INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this seminar is to guide you through the research and writing of your senior essay project. For many of you, this is your first extended research project. Undertaking such a project is exciting; it might also seem, at the outset and other moments along the way, a daunting undertaking. The senior essay seminar is designed as a space of support. This seminar provides you with concrete deadlines that will help you move through the various stages of the research and writing process at a manageable pace. In addition to providing deadlines, this seminar is a place for providing and receiving peer feedback, as well as for discussion about research methods, sources, composition, and editing.

While this seminar is an essential component of the senior essay, your primary working relationship is with your faculty advisor. You need to identify your faculty advisor as soon as possible and meet with him/her regularly to discuss your project and to determine a timeline for progress and completion of your essay. Your faculty advisor will provide expert consultation on issues specific to your subject matter and research. After you submit your final manuscript, your faculty advisor and an outside reader will be responsible for grading your project. More information can be found on the American Studies website: http://americanstudies.yale.edu/senior-year

While all senior seminar projects require an essay component, you may also choose to present your research in another format (for example: a film/video, play, new media, visual arts, music, etc.). If you plan to pursue this option, please make sure to consult with your faculty advisor as soon as possible. You should also let me know as soon as possible so that we can establish a specific plan for you that takes into account your alternate project format.

REQUIREMENTS

Reading: The following books are available online via the Yale library. We will be discussing selected chapters from The Craft of Research in class. We will not discuss The Chicago Manual of Style at length, but you should use it closely for your own reference.


**Attendance and participation:** Attendance in scheduled seminar meetings is mandatory. Prior preparation and participation are expected. You should come prepared to engage with the texts, assignments, and with one another.

**Sharing work with colleagues:** Throughout the semester, you will be asked to share your work with, and critique the work of, your colleagues. You are expected to provide thoughtful and respectful feedback to each member of your peer-editing group.

**Meeting with Yale subject librarian:**
Each student will need to schedule an individual meeting with David Gary, Kaplanoff Librarian for American History, to discuss the ways in which Yale’s library resources can support your project. After our in-library session (Sept. 10), you should email david.gary@yale.edu. Please contact David by Monday, September 15 to schedule your meeting.

**Meeting with me:** You are required to meet with me individually at least twice during the semester to discuss and assess how your research and writing are progressing.

**Presentations:** Toward the end of the semester, you will be asked to prepare a presentation on your work-in-progress.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- **Subject Guide:** U.S. History & American Studies Web Guide, Yale Library:
  [http://guides.library.yale.edu/ushistory](http://guides.library.yale.edu/ushistory)
- **How to Write a BA Thesis**, Charles Lipson:
  [http://orbexpress.library.yale.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=8277274](http://orbexpress.library.yale.edu/vwebv/holdingsInfo?bibId=8277274)
- **The Writing Center:** Tutors and readers at the Writing Center are available. Please make use of this resource!
- **Citation Tools:** Various programs are available to facilitate compiling and citing resources, including Endnote and Zotero. Explore these tools at [http://www.library.yale.edu/cite/](http://www.library.yale.edu/cite/).
- **Past Essays as examples:** Senior essays from previous years are kept on file in the American Studies undergraduate office, HGS 232. Please drop in and speak with undergraduate registrar Jean Cherniavsky to look at previous senior essays.

**EVALUATION**
Your participation will not be assessed on a letter scale (A, B, C), but I will write an evaluation of your work in the seminar that will be considered by your advisor and a second reader. Your essay will be evaluated according to the following criteria: strength of the argument, the effective treatment of primary and secondary source materials, the organization of the essay, and the technical aspects of the manuscript (e.g., citations). Your advisor and second reader will be expected to offer extended written comments on your work.
DEADLINES

Your prospectus, bibliography, and drafts should be delivered to the American Studies undergraduate office (on paper to HGS 232), to your faculty advisor (ask them whether they prefer an electronic or hard copy) and to me (via classes*v2 dropbox). The final manuscript, however, should only be submitted to the American Studies office, not to your advisor. For your final manuscript, submit two hard copies to the American Studies undergraduate office by 4 pm on the day of the deadline. In addition, you should submit an electronic copy of the essay (PDF format is preferred) by 4 pm on the day of the deadline to Jean Cherniavsky, so that your essay may be included in the departmental archive.

Fall Semester Only (491a)
- Wednesday, September 10 – Prospectus and prospectus form due by 3:00 pm
- Monday, September 15 – Email librarian David Gary by this date to schedule an individual meeting
- Wednesday, October 8 – Annotated bibliography due by 4 pm
- Monday, November 3 – Full draft due by 4 pm
- Friday, November 21 – Final 30-page manuscript due (two bound copies, pdf) by 4 pm

Full Year/Intensive (493)
- Wednesday, September 10 – Prospectus and prospectus form due by 3:00 pm
- Monday, September 15 – Email librarian David Gary by this date to schedule an individual meeting
- Wednesday, October 8 – Annotated bibliography due by 4 pm
- Friday, December 5 – 15-20 page draft due by 4 pm
- Wednesday, March 4 – Full draft due by 4 pm
- Friday, April 10 – Final 60-page manuscript due (two bound copies, pdf) by 4 pm

Prospectus and Prospectus Form: The prospectus is a one- to two-page document outlining the aims, scope, and methodology of the project. The prospectus should include a preliminary bibliography of primary and secondary resources. You must include a completed prospectus form with the prospectus. You must have a faculty advisor in order to submit the prospectus form. Before submitting your prospectus and prospectus form, please meet with your essay advisor for her/his approval and signature.

Annotated Bibliography:
This document should list a number (at least 10) of secondary sources that will play an important role in your writing. For annotations, you should include summaries of how each work’s argument or content intersects with your proposed project, and the ways in which you expect to make use of it. Rather than merely dumping in any and all potential citations with brief summaries in the style of a book report, take time to assemble a thoughtful overview of the main pieces of scholarship with which you expect to engage. This document is for your own future use; thus you may organize it as you please – as long as you demonstrate a relatively thorough and intelligent overview of sources that you’ve examined and expect to rely on in a substantial way.
Drafts: For one-semester participants, a full draft is due approximately three weeks before the deadline for the final manuscript. You may still have gaps that you will need to fill in, or tinkering to do, but this draft should demonstrate that you are moving into the final revision stage. Immediately after submitting the full draft, you should set-up an appointment with your faculty advisor to discuss what revisions this draft will require. For full-year participants: the draft due in the fall should be 15-20 pages. Please include with your draft a brief explanation of how these pages fit into your larger project, and which sections will need to be written or filled out in the coming semester.

Final Manuscript: One-semester participants will submit a manuscript of 30 pages. Full-year participants will submit a manuscript of 60 pages.

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

This schedule, including assignments, may change according to the needs of the participants. Sufficient notice will be given. Postings should be made by 11:59 p.m. on the Monday before the seminar meeting unless otherwise noted.

Weds., August 27: Introduction and Getting Started

Weds., Sept. 3: Sources, Part I
Reading: Part II of The Craft of Research: Prologue and Chapters 3-6 (Optional: skim Part I of The Craft of Research)
Assignment: Submit a document with 2-3 annotated entries, using the Purdue Online Writing Lab on Annotated Bibliographies (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/1/) as a guide. Upload this to the classesv2 dropbox by Tuesday, Sept 2 at 11:59 p.m.

* Prospectus and prospectus form due on Wednesday, September 10th by 3:00 p.m. You MUST have an advisor prior to submitting these.

Weds., Sept 10: Sources, Part II
Assignment: Prepare and submit prospectus and prospectus form
Group meeting with American Studies subject librarian David Gary and Manuscripts and Archives librarian William Landis. This hands-on seminar will focus on research techniques and the vast array of sources and resources available at Yale. After this session, email David at david.gary@yale.edu by Monday, September 15 to set up an individual appointment with him.

Weds., September 17. Individual Meetings
Sign up for an individual meeting during our regularly scheduled class time.
Weds., September 24. Arguments, Organization and Outlines
Reading: Chapter 7-8 & 10, The Craft of Research.
Assignment: Post an outline for your project. Include a paragraph or two that addresses the following: What questions are to be asked and answered in this essay? What parameters are placed on the project? Why is this an important project? What is your tentative thesis statement? What archives will be used?

Weds., October 1, Drafting
Assignment: Submit draft pages
Semester participants will submit 4-6 pages and a detailed outline to their writing group. Full-year participants will submit 2-4 pages to their writing group.

*Annotated Bibliography due Wednesday, October 8th by 4 p.m.

Weds., October 15, Drafting
Assignment: Submit draft pages
Semester participants will submit 10-15 pages to their writing group. Full-year participants will submit a detailed outline and 5-7 pages to their writing group.

FALL BREAK, OCTOBER 21-27

*Semester participants’ full drafts are due on Monday, November 3 by 12 pm (noon)

Weds., November 5, Editing and Revising, Drafting
Assignment: Semester-students: Read the full drafts submitted by your writing group. Full-year students: Submit draft pages.
Semester participants will read the full drafts submitted by fellow writing group members and prepare feedback for each draft. Full-year participants will submit 10-15 page drafts to their writing group.

Weds., November 12: Individual Meetings with Semester Participants
Semester participants must sign up for an individual meeting.

Weds., November 19: Individual Meetings with Full-Year Participants
Individual meetings with full-year participants to discuss their progress thus far and a schedule for completing the project in the coming semester.
* Semester participants’ final manuscripts (30 pages) are due on Friday, November 21 by 4 pm, in 2 hard-copies and one PDF copy

THANKSGIVING BREAK, NOVEMBER 22 – DECEMBER 1

Wed., December 3, Presentations

_Assignment:_ Prepare an in-class presentation
Fall-semiter participants will make 7-minute presentations to the group, with time for questions.
Year-long participants will give 2-3 minute presentations of their discoveries so far.

* Full-year participants’ drafts (15-20 pages) are due Friday, December 5 by 4 pm