

HISTORY 391: SENIOR SEMINAR: BRITISH INDIA

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30-3:15; available by appointment on Wednesdays

DESCRIPTION:

Victorians described India as the “jewel” in the British Imperial crown. Today, India is the world’s second most populous nation, has a robust and expanding post-industrial, high-tech economy, is one seven countries that has declared possession of nuclear weapons, and is engaged in a long-running border war with its neighbor Pakistan. Despite its obvious importance on the world’s stage, it is unfortunate that few in this country know much about India and its past.

This course explores the British relationship with India from the first trade missions of the early 1600s through the height of British rule in the late 19th century and the collapse of British rule in the first half of the 20th century. This class will range over a broad span of time, but will focus on two main issues. First, we will attempt to understand how a third rate European power overthrew one of the early modern world’s most wealthy empires and managed to project English power across more than ten-thousand miles of open seas for nearly two centuries. Second, we will explore the cross-cultural negotiations that characterized the relationship between Britons and the inhabitants of south Asia in this time period.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

This is a seminar class and it is the capstone course for history majors. The main project for this course involves the preparation of a 25-30 page research paper. During your work on this project, you should demonstrate a mastery of the skills that you should have cultivated as a history major. These include:

- The ability to locate information in the library and through IDS/ILL
- The ability to critically assess secondary sources (identify thesis, compare and contrast with other secondary sources, comment on analytical strengths and weaknesses, etc.)
- The ability to critically assess primary sources (research context of source, assess relevance, analyze strengths and weaknesses, etc.)
- The ability to formulate an argument or thesis based on historical evidence
- The ability to read carefully and critically
- The ability to write clearly
- The ability to present ideas in a mechanically correct format (correct footnotes, bibliography, etc.)

REQUIREMENTS:

Final Paper	50%
Paper Proposal/Secondary Source Bibliography	5%
Historiography Paper/Final Bibliography	10%
Draft	15%
Class Participation	10%
Research Journal	10%

Final Paper (50%)

The final paper is due at the start of the exam session (8 am on May 9). The final paper should be 25-30 pages in length and must be free of proofreading errors. It must include proper footnoting (in Turabian style) and a full, annotated bibliography. Final papers that contain significant problems with footnoting and/or bibliographies will receive no better than a D grade.

The final paper must also show evidence of thoughtful revisions from the rough draft. Final papers that demonstrate only cosmetic revisions (i.e. you've run spell check and fixed commas) will be marked down at least one full letter grade from the rough draft.

Paper Proposal and Secondary Source Bibliography (5%)

Due at the start of class on 21 February. The paper proposal should be a 1-2 page statement of the topic you intend to work on for your final paper. It should include evidence of some early research into secondary sources available on campus (i.e. evidence that you've consulted general academic works on British India and journal articles beyond the common course readings), and some discussion of the feasibility of the project. The secondary source bibliography should be an exhaustive bibliography of scholarly historical writing, published during the last 30 years that is relevant to your topic. It should demonstrate evidence of a thorough examination of resources available on campus (including WorldCat, the Arts and Humanities Citation Index, and the bibliographies of books).

Historiography Paper and Full Bibliography (5% each)

Due at the state of class on 23 March. The historiography paper is a 4-5 page essay describing different historians' interpretations of the topic that you have chosen. It should clearly compare and contrast different historians' ideas and explore the relative strengths and weaknesses of their arguments. It should also build on the paper proposal to more clearly explain the focus of your research project and how this project relates to other historians' works. The final bibliography should build on the secondary source bibliography, adding relevant academic works and an exhaustive list of relevant primary sources. On this assignment, bibliographic entries should be annotated (2-3 sentences explaining what the book/source is about and why it is relevant to your project).

Draft (15%)

The rough draft is due on April 11. This should be at least 20 pages in length. The paper should be well organized, written clearly, and should have a clear thesis. Drafts should also include a clear footnoting system.

Class Participation (10%)

On days when class meets, you are expected to be in class, ready to talk about the assigned readings or your research project. This class does not meet during every class period and some class periods will involve individual or group consultations. It is the responsibility of students to make sure that they attend scheduled classes and meetings.

Part of the class participation requirement includes regular peer reviews. Once everyone has selected a paper topic, students will be assigned to a draft group of two or three other students who are working on similar projects. You will be responsible for reading the historiography essay, final bibliography, and rough drafts from the other members of your group and will be asked to write up substantive critical comments for these assignments. Peer review exercises will be worth up to 1/4 of your class participation grade.

Research Journal (10%)

Students must keep a journal consisting of two parts: reflective writing on the readings and a research log. Over the course of preparing a major research project, even the best students occasionally run into problems and need to change topics or ask for an extension. In order to demonstrate that such an emergency was not primarily the result of bad planning, students should be prepared to show what they've been working on over the course of the semester. The research journal is a convenient tool for keeping such information handy. Likewise, occasionally a final paper reflects problems that are beyond a student's control (lack of available primary sources, etc.). Although the final paper will be graded based on its own merits, a thorough research

journal can help demonstrate the level of consistent effort that you put into the project. I will collect these journals at random, so please keep them up to date and bring them to class.

Reflective Writing Section (worth 80%)

At a minimum, student journals should contain one entry for 7 of the 9 days that we discuss common readings in this class (19 January-16 February). Each journal entry should begin with a one or two sentence analytical question formulated by the student and approximately 2 pages of writing that addresses this question and uses specific references from the reading to back up ideas. Journal entries should be completed before the class in which we discuss a reading assignment. Material from journal entries may be incorporated into short papers (with revisions). Individual journal entries will receive a check plus (roughly equivalent to a low A), check (roughly equivalent to a low B), or a check minus (roughly equivalent to a low C) grade. In assigning a final grade for the journal, I will take these marks into consideration, as well as evidence of consistent performance and/or improvement. Evidence of declining work on the journals may also be factored into the final journal grade.

Research Log (worth 20%)

This section should contain notes and draft writing done for the final paper project. It should contain

- Brief paragraphs explaining the significance (or lack of significance) for everything that you read. These can later be incorporated into your annotated bibliography.
- Notes, outlines, and/or drafts of the final paper assignments.
- Notes from library research sessions
- Notes from peer review sessions or consultations with me
- Documentation of requests made to Inter-Library Loan.

Portfolio

In order to receive a passing grade on the final paper, students must submit all preliminary assignments on time. When you hand in your final paper, you must also hand in a portfolio that consists of your paper proposal, historiography essay, final bibliography, rough draft, research journal, any peer review comments, and any written comments I have made. Final papers that are not accompanied by a portfolio may be marked down at the instructor's discretion.

Accessibility

I will be happy to make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Students should discuss needed accommodations with myself and the Director in the Office of Disability Services (Tabitha Buggie-Hunt, 105D Erwin) as early as possible in the semester.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much do I have to read?

Early in the semester, each student will be given access to a comprehensive bibliography of secondary sources covering British India from 1600-1947. Before you even think about asking me this question, make sure that you have consulted every relevant book on this bibliography and every relevant primary or secondary source included in the footnotes and bibliographies. Only when you have completely exhausted these possibilities are you allowed to ask this question.

What if I miss a class or meeting?

Because class meets infrequently, your opportunities to impress me with your class participation are limited. I am a fair and just person, so please discuss absences that occur for a justifiable reason. Otherwise, be in class on the days we meet.

What are your standards for class participation?

Geneseo is a liberal arts college. The curriculum assumes that students will show up to class having prepared and reflected upon the course materials and will be ready to discuss them. To get an A in class participation,

you need to demonstrate that you've read and thought about the readings, you need to be willing raise relevant points during class discussions and you need to be an active and critical participant in peer review exercises. If you come to class regularly, but do not participate in discussions and do minimal work on peer review exercises, you can expect a D for class participation.

If you are shy, remember that talking in class is not the only way to demonstrate class participation. I will take into account evidence of engagement with the class demonstrated in the research journals and peer review exercises, so take these assignments seriously if you know that this is a problem.

Can I change paper topics midway through the semester?

Obviously, the content and focus of your paper will evolve as you do research, and this kind of change is perfectly acceptable. However, major changes (for example, if you want to switch topics from the 17th century East India Company to Gandhi) must be approved by me. Topic changes will not be approved under any circumstances after March 21.

Can I get an extension?

It depends. My standard penalty for late assignments is 10% per day; papers more than one week late will not be accepted. These penalties may be waived if you discuss in advance with credible justification the need for an extension. If a student has been consistently and conscientiously working on a project (which may be demonstrated through a carefully-kept research journal), the necessity of asking for an extension should be clear well before the assignment due date. The closer we get to a due date, the less likely I am to respond positively to an extension request.

Remember: IDS/ILL is an excellent and fast way to get research materials onto campus, however they are not miracle workers. You should assume that it will take at least 2-3 weeks for an IDS document or book to arrive on campus. The fact that ILL has not delivered a book ordered at the last minute reflects bad planning and is not an adequate excuse for a late assignment.

What do you think about plagiarism?

I adhere to a zero tolerance policy on academic dishonesty, so please review the College definition of plagiarism in the most recent Bulletin. Because this is a senior capstone course, there is no excuse for "accidental" plagiarism. Therefore, if I suspect academic dishonesty on any scale, I will apply the harshest possible penalty (failing grade for the class) and will request that the Dean of Students apply additional disciplinary penalties appropriate to this severe violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

TEXTS:

Required

- Denis Judd, The Lion and the Tiger: The Rise and Fall of the British Raj, 1600-1947 (Oxford University Press, 2004)
- C.A. Bayly, Indian Society and the Making of the British Empire (Cambridge University Press, 1988)
- Thomas R. Metcalf, Ideologies of the Raj (Cambridge University Press, 1995)

Strongly Recommended

- Kate Turabian, Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations

CLASS SCHEDULE

NOTE:

* Entire class meets

** Reserved for mandatory consultations

January 17*	Introductions
January 19*	Judd, chapters 1-3
January 24*	Judd, chapters 4-7
January 26*	Judd, chapters 8-10 and epilogue
January 31*	Bayly, introduction and chapters 1-2
February 2*	Bayly, chapters 3-4
February 7*	Bayly, chapters 5-6 and conclusion
February 9*	Metcalf, chapters 1-2
February 14*	Metcalf, chapters 3-4
February 16*	Metcalf, chapters 4-6; Hand In Journals
February 21*	Discussion of Papers Proposals; Paper Proposal Due
February 23	Research Day, No Class
February 28**	Mandatory Individual Consultations
March 2**	Mandatory Individual Consultations (continued)
March 7**	Draft Group Meetings
March 9**	Draft Group Meetings (continued)
March 14	Spring Break, No Class
March 16	Spring Break, No Class
March 21	Research Day, No Class
March 23*	Discussion of Papers, Historiography Essay and Full Bibliography Due
March 28**	Draft Group Meetings
March 30**	Draft Group Meetings (continued)
April 4	Research Day, No Class
April 6	Research Day, No Class
April 11*	Discussion of Papers, Rough Draft Due
April 13	Research Day, No Class
April 18**	Draft Group Meetings
April 20**	Draft Group Meetings (continued)
April 25	Research Day, No Class
April 27*	Review Session; Journals Due
Tuesday, 9 May*	Exam Session, 8-11 Final Paper Due and Oral Reports