quick response emergency grants to matriculated students in good academic standing who are experiencing personal emergencies.
- **Food pantry:** The Knights Table Pantry was established in the fall of 2018 as part of Queens College's commitment to reduce food insecurity among its student population.
- **Counseling:** The mission of Counseling Services is to enhance students' academic, intellectual, personal, and social growth.
- **Peer support:** Peer Support Services are open to all registered Queens College undergraduates.
- **Printing:** The following locations are available for general student printing use: Powdermaker Hall Room 210 and Rosenthal Library second floor. Current Queens College students, staff, and faculty can use their QCard to pay for printing and copying services.
- **Peer tutoring:** The Learning Commons (LC) offers peer tutoring, workshops, study spaces, and other services.

CLASSROOM and EMAIL (N)ETIQUETTE *(parts adapted from John Jay College policies):*

Throughout this course, you should act and write as though you are in a professional workspace. This includes successfully completing coursework, and engaging with other community members (faculty and students). Here are some recommendations:

- **Respect the classroom space.** Respect your fellow students and the learning environment of the classroom. Arrive to class on time and prepared to participate. If you arrive late, you should come into the classroom as quietly as possible and sit in the open seat nearest the door.
- **Turn the sound off on all electronic devices and put them away before the start of class.**
- **Write completely and scholarly.** Your writing in assignments, in class, on Blackboard, and/or in emails should be professional. Use proper punctuation, spelling, capitalization, and grammar at all times. Avoid abbreviations and acronyms. U for you, LOL, and TTYL are fine for a text to a friend, but not appropriate for college classes. Proofread all writing.
- **Use standard capitalization and punctuation (i.e., do not write in ALL CAPS or write like e. e. cummings!)** in all written assignments and emails.

- **Be clear in emails.** Emails to your instructor should be direct and to the point. They should always include your course number or title and a descriptive subject in the subject heading (e.g., “Re: History 190 assignment”). Emails should contain an opening salutation (e.g., “Dear Professor Billado,”) and a closing valediction (e.g., “Sincerely,”) followed by your full name.

POLICIES ON LATE WORK: You should try not to fall behind in the assignments for class. Late assignments have a way of piling up and then seeming insurmountable. Open the FAQ section linked in the left-hand menu of our Blackboard home page to read the detailed list of grace periods and late penalties for assignments in this course.

CALCULATION OF GRADES: There are one hundred points worth of assignments in this syllabus. Those points are translated into letter grades at the end of the semester as follows:

97-100	A+	83-86	B	70-72	C-
93-96	A	80-82	B-	67-69	D+
90-92	A-	77-79	C+	60-66	D
87-89	B+	73-76	C	below 60	F

PATHWAYS STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: This course satisfies an English Composition (EC) requirement of the Pathways General Education Required Core. In this category, English 110 (Writing 1) satisfies the EC 1 requirement. Writing 2 courses, including HISTORY 190, satisfy the EC 2 requirement. The EC-2 requirement is defined as follows: “Write clearly and coherently in varied, academic formats (such as formal essays, research papers, and reports) using standard English and appropriate technology to critique and improve one's own and others' texts.” The learning outcomes for this category may be downloaded [here](#).

Writing 2 courses must meet ALL of the following learning outcomes:

- Read and listen critically and analytically, including identifying an argument’s major assumptions and assertions and evaluating its supporting evidence.
- Write clearly and coherently in varied, academic formats (such as formal essays, research papers, and reports) using Standard English and appropriate technology to critique and improve one’s own and others’ texts.
- Demonstrate research skills using appropriate technology, including gathering, evaluating, and synthesizing primary and secondary sources.
- Support a thesis with well-reasoned arguments, and communicate persuasively across a variety of contexts, purposes, audiences, and media.
- Formulate original ideas and relate them to the ideas of others by employing the conventions of ethical attribution and citation.

SCHEDULE of TOPICS, READINGS, and ACTIVITIES

DATE	HOMEWORK (<i>due times noted in bold on due date</i>)	TOPICS & ACTIVITIES
Tu Aug 29	Post: Flip video due 11:59 p.m. (directions on Bb) Read: directions for research proposal & bibliography(Bb) Post: direction questions due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Orientation & introduction: What is history? What is academic writing in history?</i>
Th Aug 31	Read: John Arnold, <i>History: A Very Short Introduction</i> , pp. 1-3, 5-8, 10-14 (Bb) Write: Arnold paragraph due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>History vs. the past Citations, pt. I The sources of history, pt. I</i>

Tu Sep 5	Post: plagiarism pledge due 11:59 p.m. (Bb) Write: topic email #1 due 11:59 p.m. (directions on Bb)	<i>The sources of history, pt. II</i> <i>Historical questions</i>
Th Sep 7	Read: Njal's Saga , ch. 1-34, " The Tale of Thorstein Shiver ," and " The Tale of Thorstein Staff-Struck " Write: Thorsteins/Njala I paragraphs due 11:59 p.m. (Bb) Watch: classmates' Flip videos (directions on Bb)	<i>Analyzing primary sources, pt. I</i> <i>Citations, pt. II</i>
Tu Sep 12	Write: topic email #2 due 11:59 p.m. (directions on Bb)	<i>Library and internet searches</i>
Th Sep 14	Read: William Ian Miller, " Beating Up on Women and Old Men and Other Enormities: A Social Historical Inquiry into Literary Sources " Write: Miller paragraph due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Discussion: paper topic ideas</i> <i>Sign up: individual research meetings in class on 9/26, 9/28, & 10/3</i>
Tu Sep 19	Write: topic email #3 due 11:59 p.m. (directions on Bb)	<i>Finding the thesis, pt. I</i>
Th Sep 21	Read: Njal's Saga , ch. 35-47, Egil's Saga , ch. 81 Write: Njala II/Egil paragraphs due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Analyzing primary sources, pt. II</i>
Tu Sep 26	Read: directions for primary source summary Post: direction questions due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	individual research meetings (see schedule on Bb)
Th Sep 28	Read: Ármann Jakobsson, "Vampires and Watchmen: Categorizing the Mediæval Icelandic Undead" OR Carol J. Clover, "Regardless of Sex: Men, Women, and Power in Early Europe" (see directions on Bb to find both articles through the library databases) Write: Jakobsson OR Clover paragraph due 11:59 p.m.	individual research meetings
Tu Oct 3		individual research meetings
Th Oct 5	RESEARCH PROPOSAL due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Finding the thesis, pt. II</i>
Tu Oct 10	NO CLASS MEETING—QC MONDAY CLASSES MEET	
Th Oct 12	<i>printed</i> research proposal due at start of class Read: directions for annotated bibliography Post: direction questions due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	peer review #1
Tu Oct 17		<i>Quotation, paraphrase, summary</i>
Th Oct 19	PRIMARY SOURCE SUMMARY due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Analysis, abstracts, annotations</i>
Tu Oct 24	<i>printed</i> primary source summary due at start of class	peer review #2
Th Oct 26	Read: directions for historiography Post: direction questions due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Citations, pt. III</i>

Tu Oct 31		<i>Writing thesis statements</i>
Th Nov 2	ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>What is historiography?</i>
Tu Nov 7	<i>printed</i> annotated bibliography due at start of class	peer review #3
Th Nov 9	Read: directions for primary source analysis Post: direction questions due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Anticipating counterarguments</i>
Tu Nov 14		<i>Drawing and writing conclusions</i>
Th Nov 15	HISTORIOGRAPHY due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Proofreading & reverse outlining</i>
Tu Nov 21	<i>printed</i> historiography due at start of class Read: directions for final essay Post: direction questions due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	peer review #4
Th Nov 23	NO CLASS MEETING	
Tu Nov 28		<i>Academic conventions & jargon</i>
Th Nov 30	PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS due 11:59 p.m. (Bb) Post: information for presentations due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	<i>Other forms of history writing</i>
Tu Dec 5	<i>printed</i> primary source analysis due at start of class PRESENTATION due 11:59 p.m. (Flip)	peer review #5
Th Dec 7	Write: <i>printed</i> presentation question due at start of class	<i>Discussion: presentations</i>
Th Dec 14	OPTIONAL DRAFT FOR PEER REVIEW due Th Dec 14 by 11:59 p.m. via email	
Su Dec 17	OPTIONAL PEER REVIEW due Su Dec 17 by 11:59 p.m. via email & Bb	
Th Dec 21	FINAL REVISED ESSAY due 11:59 p.m. (Bb) OPTIONAL EXTRA CREDIT BIBLIOGRAPHY due 11:59 p.m. (Bb)	



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