

Honors 409
Reforming Dixie: Stories from Alabama in the 1920s
University of Montevallo
Fall 2022
Dr. John R. Bawden

Course Credit: 3 hours

Pre-requisites: none

Meets: Thursday, 5-730 pm, Hill House

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Office Hours: MW 9-12, 1-3, UMOM 303 (or by appointment)

Description

What was life like in Alabama during the 1920s? What did reformers want to change about the state? In this class, we will investigate life Alabama one hundred years ago with an eye to change and continuity. During the first ten weeks of class, students will write a research paper about any topic (person, place, event, process) and fit the topic into the wider theme of reform. During the final five weeks of class, students will prepare their paper for possible presentation at an undergraduate research conference and develop a podcast episode.

Research Paper

You will write a research paper (10-15 pages) using primary sources (sources created during the period under study) and scholarly sources (books or articles written by academics). The introductory paragraph of your paper should ask a “how” or “why” question and then answer it with a succinct thesis. The more specific your question, the more easily you can focus on your topic and develop a good argument. The first step in writing this paper is to develop a bibliography of appropriate primary and secondary sources. The second step is writing an abstract for the paper. The third step is outlining your paper’s sections. The fourth step involves writing chunks of content. The final paper must be numbered, double-spaced, with a 12-point font, and 1” margins and have a title that reflects the subject of the paper and your argument. Finally, the paper must be footnoted according to the Chicago Manual of Style. Students will receive my feedback on the bibliography, abstract, and introduction. During class, students will also share why they selected the research topic, what source material they have located, and respond to questions or comments from classmates.

Podcast

Students will contribute a 10-minute episode to “[Reforming Dixie: Stories from Alabama during the 1920s](#)”. For this component of the class, we will consider issues related to intellectual property as well as the marketplace of historical podcasts and how public history differs from academic history.

Student Learning Objectives

1. Students will examine life in Alabama one hundred years ago.
2. Students will select a theme and become familiar with scholarship on the topic.
3. Students will locate primary source material and conduct historical research.
4. Students will write a history research paper and contribute its findings to a group project.

Student learning outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate informed judgment about a topic related to life in Alabama one hundred years ago.
2. Students will demonstrate knowledge of source material and scholarship on their topic of interest.
3. Students will demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills.
4. Students will demonstrate effective use of digital tools for the dissemination of the group’s work.

Course Evaluation

Reading summaries (20%)

Participation (25%)

Digital project (25%)

Research paper (30%)

Grading

A: 100-90% **B:** 89-80% **C:** 79-70% **D:** 69-60% **F:** 59-0%

Writing Assignments

All written work must be typed, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font. Guidelines for the research paper will be available on canvas.

Course Schedule

Week 1

8/25

Introductions
Alabama & the United States during the 1920s
Picking a topic

Week 2

9/1

Guest: Connor Marullo
Building your bibliography
**Reading summaries, “The Politics of Reform and Stability during the 1920s”
“Change and Stability during the Roaring Twenties”**

Week 3

9/8

How to interrogate primary sources
Getting the most of out of www.newspapers.com
Finalizing the project topics and theme

Week 4

9/15

Guest: Courtney Pickard, Alabama Department of Archives and History
Reading summary #2 due 9/15
Bibliography due

Week 5

9/22

Outlining your research paper
Telling the story
Abstracts due
Reading summary #3 due 9/22

Week 6

9/29

What’s in the public domain?
Podcasting aesthetics, podcasting ethics
Outline due
Reading summary #4 due 9/29

Week 7

10/6

2-3 pages of the research paper due 10/6
Preparing for archival work
Footnoting and www.newspapers.com

Week 8

10/13

Research field trip to the Birmingham Public Library or
Alabama Department of Archives and History in Montgomery

Week 9

10/20

6-7 pages of the research paper due 10/20
Keep the podcast’s name?
Write season two’s description
Equipment needed for podcast and other logistical considerations

Week 10
10/27

Public history versus academic history
What makes a good podcast?
Research paper draft workshop

Week 11
11/3

Research paper draft due 11/3
Reforming Dixie: Stories from Alabama in the 1920s
Episode order, script considerations
Soundscapes

Week 12
11/10

Mock run through of the podcast
Getting acquainted with Audacity
Getting acquainted with the Adobe Suite

Week 13
11/17

Meet in the digital media lab of Carmichael Library
Create still images for episode chapters (Youtube)
Record episodes

Week 14
11/24

THANKSGIVING

Week 15
12/1

Record roundtable discussion
Promoting the podcast
Final reflections