I. INTRODUCTION TO HISTORY 301-K1

This course is designed to acquaint students with some of the ways historians have thought about the past. The work of a number of historians and philosophers will be studied closely and critically over the course of the semester. In the process, students not only will become familiar with various important historical approaches but also will be encouraged to examine their own assumptions about the past and about how and why—or even if—we know it.

II. THE WEEKLY READER RESPONSE

We will meet online weekly in two groups to define, understand, and assess the different ways the philosopher-historians considered in the course have thought about the past. In preparation for class discussion, students are to produce a written response to the assigned reading each week.

Group I: Meets from 1:00-2:15pm EST
Driscoll, Foote, Gordon, Fisher, Horowitz, Loewenson, Platt, Rogowski, Tager

Group II: Meets from 2:30-3:45pm EST
Fineberg, Grissom, Hagino, Kaplan, Nyarko, Solomon, Tauber, Weinstein, Whelan

In writing their responses, students should present a clear account of the historian’s approach to the past, including his or her purpose in writing history. Only having produced such an account, should students provide a brief, succinct critique of that approach (its strengths and weaknesses, advantages and disadvantages), including an evaluation of the historian’s realization of his or her purpose in writing history.

Each response should be no more than one typed, single-spaced page in length. Margins should not be excessively narrow; fonts, not excessively small. Writing these condensed responses means making every word count, avoiding repetitions and stating the obvious—students can assume that their readers are familiar with the texts they are considering. Quotations should be kept to a minimum and only used when absolutely necessary to make a point. (When quoting, the page number should simply be indicated in parentheses.)

The reader responses will form the basis for class discussion. Indeed, students will read one of their responses to the class. Students may add marginal comments to their reader response during and after the course of class discussion. I ask that you try to submit the reader response to me (sent, for example, as an attachment) within 15 minutes of the end of your class meeting.
All students are required to write reader responses for Thucydides, Hegel, Ranke, Burckhardt, and Marx & Engels. After Marx & Engels, students may elect not to write one of the five remaining required reader responses, although it is still expected that they will do the assigned reading for that seminar meeting. Should a student write all eleven reader responses, the one receiving the lowest grades will be dropped.

III. ANALYSIS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP OF A WILLIAMS HISTORY PROFESSOR

In addition to the reader responses, students are required to write a paper of approximately seven or eight pages on a professor they have had in a history course at Williams College. The paper should give a clear account of their professor’s view of history and of the role of the historian as that view manifests itself in his or her scholarship as well as in teaching. Students are expected to assess the approach their professor takes to the past critically, to consider its strengths and weaknesses, its advantages and disadvantages.

In writing their paper, students should make use of the following: their notes, the syllabus, and other handouts from the class they took with the professor; syllabi and course descriptions from other courses taught by the professor; and, most important, the professor’s written scholarship. In some instances, students may want to supplement these materials with an interview with their professor, but only with the professor’s permission obtained ahead of time and only after the student has already developed a clear idea of the professor’s historical approach. What professors say they do and what they actually do may well diverge.

IV. GRADING IN HISTORY 301-K1

The student’s final grade in History 301-K will be determined as follows:
the average of the ten written reader responses (50%);
the paper on a Williams history professor (25%);
class participation (25%).

V. BOOKS AND READINGS IN HISTORY 301-K1

The following books are to be purchased at Water Street Books:
Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*;
Hegel, *Reason in History*;
Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*;
Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*;
Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*;
Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*;
Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe*;
In addition, students are to purchase a packet of reading materials available at the Office of Print and Mail on Park Street.
Schedule of Classes

Wednesday, 5 February – **Course Introduction**

1. Wednesday, 12 February – **Thucydides**
   Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*
   Required Reader Response

2. Wednesday, 19 February – **Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel**
   Hegel, *Reason in History*
   Required Reader Response

3. Wednesday, 26 February – **Leopold von Ranke**
   Ranke, Selections from “The Idealistic Theory of Historiography” (PACKET)
   Ranke, Selections from *History of the Reformation in Germany* (PACKET)
   Required Reader Response

4. Wednesday, 4 March – **Jacob Burckhardt**
   Burckhardt, “Introductory” from *Reflections on History* (PACKET)
   Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*
   Required Reader Response

5. Wednesday, 11 March – Class Cancelled

6. Wednesday, 18 March – Class Cancelled

**SPRING BREAK**

7. Wednesday, 8 April – **Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels**
   Marx, “Excerpt from A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy” (PACKET)
   Marx, Selections from *The German Ideology* (PACKET)
   Engels, “Engels to Joseph Bloch” and “Engels to H. Starkenburg” (PACKET)
   Engels, *The Peasant War in Germany*
   Required Reader Response
   Group I meets from 1-2:15pm EST
   Group II meets from 2:30-3:45pm EST

8. Wednesday, 15 April – **Experiential History**
   Koselleck, “‘Space of Experience’ and ‘Horizon of Expectation’: Two Historical Categories” (PACKET)
   Lucien Febvre, *The Problem of Unbelief in the Sixteenth Century: The Religion of Rabelais*, (PACKET)
   Group I meets from 1-2:15pm EST
Group II meets from 2:30-3:45pm EST

9. Wednesday, 22 April – Michel Foucault
Foucault, “Truth and Power” (PACKET)
Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*
Group I meets from 1-2:15pm EST
Group II meets from 2:30-3:45pm EST

10. Wednesday, 29 April – The Linguistic Turn
Hayden White, “The Fictions of Factual Representation” (PACKET)
Joan Scott, “The Evidence of Experience” (PACKET)
Michel de Certeau, from *The Mystic Fable* (PACKET)
Group I meets from 1-2:15pm EST
Group II meets from 2:30-3:45pm EST

11. Wednesday, 6 May – Natalie Zemon Davis
Davis, *The Return of Martin Guerre*
Debate over *The Return of Martin Guerre* between Robert Finlay and Natalie Davis in the *American Historical Review* (PACKET)
Group I meets from 1-2:15pm EST
Group II meets from 2:30-3:45pm EST

12. Wednesday, 13 May – Lyndal Roper
Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe*
Group I meets from 1-2:15pm EST
Group II meets from 2:30-3:45pm EST

Final Paper on a Williams History Professor is due by 5pm Saturday, 23 May