

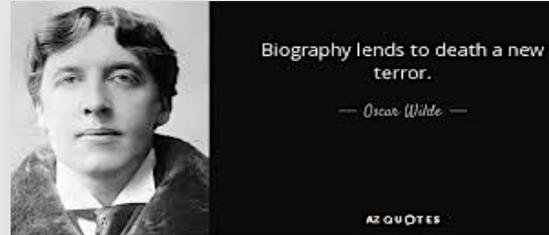
## Syllabus—History 498 Biography: The History of One

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### Course Description:

This course is an exploration of biography as a form of history. A range of issues and theories are surveyed that include traditional and modern auto/biographies to online life histories and prosopography.



### Why Study Biography?

As one of the oldest forms of historical practice, biography has served many purposes in society such as to construct and validate shared ethical and social practices as well as commemorate key individuals. The issue of identity and life history is one of the most compelling intellectual narratives we possess in society.

### Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

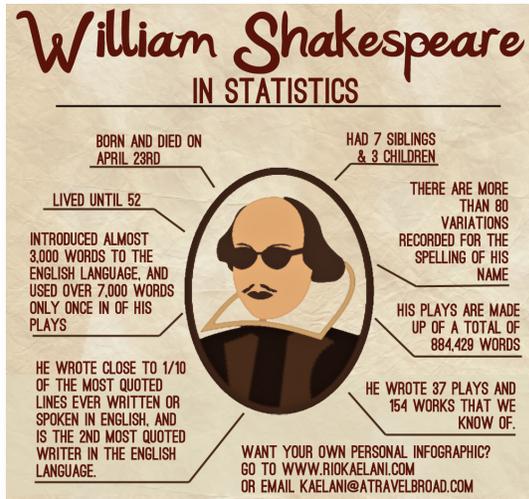
1. Learn and demonstrate knowledge on the development of the practice of biography and autobiography from ancient times to current times.
2. Learn and demonstrate knowledge on critical approaches and issues in the practice of biography and autobiography.
3. Make clearly-written and clearly-presented arguments, including a thesis and sufficient, well-used supporting detail.
4. Apply the issues of biography to issues of identity and the broader context of historical, cultural, social, and political developments.



*Painting of Confucius*

*From the Confucian Analects:*

The Master said: At fifteen I set my heart upon learning. At thirty, I had planted my feet firm upon the ground. At forty, I no longer suffered from perplexities. At fifty, I knew what were the biddings of heaven. At sixty, I heard them with docile ear. At seventy, I could follow the dictates of my own heart; for what I desired no longer overstepped the Boundaries of right.



**Readings:**

Required Texts:

Nigel Hamilton, *Biography: A Brief History*  
 Stacy Schiff, *Cleopatra: A Life*  
 Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson, *Reading Autobiography: A Guide for Interpreting Life Narratives*

Study Guide: Lecture Outlines, Key Terms/Ideas, Portfolio Weekly Assignments are in a PDF file on the Professor's Web Courses page and in CANVAS

Supplementary Course Resources: Assigned, Optional Readings, and Supplementary biographical materials are in a PDF file on the Professor's Web Courses page and in CANVAS

<http://www.cwu.edu/history/marilyn-levine>

**Class Schedule of Activities:**

Day	Lectures & Discussions	Readings	Notices
<b>Week One: The Discipline of Biography: An Overview</b>			
1/3	1. Course Introduction 2. The Importance of the Individual Perspective: Why Biography? 3. Discussion: Biography as Portraiture - <i>What can we observe?</i>		Group Discussion
1/5	1. A Global Survey of Biography (I) 2. Discussion of Portfolio Responses to Individual Biographies 3. <i>Biography: A Brief History</i>	Chapter 1-3, pp.1-99	Group Discussion
<b>Week Two: The Development of Biographical Forms</b>			
1/8	1. Plutarch as Historian and Political Scientist & Introduction to Rhetoric in Ancient Greece and Rome 2. Assignment of Group Rhetoric Activity - Formation of Groups	<u>Assigned Reading:</u> Plutarch, "Life of Demosthenes," "Life of Cicero," and "Comparison essay"[pdf]	Lecture & Rhetoric Group Activity: Day 1
1/10	1. <i>Biography: A Brief History</i> 2. Group Rhetoric Activity: Demosthenes and Cicero	Chapters 4-5, pp.100-167	Rhetoric Group Activity: Day 2
1/12	1. Group Rhetoric Activity: Demosthenes and Cicero Debate		Rhetoric Group Activity: Day 3
<b>Week Three: The Development of Biographical Forms Continued</b>			
1/15	<b>HOLIDAY</b>		

1/17	1. A Global Survey of Biography (II) 2. <i>Biography: A Brief History</i>	Chapters 7-11, pp.186-241 Chapter 13 and Epilogue, pp.279-294	Group Discussion
1/19	1. Bio-visual/Bio-aural Arts and Media Analysis: Napoleon & Alexander I		Group Discussion <b>Portfolios # 1 Due</b>
<b>Week Four: Collective Biographies</b>			
1/22	1. Discerning Patterns: Collective Biographies	<u>Optional Reading:</u> " <i>The Psychohistorical Origins of the Nazi Youth Cohort</i> "	<b>Research Topic Statement Due</b>
1/24	1. Consultation for Individual Projects		Consultations
1/26	1. <i>Cleopatra: A Life</i>	Chapters 1-4, pp. 1-124	Group Discussion
<b>Week Five: Genre Focus: Political Biography</b>			
1/29	1. Political Biography: Emergence from the Shadows 2. <i>Cleopatra: A Life</i>	Chapter 5-9, pp. 125-324	Group Discussion
1/31	1. Case Study: Historiography and Ideology in Political History 2. Consultation for Individual Projects		Consultations
2/2	1. Political Biography: Into the Limelight Media Experience		
<b>Week Six: Genre Focus: Literary Biography</b>			
2/5	1. Literary Biography: Overview of WWI and the Modern Identity 2. Group Literary Biography Activity Assigned	<u>Assigned Reading:</u> Literary Biography: War & the Modern Identity, The Bloomsbury Group, The Inklings Group	Group Activity: Day 1
2/7	1. Group Literary Activity 2. Consultation for Individual Projects		Group Activity: Day 2
2/9	1. Literary Biography: Group Activity Presentations		Group Activity: Day 3
<b>Week Seven: Reading Autobiography: Interpreting Life Narratives</b>			
<i>These two weeks will be spent in class discussions of this book and includes a group project</i>			
2/12	1. Life Narrative: Definitions and Distinctions 2. Autobiography Group Activity	In-class Group Project: Select (1) Activity from Smith/Watson, pp. 287-293	<b>Portfolios #2 Due</b> Autobiography Group Activity: Day 1
2/14	1. Autobiographical Subjects 2. Autobiographical Acts		
2/16	1. Life Narrative in Historical Perspective 2. Autobiography Group Activity		Autobiography Group Activity: Day 2
<b>Week Eight: Reading Autobiography Continued</b>			
2/19	<b>Holiday</b>		

2/21	Group assigned chapters - Each group delivers a chapter report: 1. The Visual-Verbal-Virtual Contexts of Life Narrative 2. In the Wake of the Memoir Boom 3. A History of Autobiography Criticism- Part I 4. A History of Autobiography Criticism- Part II 5. A Toolkit: Twenty-four Strategies for Reading Life Narratives		Group Discussions
2/23	1. Autobiography Group Activity Presentations		<u>Group Presentations</u>
<b>Week Nine: The Future of Biography</b>			
2/26	1. Case Study: A Multilinear, Multidimensional Online Project		<b><u>Portfolios Due</u></b>
2/28	1. Let the Spectators Become an Entertainment to Themselves	<u>Assigned Reading:</u> Reality Television and Biography: What is Reality in Identity?	
3/2	1. In-class discussion: Reflections on Biography		
<b>Week Ten: Individual Class Presentations</b>			
3/5	Class Presentations for Individual Projects		Presentations
3/7	Class Presentations for Individual Projects		Presentations
3/9	Class Presentations for Individual Projects		<b><u>Research Paper Due</u></b>
<b>Research Paper will be returned and discussed on the Finals Day which must be attended.</b>			

### Course Policies:

1. **Academic Dishonesty:** As defined in the CWU Student Conduct Code (11.B) includes both cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to: (a) Directly quoting the words in any publication without using quotation marks or indented format AND proper footnote style to identify the citation. (b) Using altered wording, materials or ideas of others without properly identifying their source. **If academic dishonesty is confirmed, I reserve the right to issue a failing grade for the course.**
2. **Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who wish to set up academic adjustments in this class should send me an electronic copy of their "Academic Adjustments" as soon as possible so we can meet to discuss how the approved adjustments will be implemented in this class. Students with disabilities without this documentation should contact the Center for Disability Services, Boullion 140, [DS@cwu.edu](mailto:DS@cwu.edu) or call 509 963-1202 immediately.
3. **Interactivity:** All students, during class sessions must turn off and put away their cell phones, and must disconnect from the Web for all other media. Other media **only** may be used for note taking. Connected media may be used during the group project sessions. The focus and interaction with the instructor and fellow students is a key component of this learning experience and will be considered an important part of the participation grade. Attendance also will be considered in the

participation grade. A Doctor's note will be necessary for medical absences.

4. **Office Hours are FOR Students:** Please drop by during office hours, whether you want to ask a question or share a conversation about the material or history in general. If my office hours are inconvenient for your schedule, we can schedule an alternative time.

**Course Assignments and Grading:**

Assignment	Percentage of Overall Grade
Three Portfolios (15% each)	45%
Biography Research Paper	30%
Group projects (5% each)	15%
Discussion/Participation	10%

**Late Submission Policy & Helpful Tips:**

Written assignments are reduced by one grade for each day they are late, up to 50%. Students are expected to complete their assignments in a timely manner and computer glitches are not an acceptable reason for delayed assignments.

**Helpful Tip #1:** *Always Back Your Work Sessions on an External Flash Drive. That way no matter what happens to your hard drive or printer, you always can submit your work in a timely manner.*

**Helpful Tip #2:** *Consider completing assignments a few days ahead of time. This assures you receive full credit for your work, by not experiencing difficulties on the due date, AND you have time to reflect and maybe redraft portions of your work, if you so choose.*

**DISCUSSION DYNAMICS:**

Discussion can be enhanced by keeping in mind a few discussion roles:

<p><b>Initiating:</b> Introduce yourself and your major when you have your first discussion with a group.</p>	<p><b>Giving &amp; Asking for Information</b> Assume that your fellow students may know the answer to something that you wondered about in the reading.</p>
<p><b>Giving &amp; Asking for Reactions</b> If you are a shy person or a curious person, do not be afraid to put your point forward and ask that students react to your idea. In addition, respond to the ideas of other students, and not just focus on your own points.</p>	<p><b>Restating &amp; Giving Examples</b> When was the last time you had an argument because of miscommunication? An important discussion skill is to concretely restate or give an example to clarify what another speaker has put forward. You might be surprised that you didn't understand their idea.</p>
<p><b>Confronting and Reality Testing</b> You have the right, even the responsibility to disagree from time to time. However, there is constructive disagreement and unconstructive disagreement. <b>Name calling, denigrating the intelligence or abilities of your classmates is not only uncivil, but it will not be tolerated in this course.</b> If you do not agree with an idea, mention that there might be merits, but you do not think it is totally correct. A good phrase when you do not agree would be "I would suggest . . ."</p>	<p><b>Synthesizing &amp; Summarizing</b> This is a very valuable discussion dynamic. How to integrate what we learn with other learning and life experiences enhances the value of the conversation for everyone.</p>

## A. Portfolio Assignment and Format

The Portfolio will be kept throughout the term and turned on dates assigned in the syllabus. The portfolio will consist of three weekly parts:

**Part I** - Answer at least two of the Portfolio Study Guide questions that are based on the readings and lectures. Restate the questions you select at the top of each discussion. Remember to link your answer to content in the reading material.

**Part II** - Prepare ahead of time at least two discussion questions for each class session which has a reading assignment. Each question should link a point raised in the reading to the issues of biography.

**Part III** - Include your own reflections in journal entries for each class session of the course. In these reflections your journal should have the following scope:

- (1) The assigned reading
- (2) The actual discussion
- (3) Experiences in the workshops

You should respond to the intellectual content of others and make your own observations in this journal segment. Issues might include the validity of the approach discussed, the nature of the writing of biography, the logic or illogic of points raised in reading or discussions. You should have at least two journal entries per week, but may have more.

4). **Enhancing the Experience.** You also can use supplementary sources in your portfolio to engage more deeply with the course content. You can include photos, other materials such as documents, articles, Web resources, and other media.

5. Your portfolio should be in a report binder, and always include the previous work and previous comments throughout the quarter when you turn your portfolio in to be graded.

### 6. Grading Criteria for Portfolios:

#### I. Answers to Questions on Readings

##### (a.) Development of Answers

- Questions restated
- Linking Answer to the Question asked
- Clarity of expression
- General Development

##### (b) Answer Content

- Relates to Reading
- Scope
- Depth

#### II. Questions

##### a.) Question Design

- Clarity of expression
- Clarity of origin
- General Development

##### b) Question Content

- Relates to the Reading

-Scope of question

#### III. Study Guide Questions & Journal Entries

##### a). Organization

- Main Idea
- Transitions

##### b). Content

- Relates to class discussion
- Relates to reading
- Raises problem(s)/issue(s)
- Discusses with evidence
- Discusses with examples
- Depth
- Scope

##### c). Critical Thinking

- Analysis of Auto/biography as a genre of history
- Reflection and analysis

## B. Biographical Figure Research Paper & Topic Statement Form

Each student is responsible for a twelve-fifteen-page course paper on a specific biographical figure of your choice, in consultation with the instructor. The paper must overview the life and significance of the biographical figure, and it must compare and contrast at least 3-4 major sources on the individual. The analysis should reflect lessons learned in the course.

The paper should be double-spaced with 1" margins on each side. The paper length may not exceed 15 pages of narrative. The 15-page length does not include the bibliography. The papers should incorporate issues raised in lectures, and should also attempt to integrate the course reading material. The grades will be based on content, critical thinking and style/grammar. Students will each prepare a 10-minute oral presentation on the biographical figure that they select.

To summarize:

12-15-page course paper, double spaced, 1" margins  
Page limit does not include bibliography  
Grades will be based on content, critical thinking, and style/grammar

### I. EVIDENCE AND ARGUMENT

1. You must write a narrative that covers your topic area, that is primarily based on research of the written sources (books, journals, and magazines). You must use both primary and secondary sources.

2. Students must use footnotes or endnotes throughout the paper. The source of the evidence is of utmost importance for the reader. You must give substantiation to the evidence. The best way to do this is to coordinate a series of facts, even more than one source, and put the argument/ideas in your own words. If you directly use the source, this is called a quotation. There are two types of quotation, a **short quotation**, and a **long quotation**. The short quotation is incorporated in the paragraph and surrounded by quotation marks at both ends. Any quote over five lines is considered a long quotation, and is made into a block quote, which is single spaced, indented and does not have quotes at the front and end.

3. Plagiarism is the copying of another work. You must cite any quotes and substantiate your information. The wholesale, uncited copying of another work is equal to theft. Any plagiarism will be followed by prompt disciplinary proceedings.

4. You should have a main theme and arguments in your paper, and use evidence to support it logically. I will be looking at overall structure and coherence, introduction, main body and conclusion.

5. Sources may include digital sources, properly attributed and cited.

To summarize:

Evidence must be supported with citations  
Do not use quotes extensively, try to synthesize ideas in your own words.  
Direct Quotes may be short or long (block)  
Plagiarism is unacceptable and will be followed by disciplinary proceedings.  
Main Theme is a key element  
Overall Structure & Coherence - Introduction, Main Body and Conclusion

## II. ELEMENTS OF STYLE

1. Be careful of grammatical usage and spelling errors. As examples to remember:

√ This is a formal paper and casual language usage is inappropriate, (eg. "Mr. Nguyen was all screwed up).

√ Contractions are not acceptable. Instead of writing "Didn't," you should write "Did not."

√ One of the most common grammatical errors is to mismatch verb tenses.

If you need a review of grammar, consult style manuals such as Kate Turabian, or the Chicago Manual of Style. Several word processing grammar and spelling checkers are also available for word processors. The best way to prevent against inadvertent grammar and spelling errors is to **check and double check** your paper.

2. In citing your evidence (either for the information or quotation), you must you either a footnote or an endnote.

**Please use the following forms of citation:**

### Footnote or Endnote

#### Book

David Marr, Vietnamese Anticolonialism (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 1-10.

#### Article

Howard S. Chang, "Chinese Students in Japan" Chinese Students' Monthly 13:1 (April 1918): 323.

3. **You should have a Bibliography at the end of your paper. Please use the following forms of citation:**

### Bibliography

#### Book

Marr, David. Vietnamese Anticolonialism. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971.

#### Article

Kriegel, Annie. "Generational Difference: The History of an Idea." Daedalus 107 (Fall 1978): 23-38.

4. If you are citing the immediately preceding work than there is no need again to give the whole citation. You may use the following as a form of citation: ibid., p.#.

5. If you are not citing the work immediately preceding, then use a *shortened form* of author, title, page #, eg.: Kriegel, "Generational Difference," pp.25-27.

6. There are resources such as open-source, free software such as **Zotero** (recommended by CWU Brooks Library) to automatically format both your citations and bibliography in the appropriate style (Chicago Manual, author-date). Zotero also will allow you to attach PDFs of articles and to put in notes as you capture the sources and conduct your research.

To summarize:

Grammar Counts! Spelling Counts! Form of Citation for Footnotes/Endnotes and Bibliography Counts!
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### **C. Group Projects Description and Requirements**

Group work is important in developing more depth and different perspective in understanding the subject. There are three assigned group projects.

### **D. Discussion and Participation Requirements**

Most class periods will have a segment reserved for students to engage in small group discussions, primarily based on the work students do in their portfolios. It is important for you to keep up with your portfolio weekly and be willing to share your ideas and explore the perspectives of others.

**BIOGRAPHICAL FIGURE RESEARCH PAPER-- TOPIC STATEMENT FORM (DUE 1/22)**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

Biographical figure:

Why do you want to study this person?

Include a preliminary, brief, time line of life history of this person:

List 3-4 Research Sources: