ASSC 1200/HIST 1900  
Raiders of the Lost Archives:  
Historical Research in Halifax  

Dalhousie University  
Fall 2014  

Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00-2:30  
Room 1130, McCain FASS building  

Instructor: Jerry Bannister  
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Email: jerry.bannister@dal.ca  

Office Hours: Fridays, 1:30-3:30, and by appointment.  

Resource Archivist: Creighton Barrett  
Digital Archivist, Dalhousie University Archives  
Phone: 902-494-6490  
Email: Creighton.Barrett@Dal.ca  

Format: Two seminars per week.  

Description: This course introduces first-year students to the principles and practices of historical research. It gives students the opportunity to design their own research projects based on a local archival or museum collection. During our weekly seminar meetings, we will read and discuss a selection of introductory studies on the elements of historical research and writing. We will also visit local archives during Week 5, and meet with professional archivists working in Halifax. For their research projects, students will be able to choose from a range of primary sources, such as diaries, newspapers, maps, collections of letters, business records, court cases, or government documents. Students are free to select a collection from any period and to focus on a topic of their choice. We will discuss the research projects thoroughly during our weekly meetings, and students will submit their final papers at the end of term.  


Available at the University Bookstore. Additional online readings are listed below.  

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## Course Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Document Assessment</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>October 10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Essay Proposal</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>November 4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Grade:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Source Oral Report</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>in class during Week 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Sources Oral Report</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>in class during Week 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>assigned at the end of term</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Research Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>December 5th</td>
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As a seminar, this course is based on class discussions rather than lectures. Attendance is mandatory. There will be no test or final exam. If you have to miss a class due to illness or an emergency, please email me as soon as possible. Class participation grades will comprise a variety of elements, including reports on primary and secondary sources, as well as attendance and contributions to seminar discussions. Late papers will be penalized five marks per day (5%). For a breakdown of the university’s grading scale and assessment rubrics, see: [http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/grade-scale-and-definitions.html](http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/student_services/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/grade-scale-and-definitions.html)

Class materials will be updated during the term on the OWL/BbLearn system, so please check our site regularly. Once we get settled into the Fall term, I will post links to all the online material; in the meantime, you can click on the links contained in the pdf version of the syllabus. If you need to contact me at any time, please email me at [jerry.bannister@dal.ca](mailto:jerry.bannister@dal.ca) directly, rather than through the internal OWL/BbLearn web site. To protect others’ privacy, students may not do voice or video recordings of any activity that occurs within the classroom. During our weekly seminar discussions, please refrain from using electronic devices in ways that might be considered disruptive or disrespectful to other students. Please refrain from texting, emailing, or other online activities.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register as soon as possible at the Student Accessibility Services. To do so, please phone 494-2836, e-mail [access@dal.ca](mailto:access@dal.ca), drop in at the Killam G28, or visit their web site at [www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca](http://www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca)
# Course Schedule

## Week 1

**Course Introduction**

4 Sept  
Discussion of seminar organization, readings, and assignments

## Week 2

**Introduction to the Principles of Reading and Research**

9 Sept  
Introduction to Reading and Research

11 Sept  
Introduction to History and Historiography
- Presnell, intro. & ch. 1 (please bring your copy to class)

## Week 3

**Introduction to Archives and Archival Research**

16 Sept  
Using Library and Online Resources
- Presnell, chs. 2-3

18 Sept  
Discussion with Creighton Barrett, Digital Archivist, on using primary sources
- Presnell, ch. 6

## Week 4

**Identifying Interests and Using Imagination**

23 Sept  
Role of Intuition and Imagination

25 Sept  
Interpreting Archival Documents: Case Studies of Maps and Newspapers
- Presnell, ch. 8

## Week 5

**Beyond the Classroom: Field Trips to Local Archives**

30 Sept  
Dalhousie University Archives
We will meet at the Dalhousie University Archives, located on the 5th floor of the Killam Memorial Library.
- DUA Homepage: [http://libraries.dal.ca/collection/archives.html](http://libraries.dal.ca/collection/archives.html)

2 Oct  
Nova Scotia Archives
We will meet at the Nova Scotia Archives, located at 6016 University Avenue
- NSA Homepage: [http://novascotia.ca/archives/](http://novascotia.ca/archives/)
- Schmidt, “Using Archives: A Guide to Effective Research,” which will
distributed as a pdf document and posted on the course OWL/BbLearn web site.

**Week 6**  
**Selecting and Evaluating Sources**  
7 Oct  
Principles of Source Evaluation  
• Presnell, chs. 4-5  
9 Oct  
Promise & Peril of Internet Research  
• Presnell, ch. 7  
**Document Assessment Assignment due by 4:00 on Friday, October 10\(^{th}\)**

**Week 7**  
**From Questions to Evidence**  
14 Oct  
Converting Data to Evidence  
• Presnell, ch. 7  
16 Oct  
Converting Questions to Research Problems  
• Presnell, ch. 10

**Week 8**  
**Reports from the Field, Part I: Primary Sources**  
21 Oct  
Oral Reports on Primary Sources  
23 Oct  
Oral Reports on Primary Sources

**Week 9**  
**Reports from the Field, Part II: Secondary Sources**  
28 Oct  
Oral Reports on Secondary Sources  
30 Oct  
Oral Reports on Secondary Sources

**Week 10**  
**From Hypothesis to Outline**  
4 Nov  
Discussion of Essay Ideas  
**Essay Proposals due by 4:00 on Tuesday, November 4\(^{th}\)**  
6 Nov  
How to Organize Evidence  
• Presnell, ch. 11  
• Online Writing Lab, Purdue University, available at:  
https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/544/01/

**Week 11**  
**Writing: Some Unsolicited Advice**  
11 Nov  
No Class: Remembrance Day  
13 Nov  
Two Different Takes on Writing  
• Strunk & White, “Elements of Style,” available at:  
http://www.bartleby.com/141/  
• Pullum, “50 Years of Stupid Grammar Advice,” available at:  

**Week 12**  
**Reports from the Field, Part III: Drafting & Editing**  
18 Nov  
Discussions of Draft Research Essays  
20 Nov  
Discussions of Draft Research Essays
Week 13  Sweating the Small Stuff: Proofing & Polishing
25 Nov  Deciding what to keep and what to dump
27 Nov  Polishing your style
   • Thinking Stylistically, available at:
   http://historiansgaze.blogspot.ca/2009/10/thinking-stylistically.html

Week 14  Course Conclusion
2 Dec  Discussion of final research papers
Final research essays due by 4:00 on Friday, December 5th

Document Assessment

The first assignment is a short assessment of a document. Your job is to write a brief description of an archival document and discuss how it could be used for historical research. Your discussion should be 500-1,000 words in length, and should offer a brief overview of what is known about the source and its context, e.g., the time period or geography. It should discuss relevant issues such as the author (if known), the physical state of the document, and the patterns within the document, e.g., what it includes versus what it omits. After providing a basic description of the document, you should then discuss possible ways in which it could be used for historical research. This discussion could address questions such as the intended purpose of the document or what it reveals about the time and place in which it was written.

You can choose between two basic types of documents that we will discuss in Week 4, from the Nova Scotia Archives’ digitized collections of historical newspapers and maps. You can choose either one map or a single issue of a newspaper. The online collections span several centuries in Nova Scotia’s history, and you can choose whatever period or topic interests you. The complete digitized material is available via the NSA web site:

   • Digital map collection: http://novascotia.ca/archives/virtual/maps/
   • Historical newspapers database: http://novascotia.ca/archives/virtual/newspapers/

We will discuss this assignment thoroughly in class at the start of term. The assignment is due by 4:00 on Friday, October 10th.

Essay Proposal

The research assignment for this term will be broken into two parts: your proposal and your final research essay. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the instructor early in the semester to discuss potential sources and topics. You are free to choose from any archival
collection available in Halifax. Every student must submit an essay proposal: final research papers submitted without a prior essay proposal will not be accepted.

We will discuss your choices of primary and secondary sources during Weeks 8-9, so we will have ample opportunity to talk about your research in class, and address any concerns you may have, before the proposal assignment is due. The essay proposal must include the following components:

1) Working title for your essay. The title should list the geography and chronology covered by the essay.
2) Short description, no less than 500 words, of the archival source(s) that you plan to research for your project. The number of primary sources depends on the length and complexity of the archival collection that you select.
3) Short summary, no less than 300 words, explaining the topic related to the archival source that you plan to pursue.
4) Question(s) that your archival research will address.
5) Working hypothesis, i.e., your tentative answer to your question(s).
6) Bibliography that includes a primary source(s) from an archival collection available in Halifax, plus four relevant secondary sources that meet the criteria for scholarly sources.

The criteria for this assignment, including the definitions of suitable primary and scholarly sources, will be discussed fully in class. The essay proposal is due by 4:00 on Tuesday, November 4th, but students are welcome to submit their proposal earlier in the semester.

**Research Essay**

The research essay will be a paper of no less than 2,000 words in length. It should be between 2,000 and 3,000 words in length (8-12 typewritten pages). Essays up to 20 pages in length will be accepted. The final research essay should be based on the essay proposal.

The research essay must have a clear thesis. Essays must have an introduction, a sustained argument, a conclusion, and a bibliography. Your thesis must deal with an historical question relevant to the course material. Essays submitted without a prior essay proposal will not be accepted. Essays must draw on at least one appropriate primary source, as well as at least four scholarly sources related to the topic. Suitable primary sources can be chosen from the wealth of archival materials available in Halifax.

Assignments must conform to the History Department’s guidelines. Assignments should have a proper title page; the text must be double spaced, with standard margins and fonts; and all pages must be numbered. Students must ensure that their essays have sufficient references in the proper format, using footnotes or endnotes. Essays must have an introduction, a clear argument, a conclusion, and a bibliography. **References must be inserted whenever a direct quotation is used and/or whenever the paper cites specific information drawn from a source.** These references must include specific page citations. Assignments must be proofread, clearly
organized, and written at a university level. Copies of the History Department’s guidelines are available online: [http://history.dal.ca/Student%20Resources/Style_Guide.php](http://history.dal.ca/Student%20Resources/Style_Guide.php)

The criteria for the assignments, including proper referencing techniques, will be discussed thoroughly in class. Plagiarism will be dealt with according to the university regulations. As a student in this class, **you are required to keep an electronic copy of any assignment you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.** All assignments must be either handed to the instructor in person or placed in my drop-box (number 71), in the McCain FASS building. Do not push papers under the instructor’s door. Please note that the History Department’s main office does not accept student papers. **Late papers will be penalized five marks per day (5%).** Extensions will be given only for documented medical or personal emergencies. All final research papers are **due by 4:00 on Friday, December 5th.**

**Student Accommodation**

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit [www.dal.ca/access](http://www.dal.ca/access) for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation – Form A.

A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

**Academic Integrity**

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students
should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to be checked electronically for originality. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.

At Dalhousie University, we respect the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect. As a student, adherence to the values of academic integrity and related policies is a requirement of being part of the academic community at Dalhousie University. Academic integrity means being honest in the fulfillment of your academic responsibilities thus establishing mutual trust. Fairness is essential to the interactions of the academic community and is achieved through respect for the opinions and ideas of others. “Violations of intellectual honesty are offensive to the entire academic community, not just to the individual faculty member and students in whose class an offence occurs.” [Intellectual Honesty section of University Calendar]

How can you achieve academic integrity?

- make sure you understand Dalhousie’s policies on academic integrity
- give appropriate credit to the sources used in your assignment such as written or oral work, computer codes/programs, artistic or architectural works, scientific projects, performances, web page designs, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images
  - Use RefWorks to keep track of your research and edit and format bibliographies in the proper citation style http://www.library.dal.ca/How/RefWorks
- do not download the work of another from the Internet and submit it as your own
- do not submit work that has been completed through collaboration or previously submitted for another assignment without permission from your instructor
- do not write an examination or test for someone else
- do not falsify data or lab results
  
  [these examples should be considered only as a guide and not an exhaustive list]

What will happen if an allegation of an academic offence is made against you?

I am required to report a suspected offence. The full process is outlined in the Discipline flow chart and includes the following:

- Each Faculty has an Academic Integrity Officer (AIO) who receives allegations from instructors
- The AIO decides whether to proceed with the allegation and you will be notified of the process
- If the case proceeds, you will receive an INC (incomplete) grade until the matter is resolved
If you are found guilty of an academic offence, a penalty will be assigned ranging from a warning to a suspension or expulsion from the University and can include a notation on your transcript, failure of the assignment or failure of the course. All penalties are academic in nature.

**Where can you turn for help?**

- If you are ever unsure about ANYTHING, contact the course instructor
- [Academic Integrity website](#)
  - Links to policies, definitions, online tutorials, tips on citing and paraphrasing
- [Writing Center](#)
  - Assistance with proofreading, writing styles, citations
- [Dalhousie Libraries](#)
  - Workshops, online tutorials, citation guides, Assignment Calculator, RefWorks
- [Dalhousie Student Advocacy Service](#)
  - Assists students with academic appeals and student discipline procedures.
- [Senate Office](#)
  - List of Academic Integrity Officers, discipline flow chart, Senate Discipline Committee