This seminar course will examine historiography which, briefly defined, is the methodology and
practice of doing history. This course will be different from the other courses you have taken for
your major, which have focused on history; this one will focus on how history has been
undertaken in the past and is undertaken today. To what extent does our understanding of history
frame our everyday existence? Is history simply the study of the past, or can it be used to support
modern political, socioeconomic or cultural perspectives? And if it can be used in this way,
should it? We have all heard the expression, “Those who forget the past are doomed to repeat it”
– but how true is such a sentiment? Or is an over-rootedness in history dangerous? This course
will explore these questions, and others, by examining schools of historical thought that inform
the profession today, and we will investigate the ways in which those schools of thought
contribute to the evolution and the maintenance and development of history as a discipline.

REQUIRED TEXTS: There are two, short, required texts for this course.

Ludmilla Jordanova, History in Practice, 2nd edition (Hodder and Arnold/OUP: New York,
2006).


In addition to these texts, there will be weekly readings as outlined below. These will be posted
to the Acorn site for the course soon. In addition you may want to consult the following
resources from time to time, to add background information and perspective to your readings.

circulating reference section of the library (D14.B58).
Hughes-Warrington, Marnie. Fifty Key Thinkers on History, (London: Routledge, 2000). This
will be placed on reserve at the library (D13.H75).
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are reminded that plagiarism is a serious academic offense, and will result in a failing grade, probably for the entire course. Please refer to the section “Academic Integrity”, found on page 33-34 of the Acadia University Calendar, 2013-2014.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Article summaries: 20%
Class participation: 25%
Class presentation: 25%
Final essay: 30%

Article summaries: At the beginning of week five (October 8) through to and including week eleven (November 19), you will be handing in article summaries. You need to do 20 of these during the weeks in question. It is up you to pick what you want to do. Each summary will be marked out of 10, with the whole lot averaged together for a mark out of 20 overall. These summaries are due at the beginning of the class for the week in which you are writing them. In other words, if you are doing two article summaries for week seven, then you must hand them in at the beginning of that class. I will not accept summaries for week seven in week ten. The summaries themselves are to be no more than 150 words in length, exclusive of title and author information. You must include a word count of the text and I will stop reading at word 151 – my mind automatically counts the words. The summaries will distill the reading – include the thesis statement of the reading, the main argument, main sources and some judgment of the reading’s conclusions. Spelling and grammar are crucial. Make sure your summaries are clear, to the point and do not contain extraneous material. The trick is to take a bunch of material and distill it down to its essence. Believe it or not, future employers will appreciate such a skill!

Class participation: Attendance is mandatory for all classes. The classes will be considerably enriched by contributions from all class members. Therefore, participation is mandatory as well. If you do not talk in seminars you will receive a zero for that component of the course. Your participation mark will be based on, but not restricted to, your preparation for the seminars (doing the readings!), your participation in the discussions, and your analytical grasp of the readings.

Class presentation: Once during the term, beginning week five, you will run the seminar for the duration. You will do this in partnership with one other individual in the class. We will organize the teams and schedule during the first class. Needless to say, failure to show up for your week will result in a zero out of 25 for that component of the course (unless you have a documented medical emergency). Teams must consult with me in advance of your presentation to get guidance on what you plan to do.

Final essay: At the end of the term you will hand in a 12 to 15 page essay analyzing one of the historical controversies that we cover, weeks five to eleven inclusive. In addition to the scheduled readings, you need to find between three and five additional relevant sources to
analyze. Try to detect controversies in the field, changes over time, use of sources and so on – all the sort of thing we have been discussing during the term. Late penalty is five percent per day.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 (September 10) – Course introduction, presentation schedule and organization.

Readings for the first week will be found on the course ACORN page (three articles). Please read them in advance of class and be prepared to discuss them.

Week 2 (September 17) – The Uses of History


Week 3 (September 24) – The Practice of History, part one.

Jordanova, Chapters 1 to 4.

Week 4 (October 1) – The Practise of History, part two.

Jordanova, Chapters 5 to 8.

Week 5 (October 8) – The Annales School


Week 6 (October 15) – Marx and History


Week 7 (October 22) – Women’s History


Week 8 (October 29) - History and Memory


Week 9 (November 5) – The Russian Revolution


**Week 10 (November 12) – World History – Who Owns the History of the Globe?**


**Week 12 (November 26) – To be announced.**