A HISTORY OF HARPSWELL AND THE COAST OF MAINE

This intermediate-level course examines the long history of Harpswell as part of the coast of Maine, and the research methodologies used to uncover and analyze that history from environmental, community, socio-economic, political, racial and ethnic, and cultural perspectives. Topics include bonds and tensions in a peninsula and islands community, coastal agriculture and stone walls, inshore and deep-sea fisheries, shipbuilding and shipping, poverty and living on the margin, and the rise of tourism.

Course requirements: The seminar consists of thirteen class days; students are expected to attend all class meetings. On most days, we will meet at the Coastal Studies Center on Orrs Island at 9:00 a.m. for a discussion and occasional lecture class meeting in the morning. All assigned readings for each class should be completed by that class meeting. Students are expected to arrive prepared to participate in a discussion and analysis of the assigned readings [60% of final grade]. The History 2129 / ENVS 2449 Reading Guide (use the link on Blackboard) provides questions to help you focus your reading for the class discussions as well as electronic links to the assigned articles, either through e-reserve or an online Library database. If you miss a class, you are expected to write an informal (ungraded) but thoughtful evaluation (2-3 pages) of the assigned readings for that class. The afternoon portion of the class will include various activities, both at the CSC and beyond: a walking tour around Harpswell; trips to local libraries, archives and museums; discussions about research projects, methodologies, and source databases; individual meetings and independent work.

During the Oct. 19-Nov. 9 module, students will design a research project that focuses on an aspect of the history of Harpswell and/or the coast of Maine, posing a historical question or problem about that aspect, and proposing a hypothesis to answer or resolve the question or problem. Students will locate both primary and secondary sources that address the subject, and begin to analyze those sources. The course will culminate with a detailed research project prospectus which will include an introduction and a hypothesis or thesis statement, a section on sources and methodology, and a preliminary discussion and analysis of the sources. The prospectus should represent a substantial first stage in a process that could culminate, during another semester, in an independent study project and final paper. At the end of the course, students will present a work-in-progress report to the class. The final prospectus will be due Friday, Nov. 10, at 5:00 pm [40% of final grade].

All students are expected to read, understand, and abide by The Bowdoin College Academic Honor Code and by the rules of citation described on the Academic Honesty and Plagiarism site at http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/academic-honesty/index.shtml.


Links to the History 2129/EnvS 2449 Reading Guide, Electronic Reserve Reading Links, and other online resources can be found on Blackboard Academic Suite at http://blackboard.bowdoin.edu/, or at http://www.bowdoin.edu/faculty/s/smcmahon/courses/hist2129/index.shtml.
WEEK 1

10/19 THINKING HISTORICALLY AND THINKING ABOUT MAINE (83 pages)

Robert Blackey, et al., Teaching Innovations Forum: “Thinking Historically in the Classroom,” *AHA Perspectives* 33.7 (October 1995). (LINK to notes)


document: W.H. Doughty, *Orr’s Island Souvenir: Historical Sketch of Orr’s Island, with Landscape Descriptions* (1899). (HL SCA link)

Afternoon: W.H. Doughty’s 1899 tour of Orr’s Island

WEEK 2

10/23 THINKING ENVIRONMENTALLY AND THINKING ABOUT MAINE (104 pages)


Introduction, xi-xv;

Ideas Matter:


Guidelines for writing a research paper prospectus in History (link)

Afternoon: Discussion about possible research project topics

Colonial and Early National Eras

10/24 THE COAST OF MAINE: NATIVE AMERICANS AND EARLY ENGLISH SETTLEMENTS (92 pages)


Alaric Faulkner, “Archaeology of the Cod Fishery: Damariscove Island,” *Historical Archaeology* 19.2 (1985), 57-86. (JSTOR)


Afternoon: Individual meetings
10/25  THE SETTLEMENT, UNSETTLEMENT, AND RESETTLEMENT OF HARPswell AND THE MAINE COAST (86 pages)
Christopher Bilodeau, “Creating an Indian Enemy in the Borderlands:  King Philip’s War in Maine, 1675-1678,” Maine History 47.1, (2013), 11-41.  (e-reserve)

Lunch at Bowdoin
Library tour with Barbara Levergood and Marieke Van Der Steenhoven.  Meet at 1:00 pm at Hawthorne-Longfellow Library, Bookhenge

The Nineteenth Century
10/26  RURAL LIFE IN EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY MAINE (68 pages)
Wescott, History of Harpswell, Ch.9, “Farming, Fishing, and Shipbuilding, 1730-1820,” 86-106.

presentation:  “Thorn the Murderer”

Afternoon:  Independent work

WEEK 3
10/30  FISHERMEN, SAILORS AND DEEP SEA FISHERIES  (116 pages)

Afternoon:  Exploring databases:  America’s Historical Newspapers; Ancestry Library

10/31  FARMING ON THE MAINE COAST (63 pages)

presentation:  Stone Walls and other ways to play fast and furious with historical data

Afternoon:  Archival research opportunity
11/2  SHIPBUILDING AND SEAFARING COMMUNITIES  (68 pages)


presentation: “A Community of Shipbuilders”

Afternoon: Maine Maritime Museum

11/1  COASTAL AND ISLAND ECONOMIES: INSHORE FISHERIES  (61 pages)

Nancy Payne Alexander, “Taking up the Slack’: Penobscot Bay Women and the Netting Industry,” Maine History 45.3 (2010), 259-280. (e-reserve)


Afternoon: Individual meetings

WEEK 4

11/6  RACE, CLASS AND CULTURE: THE MAINE COAST, CUNDY’S HARBOR, MALAGA ISLAND  (65 pages)


film: Anchor of the Soul 60 Minutes (1994).

Afternoon: Independent work

Late 19th and early 20th century

11/7  COASTAL TOURISM AND SUMMER PEOPLE  (74 pages)

document: Samuel Adams Drake, Ch. XXII, “In and Out of Bar Harbor,” in Drake, The Pine-Tree Coast (1891), 304-319. (e-reserve)

Afternoon: Archival research opportunity

11/8 FISHERMEN, SPORTSMEN AND CONSERVATION  (53 pages)


Afternoon: Independent work

11/9 Work-in-Progress presentations

Afternoon: Independent work

11/10 Research Paper Prospectuses due Friday Nov. 10