

Dr. Laura Moore
Mclver 334E
256-0472
ljmoore2002@yahoo.com
Office Hours: Mon, 2:30-4:00
and by appointment

History 511a
Spring, 2002
UNC-Greensboro

Writing Seminar in American History: Native American Women: Telling Lives, Writing History

History 511 is designed to provide graduate students and advanced undergraduate history majors with an introduction to the process of writing an original research paper. In this particular course you will research and write on a topic or theme in Native American women's history using memoirs and autobiographies of Native American women as your major primary sources.

I do not assume that you have any background in Native American history. I do assume, however, that you have experience in historical analysis – that is, that you know what primary and secondary sources are, can identify the thesis of a scholarly work, etc. After spending your college career reading and listening to other historians' analyses of the past, now you get to be the historian.

Native American women's history presents particular challenges to researchers. For example, most written sources that historians of Native America rely on were generated by Euroamerican men and often reflect their misunderstandings and prejudices. Historians must always read primary sources with care and with a critical eye, no more so than when they are researching Indian women. We will discuss these methodological difficulties, and how historians have confronted them, during the first month of the semester as we read the works of various scholars of Native American history. You will spend most of the semester, though, confronting the scholarly process yourself.

The course is organized around the four major elements that go into the creation of an original research project:

1. reading published scholarly work – secondary sources that relate to one's research topic
2. finding, reading, and analyzing primary sources
3. organizing one's findings and writing drafts
4. getting comments and advice from colleagues

You will gain experience with these four elements through the following assignments:

Participation (20% of final grade): You will get credit for keeping up and actively participating in the course by doing informal reaction papers to the reading and through your general participation in class discussions

Reaction papers: On the four days that I have assigned secondary source reading (January 23, January 30, February 6, and February 20) you will write an informal response to the day's reading. Reaction papers should be no longer than two printed pages. They should address the following questions: 1. briefly, what are the main arguments of the readings? 2. what kind of methodology did the author(s) use – what kinds of sources did they rely on, what kinds of questions can be addressed using those sources, how did the scholars use their sources to form their arguments? 3. What is especially interesting, surprising, striking to you about the reading? Does the reading give you any ideas for or insights into your own research project?

Reaction papers must be submitted to the Discussion Board on Blackboard by 2:00pm the day for which the reading is assigned. You should then read over all the reaction papers before class that day. I will give each reaction paper a check, check-plus, check-minus or zero. If you receive at least three checks, you will earn a B for this part of your grade. Check-plusses on at least two earn an A; check-minuses on at least two earn a C. One zero earns an automatic D, and two zeroes an automatic F. To get at least a check, it simply needs to be clear that you did the reading, gave it some serious thought, and have addressed the above questions to some extent.

General Participation: Different people make different kinds of contributions to a discussion. Some of us are more talkative or assertive than others; sometimes just one, short, thoughtful comment can move a discussion to a deeper level. In figuring your participation grade, I will take into account the quality and thoughtfulness – and to a lesser degree the quantity -- of your contributions to class discussions. I will evaluate general participation on how engaged you are in the discussions, how well you listen to other members of the class and respond to what they say, etc. Attendance will also be a factor here – after all, it's hard for your mind to be present when your body is not.

Drafts and Comments on Drafts (30%): A basic philosophy of this course is that writing is a collaborative process. Thus, learning how to read and comment on colleagues' drafts is one of the skills I will help you develop this semester. During the fourth week of class we will divide into groups. For the rest of the semester you will be responsible for writing up comments on drafts written by members of your group. You will turn in a total of five draft stages of your research paper: a one-page prospectus, a three-page prospectus, notes on a primary source, a partial draft, and a complete draft (more details and due dates are below). You will then write comments on four of these: the two prospectuses, the partial draft, and the complete draft.

As with the reaction papers, I will mark each draft stage and each set of comments with a check, check-plus, check-minus, or zero. Checks on at least eight of the nine assignments in this category earns a B; check-plusses on a majority with no zeroes earn an A; check-minuses on a majority earn a C. More than one zero earns an

automatic F. I will accept no more than one of these assignments late (and then only if you get in touch with me and your group by the deadline to let us know when it will arrive), after that late drafts and comments will get zeros. The final version of the paper CANNOT be turned in late.

To earn at least a check on the drafts, they should fulfill the assignment and demonstrate that care and thought has been put into them. For example, if a draft includes revisions from previous drafts, it does indeed need to be revised and improved. On the comments I will be looking for thoughtful insights and useful, concrete advice. I will provide more advice and instructions about these assignments over the course of the semester.

Research Paper (50%): As with any history paper, this one will be evaluated on how clear, convincing, logical, original, and insightful the argument is and how well it uses evidence from primary sources to make the argument. You will get lots more instructions and advice both from me and other members of the class over the course of the semester.

READINGS:

Most of the assigned reading is in the following books, which can be purchased at the campus bookstore: Nancy Shoemaker, ed., *Negotiators of Change: Historical Perspectives on Native American Women*; Theda Perdue, ed., *Sifters: Native American Women's Lives*; Theda Perdue, *Cherokee Women: Gender and Culture Change, 1700-1835*; Brenda Child, *Boarding School Seasons: American Indian Families, 1900-1940*. Additional assigned reading is on electronic reserve. To access the reserve reading, go to the UNCG library homepage (<http://library.uncg.edu>), click on the "Reserves" link, and follow instructions from there.

ADVICE:

My favorite college professor used to say that true learning begins when you admit that you're confused. In that spirit, I encourage you to ASK QUESTIONS of me, of other students, and of yourself, both in the classroom and out of it. I really enjoy talking with students. If you can't come to office hours, I can arrange to meet with you at other times.

This course will be completely discussion-based – the active and thoughtful participation of everyone is absolutely crucial to its success. Keep up with the reading and other work, bring imaginative questions to the material, respect each other, and don't be shy.

This is an advanced course that requires hard and serious work outside class hours as well as during them. You should not, however, feel overwhelmed by the work. If you start to feel overwhelmed come TALK TO ME. (Please also contact me as soon as possible if you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations.) I also encourage you to take advantage of the many resources available to UNCG students including the Learning Assistance Center (334-3878) and the University Writing Center (334-3125).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

I take my obligations under the Academic Integrity Policy seriously and expect you to do the same. ALL the work you do in this course is subject to the policy. It is especially important that you do not commit PLAGIARISM. Plagiarism is not only an honor code violation, but is also illegal. If you are at all worried that you might be in danger of plagiarism or any other violation, you should ASK me (not another student) in advance.

A FINAL NOTE:

You should take pride in all the work you turn in this semester. That means, in part, that everything, including drafts, should be free of grammar errors, proofread and spell-checked, and printed in a reasonable font with reasonable margins. Style, including footnotes, should follow Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*.

- Wednesday, January 16 Introducing the course
- Monday, January 21 MLK, Jr holiday
- Wednesday, January 23 The First American Woman: Three Approaches to Pocahontas – read Green, “Pocahontas Perplex,” on reserve; Brown, “Anglo-Algonquian Gender Frontier,” in *Negotiators of Change*, and Rountree, “Pocahontas,” in *Sifters*
AND read and bring to class a Native American woman’s memoir (or a selection from one)
- Wednesday, January 30 Themes and Methods: read Shoemaker’s Introduction in *Negotiators of Change*; Ford, “Native American Women” Changing Statuses, Changing Interpretations,” on reserve; Klein and Ackerman’s Introduction to *Women and Power in Native North America*, on reserve; and Mihesuah, “Commonality of Difference,” on reserve AND one essay each from *Negotiators of Change* and *Sifters* not already assigned.
Also be prepared to propose (orally) a research topic
- Wednesday, February 6 Gender analysis in Native American History: Read Perdue, *Cherokee Women*
MEET IN LIBRARY ROOM 774
- Monday, February 11 One-page prospectus and bibliography of primary and secondary sources due on Blackboard by 4:00pm
- Wednesday, February 13 Research proposals and problems I: Read each others’ prospectuses and bring written comments for those in your group, with a copy for me
- Wednesday, February 20 Analyzing sources: read Child, *Boarding School Seasons* AND bring copies of a selection from one of your primary sources along with notes on it
- Wednesday, February 27 Individual Consultations – we will not meet in class
- Monday, March 4 Three-page prospectus including literature review and a tentative thesis statement and revised bibliography of primary and secondary sources due on Blackboard by 4:00pm

Wednesday, March 6	Research proposals and problems II: Read each others' prospectuses and bring written comments for those in your group
Wednesday, March 13	SPRING BREAK
Wednesday, March 20	Draft of outline, introduction, and 3-4 pages of body due – submit to Blackboard and bring hard copies for members of your group and for me
Monday, March 25	Send copies of comments on the drafts to those in your group, with a copy to me, by 4:00
Wednesday, March 27	The Writing Process I: read the comments and come to class prepared to explain your revision strategy and to respond to the comments
Friday, March 29	SPRING HOLIDAY
Wednesday, April 3	Individual consultations – we will not meet in class
Wednesday, April 10	Draft of entire paper due – submit to Blackboard and bring hard copies for members of your group and for me
Monday, April 15	Send copies of comments on the drafts to those in your group, with a copy to me, by 4:00
Wednesday, April 17	The Writing Process III: read the comments and come to class prepared to explain your revision strategy and to respond to the comments
Wednesday, April 24	No class – keep writing
Monday, April 29	Submit final version of paper to Blackboard
Wednesday, May 1	Concluding Thoughts on Writing and Reading Native American Women's History: Read each others' papers and bring a hard copy of yours for me.