

IS123: Academic Research in the Humanities and Social Sciences

James Harker

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Office Hours in P24 O.05: Mondays 13:30-15:30 and by appointment

Seminar Location TBA

9:00-12:30 Mondays

Laura López Paniagua

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Office Hours by appointment

Seminar Location TBA

9:00-12:30 Mondays

Course Description

This seminar offers training in the methods of academic research and a workshop for drafts. Focusing on representative contemporary research in the humanities and the social sciences, it supports students in proceeding with their own individual research projects by focusing on the essential elements of independent scholarly work: the choice of a topic or object of study; the outline of the main components of an article or scholarly paper; finding, gathering, collating and interpreting the sources needed for the project; correct citation, attribution, and bibliographical documentation, and lastly, the effective presentation of the final work in structure and style, as well as peer review and constructive feedback. Including the participation of thesis supervisors and other faculty members, this course focuses on individual presentations in the latter half of the semester.

Requirements

Annotated Bibliography

Upload a short ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY (AB) (minimum: two sources) on Google Team Drive before each “Research Material Presentation” class session. The annotated bibliography is in part a working journal of your research, showing what you have accomplished. Materials should be organized alphabetically under two headings, “Secondary Sources” and “Primary Sources,” with a bibliographic entry for each. The annotation itself (again, for each entry) should be a short paragraph in which you indicate what you have gleaned from the reading and how you see it as relevant to your project (you will be provided a model so you can see what it should look like).

Research Material Presentation

You will present on a text or source that you think will play a role in your thesis. A text and reading questions must be chosen for circulation on Thursday before your presentation, and you will lead a discussion on the chosen text(s).

Draft Presentation

You will need to circulate an 8-10-page piece of writing to your section (and to your advisor). This writing selection must be circulated on the Thursday before your presentation so that people have time to read it. If it is circulated late, the whole presentation will be graded down one grade per day; so make sure to circulate those writing selections on time. On the day of your presentation, you should be prepared to speak about how the writing selection fits into the larger project, what your concerns are, and what you're planning to do next. This presentation shouldn't be a recap of the writing sample, as everyone will have already read it. A PowerPoint presentation is often helpful, but it's not explicitly required. For the remaining time, we will discuss both your presentation and the writing sample. The "respondent" should be well prepared with questions and should get the discussion going (or keep it going). Moreover, it is the respondent's job to take notes during the discussion and provide the presenter with a written summary of the colloquium participants' suggestions for moving forward with the project. Your thesis advisor will attend your presentation and might have some contributions to make or might be helpful in "filtering" the discussion and figuring how ideas from it could be beneficial for the project.

Submission of Drafts

All drafts and class readings must be submitted via Google Team Drive and be emailed to all course members.

Attendance

Attendance at all sessions of the course is expected. A single absence from the course, however, will not require documentation or clarification and will not affect the overall grade. Further absences would require communication with the instructors, who might require supporting documentation or compensating assignments to make up for the absence.

During the coronavirus pandemic, no one should come to class if they are feeling ill. Participants experiencing mild illness or in quarantine will be able to participate in class either remotely or asynchronously. In the event of mild illness or quarantine, please contact your instructor to make necessary arrangements. Under these circumstances, remote or asynchronous participation is considered to be "in attendance."

Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes. The full Bard College Berlin attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

Grade Breakdown

Attendance and Participation	40%
Annotated Bibliography	20%
Research Material Presentation	20%
Draft Presentation	20%

Required Texts

Readings are available on Google Team Drive for the course. Student-initiated readings for the group presentations and individual presentations will be uploaded to Google Team Drive and/or emailed.

Course Schedule

Week 1: August 31	Online Joint Session: Identifying a Topic and Finding a Thesis Advisor
Week 2: September 7	In-Person Group Session Reading: selections from <i>They Say/I Say</i> (Graff and Birkenstein 2020)
Week 3: September 14	Finding Sources (Format TBA)
Week 4: September 21	In-Person Session: Faculty Panel on Research
Week 5: September 28	Research Material Presentations & Annotated Bibliography
Week 6: October 5	Research Material Presentations & Annotated Bibliography
Week 7: October 12	Research Material Presentations & Annotated Bibliography
Fall Break	
Week 8: October 26	Online Joint Session: CV and Cover Letter Workshop
Week 9: November 2	Draft Presentations
Week 10: November 9	Draft Presentations
Week 11: November 16	Draft Presentations
Week 12: November 23	Draft Presentations

Week 13: November 30

Draft Presentations

Declaration of your thesis title in week 13 of the Fall semester on Friday, December 1, 2020 at 15:00. You must complete the declaration of BA Thesis Title form.

https://tools.bard.edu/wwwmedia/files/3333161/2/Declaration_of_BA_thesis_title.pdf

You must obtain the signatures of your supervisor and second reader before submitting the form to the Registrar's office by the deadline above.

Week 14: December 7

Draft Presentations

A 10-page thesis excerpt is due to thesis advisors during Completion Week. The specific due date will be determined by the thesis advisor.