

**Methods of Historical Research**  
**Course Expectations and Grading – Fall Semester 2009**  
**Watershed School**  
**Instructor: Judith Masseur**

Methods of Historical Research is designed to provide students exposure to three disciplines in the study of history: economics, civics and geography. Students will gain exposure to the use of maps, data and primary source materials to analyze and understand historical events. The course is a half-year course and students will earn 1/2 credit if they are successful in fulfilling the course expectations.

**Course Objectives**

1. Students will engage in historical research using a variety of sources including: maps, graphs, primary source documents, public records and other data sources.
2. Students will foster a deeper understanding of themes and events by posing questions and analyzing historical information. Students will gain an understanding of the modern world using historical insight.
3. Students, using history as a backdrop, will gain a more comprehensive understanding how primary sources and data analysis can provide a much broader understanding of history rather than relying on second hand sources/texts.
4. Students will engage in academically rigorous activities, included, but not limited to: posing questions, forming hypotheses, critically analyzing primary and secondary sources, discussing and writing about content, designing and reading maps/graphs, and drawing conclusions about the impact of history on the modern world.

**Course Expectations**

1. Students are expected to be to class on time and to be well prepared to engage in discussions.
2. Assignments are to be handed in when due. Late assignments will be accepted, but will be assessed at a lower grade, to be determined by the extent of the assignment.
3. Students are expected to have a three ring binder for handouts and notes. It is imperative that students retain all materials and organize well. All handouts and notes will be dated.
4. Students are expected to actively engage in their learning. Each student will be expected to participate in class activities and discussions.
5. There should be a mutually respectful environment within the class. Students should feel comfortable taking risks. Any behavior that inhibits others from feeling comfortable will be addressed.
6. Please approach me with any issues you have. I can be reached by e-mail: [j\\_masseur@yahoo.com](mailto:j_masseur@yahoo.com) or by phone: 763.3191. Please know that I am here for you to make this experience as rewarding as possible and I expect myself to be your most valuable resource in this class.

Save all work. Please do not ask for handouts, notes, assignments, outlines, etc. unless you are absent. Please ask a classmate for lecture notes if you have missed a class. If there are any problems please let me know as soon as possible.

## **Assessment**

Students will be assessed based on their performance on the following:

- Tests

Tests will be given at the end of each unit as determined by the syllabus. Tests will consist of essays, identifications (short answer) and map/graph analysis. They are comprehensive may cover materials from the readings that was not discussed in lectures.

- Expository Writing (Essays)

Essays and research papers will be assigned with each unit. Students will be expected to use the Chicago (Turabian) method of documentation for all essays.

- Maps

Maps are expected to be neat and well organized. As with essay, maps will align with units.

## **Graphs**

- Both the study and creation of graphs will be an inherent part of the curriculum. Graphs are expected to be neat, well organized and should be a concise representation of the presented data.
- Homework

Students will be assigned homework on a regular basis. It is the students responsibility to see me if there needs to be clarification of the expectations on any given assignment.

Class participation is defined by attendance, punctuality, engagement in discussion and class activities and overall commitment to high quality work. I will be sure to discuss any issues I see regarding class participation, but I am confident that this will not be necessary.

## **Texts**

Benjamin, Jules R. [A Student's Guide to History](#). New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991.

Loewen, James. [Lies My Teacher Told Me](#). New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995.

## **Supplemental Materials**

Excerpts from the texts listed above will be used throughout the semester. Please note that with each unit supplemental materials will be provided from a number of sources including periodicals, atlases, other texts, journals and other sources to which students will gain exposure.

