Welcome to the wonderful world of serious historical research! This seminar seeks to provide honors students with an opportunity for discussion, advice, and support from your fellow thesis writers, as well as support and guidance from me as the History Honors Coordinator this year. Each of you has an individual faculty advisor and this group is not meant to substitute for the advising you should be getting from your individual advisor. Rather, we will discuss general strategies of research and notetaking, consider the methodology of historical research, and serve as a combination support group (or therapy group, if necessary) and writer’s workshop. As the term progresses, we will begin reading and reviewing people’s work, a project that will accelerate in our second semester.

We will meet weekly on Wednesday evenings from 7:00-9:00. Please note the session for schedules below. If you are asked to post a response to the blackboard site, you must do so by 10 p.m. on Tuesday evening before our Wednesday class. I hope that this group will provide a convivial atmosphere for you to share your ideas, fears, challenges, and triumphs.

**Required Readings:**
There are two required books for History 501, both available at the campus bookstore and on reserve at Mudd:


**Meeting Schedule:**

*Wednesday, Sept. 7th: Introductions*

*Prepare a brief statement explaining your topic, the most salient historiographical issues you plan to address, and your sources. Also briefly discuss what you have done so far on the thesis and what you personally consider your biggest challenge to be with this project. Post your statement to the blackboard site by 10 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 6th.*

*Wednesday, Sept. 14: No Class Meeting*

*There will be no group meeting this week, but everyone should schedule an individual meeting with Jen Starkey at Mudd Library.*
Wednesday, Sept. 21st: Crafting a Work Schedule

Please come to this meeting with a schedule for your research over the course of the semester. Have you successfully created a schedule that enables you to work on your thesis enough each week? How have you divided up the components of your research? How long do you think various parts of your research will take? Have you worked on plans to access sources elsewhere, if necessary?

Post a one-page statement about your schedule to the blackboard site by 10 p.m. on Tuesday night.

Wednesday, Sept. 28th: Doing Historical Research and Taking Notes

Please read Turabian, Part I, sections 1-4, pp. 1-47 and come prepared to discuss it. We will also spend time talking about taking notes. Taking notes might seem very basic, but in fact, being able to take succinct and useful notes, being able to find and reference the notes that you have taken, and keeping everything organized is one of the biggest challenges of any major research projects. Come to this session prepared to share your successful strategies in organization and notetaking, as well as to admit to your weaknesses in this regard.

Wednesday, October 5th: Uncovering the Ductworks: The Methodology of History

What, exactly, is the historical method? Historians often find themselves at a loss to explain exactly what their methodology is. For this week, we will read the short book, The Landscape of History by John Lewis Gaddis and discuss his spirited defense of the value of the particular method employed by historians. Be prepared to discuss as well how this reading might be useful to you as you move forward with your thesis.

Wednesday, Oct. 12th: So What Does a Thesis Look Like?

For this session, students will be asked to skim through two different theses, both available on our course blackboard site. We will talk about the structure of each thesis, how the writers managed their topics, and what the differences between them are.

Wednesday, October 19th: Group 1—Present on Primary Source and Project Status

For these next three sessions, each student will be asked to present on the current status of their thesis research—you will have at least about half an hour to lay out where things stand, to seek advice on challenges that you are having, and to talk through your ideas. Please bring enough copies of one primary source to share with your classmates. You will be asked to discuss the source and how it relates to your larger research strategy.

Wednesday, October 25th: No Class—Fall Break
Wednesday, November 2\textsuperscript{nd}: Group 2—Present on Primary Source and Project Status

\textit{Presentations by Group 2}

Wednesday, November 9\textsuperscript{th}: Group 3—Present on Primary Source and Project Status

\textit{Presentations by Group 3}

Wednesday, November 16\textsuperscript{th}: Preparing for Winter Term

\textit{Please come ready to discuss how you expect to use Winter Term. You are eligible to apply for an Arzt History Honors Grant to help defray up to $1000 in costs for a research trip. Before this meeting, be sure to talk to your advisor and to look at the History Department website for the application.}

Wednesday, November 23\textsuperscript{rd}: No Class Meeting (Thanksgiving)

Wednesday, November 30\textsuperscript{th}: First writing due—Workshop Group 1

\textit{It’s time to show your stuff—everyone should write a short section of your thesis (no less than 5 and no more than 10 pages). Choose whichever section you feel most comfortable with—you could start with an introduction, with the historiographical section, with writing about a particular source. But it’s time to write something! Everyone should post their writing to the course blackboard site by Tuesday at 10 p.m. \textbf{Everyone} should read the submissions by those students in Group 1. We will workshop their writing samples in class on Wednesday.}

Wednesday, December 7\textsuperscript{th}: Workshop Group 2

\textit{Workshop writing samples of Group 2.}

Wednesday, December 14\textsuperscript{th}: Workshop Group 3

\textit{Workshop writing samples of Group 3.}