

**UNIVERSITY SENATE**  
**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY**  
**STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK**

Introduced by: UAC

Date: May 9, 2011

**CHANGES TO HISTORY MAJOR**

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That the Senate approves the attached proposal.
2. That this takes effect for the Fall 2011 semester.
3. That this proposal be forwarded to President George M. Philip for approval.

-----Original Message-----

From: Hamm, Richard F  
Sent: Tuesday, January 11, 2011 12:27 PM  
To: Stevens, Gregory; Endres, Cindy  
Cc: Andrea, Irene M; Fogarty, Richard S  
Subject: memo about capstone

Your office already has the two course action forms from the History Department. One proposes the creation of a capstone course for the major, and the other proposes corresponding changes to the major. Both are revised versions of proposals we made last year, but then withdrew because of concerns about projected enrollments in the capstone. After adjusting the content of the course, the department now proposes a capstone with an enrollment of 25 students per section. This size complies with instructions from the Dean to that effect, and is consistent with class sizes of upper-level writing-intensive and capstone courses in other departments.

The capstone and changes to the major are critical parts of the History Department's efforts to improve undergraduate education and student satisfaction. Such changes also correspond to elements of the Provost's strategic plan, which calls for the creation of capstone courses in majors that do not currently have them, and to standard practice in the discipline and in history departments at other institutions. It is also worth noting that such smaller, research and writing intensive courses were key components of our external reviewers' recommendations for addressing deficiencies in our delivery of undergraduate education. Most important, though, the capstone and the proposed more coherent and logical progression through our major will benefit students, providing them with critical skills and experiences central to our discipline, thus preparing them better for graduate study and future careers.

Thank you for keeping this in mind as our proposals move forward.

Sincerely,

Richard F. Hamm

Richard F. Hamm  
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Chair, History Department  
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University at Albany – State University of New York			
<b>College of Arts and Sciences</b>		<b>Course and Program Action Form</b>	
		<b>Proposal No.</b> <u>11-005</u>	
Please check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Course Proposal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Program Proposal			
Please mark all that apply:			
<input type="checkbox"/> New Course	Revision of:	<input type="checkbox"/> Number	<input type="checkbox"/> Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Listing		<input type="checkbox"/> Title	<input type="checkbox"/> Prerequisites
<input type="checkbox"/> Shared-Resources Course		<input type="checkbox"/> Credits	
<input type="checkbox"/> Deactivate/Activate Course (boldface & underline as appropriate)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):	<u>Change to the Major</u>
Department: <u>History</u>		Effective Semester, Year: <u>Fall, 2011</u>	
Course Number	Current: _____	New: _____	Credits: _____
Course Title: _____			
Course Description to appear in Bulletin:			
<p><b>Undergraduate Bulletin copy should read as follows, under “Degree Requirements for the Major in History, General Program B.A.”:</b>  <b>Students majoring in History must complete a minimum of 36 credits in history while fulfilling a concentration in one of three fields: United States, Europe, or World History. These credits must be distributed as follows:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Nine (9) credits of foundational coursework: three 100-level surveys including one in US, one in Europe, and one in World History</b></li> <li>• <b>Fifteen (15) credits of coursework in the field of concentration: four 300-level courses, and one 200-level course</b></li> <li>• <b>Nine (9) credits of coursework outside the field of concentration: two 300-level courses, and one 200-level course</b></li> <li>• <b>Three (3) credits earned in the department’s capstone course, A His 489Z, the Senior Research Seminar</b></li> </ul> <p><b>*Students must take the nine credits of foundational coursework before taking courses at the 300 level.</b></p>			
Prerequisites statement to be appended to description in Bulletin:			
If S/U is to be designated as the only grading system in the course, check here: <input type="checkbox"/>			
This course is (will be) cross listed with (i.e., CAS ###): _____			
This course is (will be) a shared-resources course with (i.e., CAS ###): _____			
Explanation of proposal:			
<p><b>The addition of a new course and requirement, AHIS 489Z: Senior Research Seminar, necessitates a change to the major. The enhanced role of 200-level courses in the major creates a more systematic and incremental path to upper-level coursework.</b></p>			
Other departments or schools which offer similar or related courses and which have certified that this proposal does not overlap their offering:			
Chair of Proposing Department Richard F. Hamm			Date  1/11/2011
Approved by Chair(s) of Department(s) having cross-listed course(s) [Copy of e-mail approval on following page.]		Dean of College	Date
Chair of Academic Programs Committee		Dean of Undergraduate or Graduate Studies	Date

University at Albany – State University of New York

College of Arts and Sciences

Course Action Form

Proposal No. 11-004

Please mark all that apply:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	New Course	Revision of:	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	<input type="checkbox"/>	Description
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cross-Listing		<input type="checkbox"/>	Title	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prerequisites
<input type="checkbox"/>	Shared-Resources Course		<input type="checkbox"/>	Credits		
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deactivate / Activate Course (boldface & underline as appropriate)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other (specify):	Gen Ed: WI	

Department: History To be effective (semester/year): Fall 2011

Course Number Current: \_\_\_\_\_ New: AHIS 489Z Credits: 3

Course Title: Senior Research Seminar

Course Description to appear in Bulletin:

**The Senior Research Seminar is an integrated, capstone course that is the culmination of the history student's major. It will extend skills that students have established and practiced in their previous history courses, and will include an in-depth exploration of the tools and concepts used by historians. Students will conduct individual research, using primary and secondary sources to produce a substantial body of writing. This course cannot be repeated for credit.**

Prerequisites statement to be appended to description in Bulletin:

**Prerequisite: Senior standing in the history major.**

If S/U is to be designated as the only grading system in the course, check here:

This course is (will be) cross listed with (i.e., CAS ###): \_\_\_\_\_

This course is (will be) a shared-resources course with (i.e., CAS ###): \_\_\_\_\_

Explanation of proposal:

**This requirement will benefit history majors and will strengthen the History Department's curriculum and pedagogical approach, as well as the university's intellectual life and reputation. It will articulate with the new strategic plan's call for such "capstone" courses for undergraduate majors, providing our students with a small-classroom experience (each section will contain no more than 25 students) and personalized attention from a faculty member, which many students do not currently receive in our very large lower- and upper-level courses. The senior research seminar will be the culmination of the history major, allowing students to refine and sharpen several important skills: the ability to conduct extensive and sustained research, to formulate and express an argument orally and in writing, to speak confidently in public, and to work independently. The benefits of such a capstone course will help our students succeed in the history major and in their future careers, as they develop skills that are essential in many fields and professions. Finally, the addition of a capstone course for history majors will bring the University at Albany in line with our peer institutions. The history departments at other SUNY institutions require a senior capstone course for the major, as do our national peer institutions.**

Other departments or schools which offer similar or related courses and which have certified that this proposal does not overlap their offering:

Chair of Proposing Department (TYPE NAME/SIGN) Richard F. Hamm		Date 1/11/2011
Approved by Chair(s) of Departments having cross-listed course(s) (PRINT NAME/SIGN)	Date	Dean of College (PRINT NAME/SIGN) Gregory Stevens
Chair of Academic Programs Committee (PRINT NAME/SIGN) Janna Harton	Date 2/23/11	Dean of Graduate (Undergraduate) Studies (PRINT NAME/SIGN) Date 2/24/11

# WRITING INTENSIVE Course Proposal

General Education Committee/Undergraduate Studies – LC 30

COURSE NUMBER: \_\_AHIS 489Z\_\_ COURSE TITLE: \_\_Senior Research Seminar\_\_

PROPOSER: \_\_Richard S, Fogarty, Undergraduate Directory, History Department\_\_

Phone #: \_\_442-5344\_\_ e-mail \_\_rfogarty@albany.edu\_\_

INSTRUCTOR(S): \_\_\_\_\_ will vary \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the following information:

- A. A copy of the course syllabus. (*Attached, see below*)
- B. Will this course *always* be taught as a Writing Intensive course? **YES**
- C. Please answer each of the following. If any answer is *no*, please explain on an attached sheet.
1. Will enrollment be limited to 35 students per section? **YES**
  2. Will the course require, other than examinations, more than one writing assignment? **YES**
  3. Will these special or added writing assignments require at least 20+ pages of writing? **YES**
  4. Will the course offer at least one of the following writing experiences: journals, personal notebooks, exploratory writing, reports, formal argumentative essays, research papers, and professional documents? **YES**
  5. Will the course require substantive revisions of these special writing assignments? **YES**
  6. Will course grading include a component that allows students to improve their graded work with responsiveness revisions suggested by the instructor? **YES**
  6. Will in-class discussion of writing assignments and detailed comments on some of the submitted writing assignments be an integral part of the course? **YES**
  9. Will an evaluation of the writing component of the course be submitted by the class? **YES**
- D. Describe any assistance you will be requesting from the Writing Center and/or CETL. (help in design of course, team teaching, student referrals, training TA's, instruction in use of the library, etc.) ***This course will not require such assistance, although individual instructors may employ some of these kinds of assistance when they teach individual sections of the course.***

**ROUTING:** When the course proposal is completed, the department, school or program must have the proposal reviewed and approved by its respective college or school. It is then submitted to the General Education Committee. Any questions concerning the approval process should be directed to Vivien Ng, General Education Committee Chair, LC31. E-mail: [vng@albany.edu](mailto:vng@albany.edu)

**APPROVAL ACTION:**

Department/Program Chair: \_\_Richard Hamm\_\_ Date: 1/11/11

College/School Dean or Designee: Gregory Stevens Date: 2/24/11

General Education Committee liaison: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*[Below is a sample syllabus for AHIS 489Z, designed as one possible approach to the course, which would take advantage of the expertise of the particular faculty member who would be teaching one section of the course—all courses would have the same general structure and goals, but would vary in topic according to the faculty member teaching each particular section. Each semester the department would offer several different sections of the course.]*

**Proposal:**

**AHIS 489Z, Environmental History of New York State**

What's been the influence of natural forces on New York's history? How have the people of New York idealized and altered nature? To what effects? From the headwaters of the Hudson River to gypsy moths on Long Island, the panoramas at Niagara Falls to the lawns of Central Park, the Erie Canal to Love Canal, students in this capstone seminar will come to better understand the nature that surrounds them in historical perspective. In so doing, students will gain familiarity with theoretical trends in the burgeoning field of environmental history.

We'll spend the first week of class coming to understand the main questions central to the field of environmental history. Then, we'll spend four weeks examining vastly different approaches to nineteenth and twentieth-century environmental history of New York State.

Common readings will include:

- Carol Sheriff, *Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862*
- David Stradling, *Making Mountains: New York City and the Catskills*
- Kenneth Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier*
- Craig Colten, et al., *The Road to Love Canal*

Equipped with this foundation, students will spend the remainder of the semester using primary and secondary sources to write the environmental history of one specific site in New York, and in assisting their classmates in researching and writing these histories.

The product of this investigation will be a substantial final paper (20-25 double-spaced pages), and students will write it in several stages, as indicated in the schedule above:

- a list of initial research questions;
- a revised list of questions and a bibliography;
- a blog entry on one source, which students will revise in light of a research partner's and instructor's comments;
- a first draft of the final paper, which students will present to the entire class;
- a final draft of the paper, revised in light of comments from classmates, a research partner, and the instructor.

Such a cumulative process of writing, revising, rewriting, and developing ideas over time will provide students with an introduction to the craft of writing, especially historical and analytical writing.

Schedule:

Weeks 1-5: common readings/theoretical touchstones

Week 6: topics and research questions due/ library session

Week 7: research questions – part I – read one fellow classmate’s research question list and add 5 more possible research questions

Week 8: revised research questions and bibliography due

Week 9: research reports: blog entries on one of sources due

Week 9: continue research – read paired classmate’s blog entry and comment

Week 10: 20-minute presentations – introduce us to the environmental history of your site

Week 11: 20-minute presentations

Week 12: 20-minute presentations

Week 13: drafts due

Week 14: comments on paired classmate’s drafts due

Week 15: wrap-up session

Grades in the class will be weighted as follows:

In three different writing assignments (the list of initial research questions, the blog entry, and the research paper) students submit and receive instructor’s feedback which can improve their grade, since the first version and second version of each of these writing assignments is graded and counts toward the total course grade.

- List of initial research questions: 5%
- Revised list of questions and bibliography: 5%
- Blog entry: 5%
- Revised blog entry: 5%
- First draft of final paper: 20%
- Presentation: 10%
- Final draft: 30%
- Class participation (includes active engagement in providing constructive feedback on other students’ work: 20%

AHIS 489Z fulfills the upper division Writing Intensive [WI] requirement of the General Education Program at the University at Albany (see the Undergraduate Bulletin for full details).