

HSTRY 571: Orientation to a Career in History, Provisional Syllabus

This draft has been edited to preserve the anonymity of volunteers in our classroom over the years. Instructors are encouraged to reach within their own networks to find speakers and facilitators, particularly former alumni.

Class Collect it Dropbox for Assignments: *please submit all assignments to canvas*

Instructor:

Purnima Dhavan, Smith 206D;

Office ph: XXX, pdhavan@uw.edu

Office hours, Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 and by appointment

This course introduces second and third year students in the Department of History to life as a professional historian both within and outside academia. Topics covered include preparing for different kinds of job markets, support for successfully completing the PhD on time, and using skills from your academic training in a variety of professional settings. All graduate students must take this 3-credit, ungraded course usually in the second year of graduate study in the History Department. The course meets on Mondays for planned curricular activities (discussion of readings, guest speakers, workshops).

You do not need to be enrolled in the course to access the readings, and all graduate students in the program are welcome to sit in on sessions that interest them. Please let the instructor know via email if you would like to attend one or more sessions.

Also, please note since the class has reminders about activities and due dates for assignments on days other than class time each week is placed between a row of asterisks, like ***** make sure you read the full description for each week.

Assignments:

All work for this class is credit/no credit, but it must be turned in on time. You must also attend every class. If you have conflicts with time submission or attendance, please notify me at once to discuss alternative deadlines or make up work. The assignments are short, mostly 1-page reports, others are scheduling tasks. For most written work you will discuss a rough form in class on Monday and turn it in in a more polished form later, usually the following Friday. There will be weeks in which there are no assignments due, but it is expected that you are working on other class prep or scheduling work for later assignments.

Week of Jan 15-22: complete scheduling for 3 required appointments, see details for Jan. 15 in syllabus: fill out AHA career mentoring form online, resume appointment with UW career center, with me (most of you will already have a time slot in the list circulated on Jan 8th).

January 19, 4 pm: Career Tracks list (see document describing this), list three career tracks in order of preference that you would like to explore this quarter. Describe each in 2-3 sentences and what you find appealing about each one. This may change over the quarter as you explore more.

Feb. 2, 4 pm: 1 page report and action plan for online profile, see syllabus for Jan. 29.
February 5, in class, 2 hard copies of CV or resume to workshop
February 19, 1st Informational Interview report due by 4pm
March 2, 2nd Informational Interview report due by 4pm
March 9, 3rd Informational Interview Report due by 4pm
March 13th: Final Professional Portfolio Due by noon.

Topics, Readings and Assignments sequentially:

January 8th: Why Require a class in Professionalization?

Goals for class

- discussion of where to get reliable information and demystifying networking
- AHA and other resources--surveying the options

Assigned readings:

•Anthony T. Grafton and Jim Grossman, "[No More Plan B: A Very Modest Proposal for Graduate Programs in History.](#)" Perspectives (October 2011)

Browse and compare the following websites as likely sources for advice for History PhDs—we will be discussing their relative merits in class. Which do you see more reliable as a source of advice? Why or why not?

- The AHA's discussion of its data on history careers for PhDs:
<http://blog.historians.org/2017/07/where-historians-work-how-to-find-yourself-in-the-data/>
- www.beyondacademe.com
- <http://theprofessorisin.com/>

Assignment to bring to class: Make a list of 2-3 career tracks related to History PhDs that are interesting to you, give some thought to how they may also enhance and inform your possible future career that is your primary choice, as well as their appeal as sole careers. Only one can be an academic job. We will explore these further throughout the quarter. If you are stumped for ideas see the following essays at <https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/career-diversity-for-historians/career-diversity-resources/career-paths> or view videos of historians discussing different career paths: <https://www.historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/career-diversity-for-historians/career-diversity-resources/what-i-do-historians-talk-about-their-work>

This will be a short ½ to 1 page, informal handwritten or bullet point list for now. Bring this to class to guide your discussion, you will turn a more polished version on our canvas dropbox later on Jan. 29.

In class—a discussion and review of different fields History MA and PhD grads work in as well as ways to identify your personal interests and strengths. I will highlight a few

academic and non-academic track jobs successfully navigated by graduates of PhD programs.

There is no class on MLK Day, Jan. 15. Please use this week to schedule three important tasks that should be completed by Jan. 22

- Go online and fill out the a contact request for one or two of these tracks on the AHA Career Match Up website for informational interviews with mentors: <http://historians.org/jobs-and-professional-development/career-diversity-for-historians/career-diversity-resources/aha-career-contacts>
- Make an appointment with me to discuss your career interests and options
- Make an appointment at our UW career center to polish your non-academic resume (changing your academic CV into a skills-based resume for other jobs, summer work, internships), explore the many ways our career center can help you: <https://careers.uw.edu/graduate-students/>

.....

Jan. 19, Friday Assignment Due: All career track exploration lists are due 4pm on our canvas website.

Please schedule your first informational interview from one of your three career tracks by next week. Since the actual interview has to take place at the convenience of your interviewee, the interview may be later, but try to have your first informational interview scheduled by the end of January. Report should be ready by Feb. 19.

January 22: How to use Informational Interviews to find out information

- How to use informational interviews to find out more about diverse History PhD careers
- Finding out what an informational interview usually involves, how this strategy can also be adapted to help you get through the PhD as well as in informal, oral contexts such as conferences, workshops, and other activities as opposed to formal, scheduled interviews
- Practice informational interview in class, demo with visiting guest, Dr. Jennifer Webster, currently the research coordinator for the Digital Financial Services Research Group. Dr. Webster received a PhD in Central Asian History from our Department.

Readings:

- Robin Wagner, “Informational Interviewing 101,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 13, 2001, <http://chronicle.com/article/Informational-Interviewing-101/45380/>
- Julie Miller Vick and Jennifer S. Furlong, “How to do an Informational Interview,” *Chronicle of Higher Education* March 24, 2009, <http://chronicle.com/article/How-to-Do-an-Informational/44793/> For the article referenced by this one (Optional, not required): Susan Basala May and Risa

Mystrom McDonell, “Coffee in 2002 a Job Offer in 2004,” *Chronicle of Higher Education*, Jan. 20, 2005.

<http://chronicle.com/article/Coffee-in-2002-a-Job-Offer-in/45086/>

Classroom activity: share progress on career track exploration, both successes and challenges. Our class will explore how to adapt the informational interview strategy for the academic/professional conference setting. You will work in groups to create a game plan for a successful conference experience and think about how to use this process to get mentoring help for other facets of graduate training—getting grants, finishing chapters efficiently, finding internships, publishing, finding mentors in different fields. List 3 priorities for yourself to explore during class conversation.

At the end of class I will ask each of you to identify a particular activity/skill you are curious about finding out more about.

January 29th: Finding Good Mentors, Building Diverse Audiences and Markets for your work

Goals for this class:

- Understanding the complexities of the different types of mentoring you may need during your career and how to find it
- Switching your perspectives in Graduate training from passive to active
- Using online tools to enhance your professional profile and using the same tools to locate helpful peer and collegial mentoring
- Understanding how different career paths and skills may overlap and enhance our ultimate careers

Assigned Readings:

- University of Michigan Grad Program mentoring guide:
- <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/mentoring.pdf>
- Katherine McDonough, “Online Presence for your Early Career,” *Dissertation Reviews*, Nov. 14, 2014. <http://dissertationreviews.org/archives/10445>

Review UW Alum Prof. John Smith’s cvs and online presence:

- Prof. Smith’s CV, for the full version see our class website, and for the shorter online version: **website link here**

Preparation for class: After you have read the UM Mentoring Guide and also the McDonough short article on online presence, take a look at both the short and long versions of Prof. Smith’s online CV. After looking at his online profile and CVs—what fields and professional contexts may he be able to ask questions about? What does this suggest about the ways in which he has approached and blended different aspects of his professional career? Why do you think the many aspects of his work (public history, online digital projects, academic research, K-12 outreach) appeal to his current employer? When did he first start working on these? Take extensive notes, we will be doing a “forensics” in class based on these two cvs, using Prof. Smith as a hypothetical

mentor, part of the larger UW alumni world. He has volunteered to be interviewed via skype.

For the second part of class, think about which parts of your profile you want to enhance: conference papers? Digital projects? Your dissertation research? Who will likely be the best set of mentors to give you advice on this? Keep Faculty, Staff, your peers, and larger personal and professional networks in mind.

Assignment: Your Online Profile, Feb. 2, Friday 4pm: Google yourself. What comes up in the first few links? What do you like or dislike about this from a professional persona perspective? What would you like to see there by the last year of your Ph.d? Ponder these questions and write a short reflection 1 page single spaced report and action plan to enhance your persona. Keep your long term career goals in mind, be specific about the platforms you might want to use (UW history grad profile? Linked in? Academica.edu? etc) Also be specific about which mentors may help get you there and how to find them.

February 5: Demystifying How Search Committees Read Academic CVs/ Developing the CV and Skills over the course of the PhD

Please note our guest speakers for different academic markets will be in class next week, this session will help you prepare questions for them.

Goals:

- Understanding how academic CVs and Professional resumes for History PhDs differ
- Having a preliminary draft of your own cv/resume ready for the future
- Comparing draft to more established professionals in the field to identify areas of growth/skills you need to build during your time at UW

Assigned reading: Please look at model CVs and Resumes online in the fields you have identified as your top choice. Some good places to start for academic cvs are departmental websites for professors in your field, or for jobs in other tracks through institutional websites, academia.edu, google, etc.

- 1) Handout on CVs on our class website
- 2) Read a short breakdown on CVs and cover letters:
<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/march-2006/going-on-the-job-market-some-dos-and-donts-for-an-effective-cv-and-cover-letter>
- 3) Our career center has advice and in person help, if you are unsure how to make your academic CV into a resume, see their helpful tips:
<https://d3irk3g7luh32r.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/25/2016/06/Turn-Your-CV-into-a-Resume.pdf>

If you are considering a non-academic career as your top choice, make sure you know what format the cv/resume usually takes in this field. Try to google and find samples, or find a mentor in the field who can help you.

Assignment: Create a draft CV or Resume for your top career choice based on your current skills and experience, try not to pad these, add experiences you hope to build while at UW in italics. Bring this to class to workshop, you will not be turning it in online until exam week, so bring a couple of hard copies to class to share with your peers to workshop.

By the end of the quarter you should have both a CV and a skills-based resume. One might be more helpful for academic work, grant applications, etc, but you need to keep the other up to date for summer employment, internships, or a non-academic job search at some point in the future. Remember these are templates, they will need to be updated every year!

February 12: Have your 2nd informational Interview scheduled by the end of this week, be ready to turn in a report by March 2 or earlier. Your goal should be to have all interviews completed by March 2 and ready to submit/discuss by March 5. If you anticipate problems, please contact me right away.

Exploring the Academic Market, Understanding the Academic Job Search

- Please look through H-Net jobs in two fields closely related to your areas of focus.
- Also look through the past 4-5 years to see what trends emerge in history hiring
- Email one peer graduate student and also talk to your adviser this week to discuss trends in your field and bring notes to class.

Reading :

1. AHA report “Many Careers of History PhDs” on our class website.
2. Christopher Newfield, “Time for a New Strategy,” *Inside Higher Ed*, July 9 2015. <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2015/07/20/essay-calls-new-strategy-protect-faculty-rights>
3. Anna Peak, “So you want to be a Tenured Ally,” *The Academe Blog*, August 31, 2015.

<https://academeblog.org/2015/08/31/so-you-want-to-be-a-tenured-ally/>

Class discussion with XXX, lecturer and adjunct to discuss non-tenured teaching jobs.

Feb. 19, President’s Day, no class: submit the report on your first informational interview by 4pm

February 26:

Working the Academic Conference for broad Career Connections

Goals for the Class:

- Understanding how to craft public talks based on setting and audience
- Learning how to put together a proposal tied to specific conference foci

- Networking opportunities at conferences and how to use them
- Differentiating between effective speaking styles for presenting historical information
- Understanding what is common to lecturing, conference papers, public talks and what is not

Assigned Reading:

1. Preparing for a Conference Paper (writing it v. presenting it): Paul N. Edwards, “How To give an effective Talk.” One our class website
2. The pros and cons of the TED approach
<http://www.megankatenelson.com/historians-ted-thyselves/>
3. Gatecrashing as networking: <http://blog.historians.org/2016/01/crashing-receptions-networking-aha-annual-meeting/>
- 4.

Prep for class discussion, take notes and bring to class:

- 1) Pick **one** conference you would like to submit a panel proposal to for next year (AHA, AAS, MESA or other professional meeting.) Be prepared to share your selection and explain who the primary attendees at a lesser known conference might be. BE AWARE OF SUBMISSION DEADLINES (most are feb-april)
- 2) Think about a possible paper topic and a broader panel theme, if considering a workshop or different goal sketch out preliminary ideas
- 3) Think about a dream team for this panel/workshop: A senior academic to chair/discuss, a variety of grad students/new Phds/rising “stars” in this field, someone relatively unknown but a person you want to connect with
- 4) Go to conference website for the most recent event and scroll program/description to see kinds of events hosted beyond academic panels, pay attention to book exhibitions receptions, possible networking opportunity. Do any of these match the non-academic career tracks on your list? Would these potential contacts go to a different conference (which one?)

March 6: Sharing Career Track Advice from Informational Interviews at our History Careers Mini-conference. Make sure you have your final informational interview scheduled by the last day of class!

Goals for this class:

- You will be sorted into 3 panels by 1st field choice
- Be prepared to present your top 2 choices—handouts are awesome! You only have 5-7 minutes each.
- Focus on why these two career tracks appeal to you, any possible concerns, and what you need to do between now and graduation to make yourself an appealing/highly skilled applicant
- We will have Q and A to compare notes.

March 9, Friday: Submit 2nd, and 3rd Informational Interview Report

March 13th: Final Professional Portfolio Due by noon. This should include the following. Please make sure it is one document in MS word so I can give you feedback.

- All 3 Reports on Informational Interviews on your chosen career tracks, with comments/format updated to reflect changes in your thinking, if any, after the conclusion of your last interview. Please indicate the order in which the career tracks are a priority to you.
- 2 CVs or Resumes in the appropriate format (academic or skill based) that would target jobs in your top two career tracks. If both tracks require skills-based resumes as opposed to academic cvs, try to tailor your skills to each career
- Action plan with goals for years 2-6 of PhD (can be one paragraph with bulleted list, no more than 1 page single spaced) of what skills or experiences you think you can reasonably build on during your time at UW in order to be competitive in your 2 top chosen fields.
- Link to your current online professional persona (our UW website, linked in or academia edu) fully updated to reflect your current goals.

Additional resources for this class:

H-Net: sign up for regular customized weekly news in your field and areas of interest. Make sure that you are getting the H-Net job list so you know what the jobs or internships in your fields look like long before you go on the market.

<https://networks.h-net.org/>

Society for Federal Historians, please explore especially to find out about internships, building skills and contacts

<http://shfg.org/shfg/>

<http://shfg.org/shfg/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/FedGovtProgramsSHFG1992.pdf>

National Council for Public History, also has a jobs link with internship postings as well

<http://ncph.org/>

Business History Conference, links to professional groups, meetings, resources

<http://www.thebhc.org/>

contrarian views on professionalization:

Reading CVs caution on premature professionalism:

<https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/april-2014/precocious-professionalism>

How to write your first published book review/get noticed by review editors:

<https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2015/03/27/essay-writing-academic-book-reviews>

<https://www.aje.com/en/arc/how-to-publish-a-book-review/>

Use the new “imagine phd” online tool for future planning

<https://www.imaginephd.com/about>