

## End of Course Reflections

Hist 3000, Fa. 2018

*Take what you wrote in "Why History?" assignment at the beginning of class and update it. Has your understanding of the discipline changed over the length of this course? Do you have a stronger sense of what it means to study history? Can you make that "elevator speech" about the major? What questions could the class have addressed that it did not?*

1. In the 3rd grade I watched a WWII documentary with my grandfather and ever since I have been eager to learn more about History. What started as a fascination turned into an interest, and what was an interest is now becoming a valuable part of who I am; but I think in many ways, that is what History is, the study of becoming. It is also a subject of difficult questions with sometimes more difficult answers. By choosing to study History, I have learned that context is essential. I have learned, and continue to learn, how to communicate complex content into a simplistic, meaningful language which can be understood. I believe that by studying History, I have become a better person because I continue to seek understanding of the world around me.
2. End of Course Reflection  
As mentioned in my "Why History" paper, I have always wanted to teach and nothing will ever change that. Through this course, I have gained a deeper respect for historians and researchers and found out that it is fun to do research, because there is always more to be learned and I am passionate about history. This class has helped me gain a much deeper understanding of what it means to be a historian. There are a lot more jobs available for individuals with degrees in history and there is a need for people that have history degrees. I feel like when people ask me what my major is and I respond that I am going into history, their response is always, "what are you going to do with that?" I can respond in a short and powerful statement that will leave them in awe and wonder, and thinking why didn't I major in history? For an introduction to research, I felt that this class did very well in explaining the basic skills required for writing a research proposal and helped prepare me for future research papers.

3. End-Of-Course Reflections

I am majoring in History because I have a strong desire to help others learn about it. I love it, and I know its importance. Our history is a very strong factor in our present and future, but we can't harness its power unless we know about it. In conjunction with this major, I am also receiving a Museum Studies Certificate. I want to become a museum curator and/or archivist. These are wonderful ways to spread knowledge of history, to aid people in discovering for themselves the things they need to know about our past. Through the Historical Research Methods class, I have learned not only how to research but how to critique and analyze sources. I have also learned how to edit myself and I have learned what my writing weaknesses are. History as a discipline has many varied ways to be applied. The same knowledge can be taught different ways. It is important that we as historians, and I myself, do not keyhole ourselves into the academic field or any specific niche in the profession of history. Studying history is the practice of analyzing records and accounts of what has happened in the past in order to better understand the relationships between different events, movements, and ideologies. This is done by reading primary and secondary literary sources, looking at artifacts, traveling to certain historical sites, and many other practices.

My revised elevator speech:

When I graduate from the History Department of Utah State University, I will be able to engage in historical practices, such as reading and analyzing sources, to gain historical knowledge through historical research skills. I will also be able to present my findings to others in a coherent manner, through papers, presentations at conferences, exhibits, and other media. I will be able to ask historical questions and answer them, referencing primary sources and credible secondary sources in a manner consistent with their intention. I will have the literary skills necessary to have a broad range of sources and cite them properly, so that I can form my arguments coherently.

This class is one of the best, most relaxed classes I have ever had. It was very progression-

focused, and we were “let loose” so to speak. However, we were given accountability for our actions. We were expected to reach certain milestones in our research at certain times in the semester.

I would have liked to learn about more ancient and past historians. We started that early on in the semester but did not continue. I understand that this was probably because of lack of time.

My main question that I would have liked to have answered is “How can we tell predatory journals from real ones?” There are so many journals that seem legitimate, but are not at all. I got in trouble my first year of college by citing one unknowingly. I wasn’t penalized for it, because it was an honest mistake, but imagine if that had happened in my professional work!

#### 4. Why History?/End of Course Reflections

I am majoring in history because of the insight it provides into the lives of people. It allows background for how humankind got to this point, and why people act and think the way they do. It is said that history is a different country, and it truly is an unknown territory that is not

physically possible to visit. As a result, it is fascinating to me to explore that unknown and

become as well acquainted with it as possible. I personally love seeing the relationship between

events and reactions, as well as seeing how particular situations influence the rest of their lives.

Studying history enables me to identify and understand different points of view in the various

conversations in life, teaches me to express myself through reasoning and evidence, and shows

me how to take mass amounts of knowledge and revert it into a shorter, more clear chunk of information.

I believe that my understanding of the discipline has changed through the course of this class. Where I initially saw the main reason for studying history as personal interest, I now

realize the additional benefits, applicable and relevant in other aspects of my life.

Moreover, I

have better developed my personal commitment to the discipline, making it easier to give the

elevator speech. The class taught me a lot about being a history major, and did, actually, make me feel a part of a group with specific attributes. It also provided much needed information on the art of project proposals that made a huge difference in the way I did things for other classes. I can not think of any questions the class failed to answer. Overall, it was an enlightening and interesting course.

5. I am majoring in history because it is something that I have always been fascinated by even as a small child. My mother would sometimes come upstairs and instead of me paying video games I would be watching a show on the history channel whether that was something about Rome, the Renaissance or World War II, it didn't matter I was interested in all of it. I loved history in all of my middle through high school and I thought that history at the college level would be even better. I am really interested in war and watching the evolution of tactics and strategies along with the use of technology to give a certain side an advantage over the other. I also am interested in hearing multiple perspectives. Such as a business owner is going to see a problem differently than a worker. I think getting those different perspectives is important and fascinating.

My understanding of history has changed dramatically. I now know what questions to ask when researching as well as how to better find what I am looking for because of History 3000. Studying history is no longer a simple google search but now it is questioning the author and the source before I decide to trust the article. I also have a better understanding of primary and secondary sources and how I should use those. My elevator speech is that I am curious about the past and I like to ask difficult questions that have not been explored very much and try to solve answers that people don't have. One question that could be addressed in the future is how to construct a great thesis that is genocide and easy to follow yet covers the question that you are trying to answer.

6. In my original statement I claimed that my peers in the mechanical engineering field were not as well rounded as I had thought college students needed to be and saw that History could provide that for me so I switched. With hindsight now I realize that I was not as well rounded as I wanted to be and have since become more like the idea version of myself that is in my mind. This class has been great for showing me the deeper levels of what is required to be a historian and not just a student of history.

#### 7. Course Reflections

In my first assignment this semester I wrote, "In order to understand the motives of decision makers and influencers, it is important to learn about the religious, cultural, scientific, and personal circumstances that surrounded them. Human interaction is complex and evolving, and studying history can reveal remarkable insights into our current society and my own

behavior.” I still feel that this is my motivation for studying history, although my ideas about what is possible are much more clearly formed. I feel confident that my history degree will prove very useful in a career in public policy. Writing, thinking, and speaking clearly about factual information and context are important skills in any field, but pursuing a career in politics will put these skills to the test immediately. Political research combines data gathering and analysis with historical research to track policy through U.S. history so the research and writing skills I have developed in this and other history classes will be invaluable. This class helped me conceptualize ways in which I can market myself in the job market and use the skills I am developing to advance my career.

8. I am majoring in history because I enjoy it. What I enjoy the most are battles. I love learning

about the soldiers, leaders, morals, reasons, terrain, armor, and anything else related to combat. Sounds childish but regardless of how old I grow I like to learn about combat and the list of things I enjoy studying about it only grow more. Just before writing this I was studying steels in combat. I know how terrible war is but I still can't stop myself from romanticizing it.

NEW Material:

I am majoring in history as I believe there are things that few history teachers teach and I want to let the future generation know of the stories of the past I believe that they need to hear. I want my students to know that some sources are more trustworthy than others and how to find out. I want them to be able to deliver a powerful elevator statement to attract the attention (and possibly funds) of others. The only way for them to be able to do that is for me to master those skills that I developed this semester. I want to be a continuously improving history teacher

9. End of Course Reflections

My understanding of the intricacies of the study of history have changed over this course. Reading Banner's book helped me to understand some of the problems of studying history and the limits it can face. My view of history has been bolstered by this course, and I am grateful that

I took HIST3000 before starting my junior year next semester because it has given me good perspective into the hardware of history. I learned that I would like to work in the public sphere of history and that my historical interest is in American history. I can make an elevator speech about the pros of studying history. This course covered a lot of skills that are helpful in the field, including research, library science, thesis writing, book review, editorial process, publishing process and a historiography of history. I also liked having a TA for this class. I cannot think of other subjects or skills that would be useful to this class.

10. I love history because it connects me to much bigger things. Through studying history, I make connections and put what is going on now and what happened then into context. I still find people and their choices the most fascinating part of history. After taking this course I see now that this discipline is a giant puzzle and I am trying to put the pieces together, but some of those pieces are missing or they change over time which makes history even more fun. I have also learned that history is not only about examining the past, but it is about developing the skills to analyze, interpret, communicate, and problem solve. It is about taking a whole bunch of data and organizing it in a clear and concise way. I may not be continuing focusing on history after I graduate, but I will take these abilities that I have learned and use them in whatever it is I do.

## **11. End of Course Reflections**

In my "Why History?" assignment, I spoke of how my desire to major in history sprung from my love for the authentic stories found throughout history. At the end of this course, I find that even though I still love the stories of history, my thoughts on the way I wanted to present history have changed.

How have my ideas about ways of presenting history changed over the semester? Because of my desired career path. In another paper written near the beginning of the semester, I

mentioned that I wanted to become either a history teacher or a museum worker. Now at the end of the course, I realized that I don't want to become a teacher, but I am very interested in the object preservation and management work involved in museums. So instead of presenting history through lectures, I want to present it through historical objects. Though there are historical aspects to museum work, I will be taking more anthropology-centered classes next semester related to the field of museum studies.

Though I plan to take a different route than I initially expected, I still feel like the history classes I took this semester have broadened my understanding. I learned how to improve my research skills by discovering and analyzing a variety of primary and secondary source documents. My writing skills were also improved as I learned to organize information in a way that best presents the ideas I want to convey.

As for questions not addressed in this class, I would have liked to learn more about the different career fields of history. Granted, we briefly discussed these fields after reading the book, *Being a Historian*, but I would have liked to have gone more in-depth in learning about these different history-related professions and the tasks entailed in them, especially considering my interest in museum work.