

# HISTORY 205: INTRODUCTION TO FAMILY HISTORY DOCTRINE & PRACTICE

*"Genealogical consciousness is a way of being, a way of thinking about your place within and responsibility to the generations surrounding you. It holds a promise to erode racism and sexism; to reduce to rubble centuries of hatred and discrimination; to bind us together when all other ways of connecting only seem to drive us ever farther apart; and to take our instinct to belong, shatter its tribal proclivities, and replace them with inclinations to Zion."*

Amy Harris, 2017

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**Fall 2019**  
**Section 002 (117 HRCB)**  
**MW 9:00-9:50 am**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to help students develop a genealogical consciousness. To that end, we will explore the history of family historical research (including the history of Latter-day Saint family history and temple practices, doctrines, and beliefs); learn practical skills in genealogical research, methodology, citation, record preservation, and writing; and discuss the importance of family history.

## **COURSE FORMAT AND OBJECTIVES:**

The central aim of History 205 is to help students learn practical skills in family history/ genealogical research and citation, methodology, record preservation and writing. The class will thus consist of some combination of lectures, discussions, problem-solving exercises, exams, and plenty of hands-on research.

In addition to being a foundational course for the Family History major and minor, this course fulfills one 2-credit Religion GE elective.

## **REQUIRED READING:**

The following book is available at the BYU Bookstore and from various online retailers.

- Margaret Bendroth, *The Spiritual Practice of Remembering* (William B. Eerdmans, 2013)

Additional readings will be available via Learning Suite.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

There are nine graded components to this course:

### 1. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION – 10%

Students are expected to attend class and actively participate. This necessitates reading the assigned material before class and coming prepared to participate in class discussions and other in-class activities. I will take roll regularly throughout the semester.

Students may miss two class periods without being penalized, though you are responsible for any material missed in case of absence and cannot make up any assignments missed as a result of your absence. **Your final (total) grade will be penalized one percentage point for each class period missed after that.** In addition, I reserve the right to adjust borderline grades up or down based on attendance and participation in class discussion.

In addition, you are expected to spend 30 hours researching and writing during the semester. The 30 hours include everything you do to complete the assignments for the class, except for time spent in class and at family history labs, doing the required reading, and studying for the final exam. At the end of the semester, you will self-report how many of those 30 hours you have completed and submit a research log showing each of the sources consulted (including those from which no information was obtained), and the hours spent. Additional information is available on LS.

**Report research hours by Monday, December 9 at 11:59 pm.**

### 2. FINAL PROJECT – 40%

Select one of the three options below for one complete family (parents and children), and complete the following:

#### OPTION 1: Create

Complete the following for one complete family (parents and children) without an existing FamilyTree.

- Family Group Record with complete citations
- A list-style proof summary of your research steps (example provided on LearningSuite), but with footnotes. If it turns out to be a complicated research project, you can do this proof-summary for just one of the children and her/his connection to the parents. The entire written length will be approximately 2 pages.
- Brief biography of at least one person in that family (2-4 pages)
- Research log

You should include the birth, marriage, and death information for each parent and child.

### OPTION 2: Validate

Complete the following for one complete family (parents and children) in order to confirm and/or correct the family's information on FamilyTree:

- Family Group Record with complete citations
- A list-style proof summary of your research steps (example provided on LearningSuite), but with footnotes. If it turns out to be a complicated research project, you can do this proof-summary for just one of the children and her/his connection to the parents. The entire written length will be approximately 2 pages.
- Brief biography of at least one person in that family (2-4 pages)
- Research log
- Screen-capture of updated FamilyTree family

You should include the birth, marriage, and death information for each parent and child.

### OPTION 3: Preserve

Complete the following for one complete family (parents and children) to preserve the memories and history of the family:

- Family Group Record with complete citations
- Research log
- Biography of at least one person in the family group (could do a couple biography or a family biography if that interests you more). It needs footnotes or endnotes for all the sources cited or referenced. Total length should be 3-5 pages if accompanied by a media product (described below). If you want to write a biography about someone for whom oral interviews, photos, and memorabilia are not accessible, you may write a longer biography instead (6-8 pages).
- In addition, select one of the following options to complete:
  - An oral interview with a relative (audio or video) lasting at least 30 minutes. You can consider posting portions of this via a social media outlet (particularly if your family already regularly uses social media for family news and history)
    - Write a full transcription of that interview, annotated with information found in original sources (census records, for example). Use footnotes.
  - Preservation (labeling of originals, digitizing [and labeling of digital files]) of at least 20 items (memorabilia and/or photos). The visual part of this assignment

can be submitted as a powerpoint presentation, a bound book, or via social media.

- Write a brief biography of a person (or couple) within the chosen family, annotated with information found in original sources (census records, for example). Use footnotes.

**Your Final Project is due via LS by Monday, December 9 at 11:59 pm.**

**As part of the research project, you are required to meet with me during office hours by Friday, September 20. To schedule an appointment, please visit LS.**

**3. PROPOSAL – 2.5%**

As part of your research project, you are required to submit a research proposal.

The proposal should be 1-2 paragraphs and provide specific information (names, dates, places, and any other relevant information) about which research option you have selected and the family you plan to research. Provide citations, in footnotes, of any sources you discuss.

**The proposal is due via LS by Wednesday, September 25 at 11:59 pm.**

**4. DRAFT OF BIOGRAPHY – 2.5%**

Submit a draft of your biography. It should be at least 3-4 pages, with source citations. If there are portions you have not yet written, but you know will be in the final draft, include those as an outline. You will need to refer to census records you've searched so far.

Please include research logs and the FGR as a PDF.

**The draft of your biography is due via LS by Wednesday, October 23 at 11:59 pm.**

**5. FAMILYSEARCH INDEXING – 10%**

Complete FamilySearch indexing for at least 30 names and reports its completion. Additional details are available on LS.

**Report completion of indexing via LS by Monday, December 2 at 11:59 pm.**

**6. FAMILY HISTORY LAB WORKSHOPS – 5%**

Attend at least three workshops in the Family History Lab (112 KMBL). Further information, including a schedule for the different workshops, is available on LS.

**Report attendance via LS by Friday, October 18.**

**7. DRAFT OF FAMILY HISTORY PROJECT – 5%**

Submit a draft of your complete family history project. Please include the FGR as a PDF.

**The draft of your Family History Project is due via LS Friday, November 22 at 11:59 pm.**

**8. FAMILY GROUP RECORD – 10%**

Submit FGR (as a PDF) representing a complete family, for their entire lifespans. Omitting children or providing no information for some children will result in a loss of points.

Properly formatted citations should appear for every event (birth, marriage, death) for each individual family member. While events may contain references to compiled sources, every event should have at least one reference to an original source.

Please be sure to include a research log.

**The FGR is due via LS by Friday, XXXX, at 11:59 pm**

**9. FINAL EXAM – 15%**

Take home. **Due via LS by Wednesday, December 18 at 11:59 pm.**

**POLICIES AND REMINDERS:**

This class is intended to be a space to critically and thoughtfully discuss Family History. Please feel free to ask questions and offer opinions during class (in fact, your grade depends on it!), but always treat your classmates, your professor, and the individuals we discuss (both living and dead!) with respect. Disagreement is allowed, but personal attacks and insults are not. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. If you experience a problem, please report the situation to the professor immediately.

**A NOTE ON TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

You are welcome to use laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices in class for taking notes, viewing reading materials, and/or completing in-class assignments. Each of us learns differently and takes notes differently. Regardless of how you take notes, please do your best to not distract the class or your fellow students. To that end, please silence your electronic devices and use them only to take notes or access course materials. As a former student and a current instructor, please rest assured that I can tell when you are browsing the internet, facebooking, tweeting, snapchatting, instagramming, TikTok-ing, or using any other social media app or game, or reading material not relevant to this class. I reserve the right to ask you to put your electronic devices away at any point.

## A NOTE ON CHILDREN IN CLASS

As part of my commitment to helping all students succeed, I have implemented the following policies regarding children in class:

- 1) All breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as necessary.
- 2) Non-nursing babies and older children are welcome whenever alternate arrangements cannot be made. As a parent of three young children, I understand that babysitters fall through, partners have conflicting schedules, and other issues arise that leave parents with few other options.
- 3) In all cases where children come to class, I invite parents/caregivers to sit close to the door so as to more easily excuse yourself to attend to your child's needs. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.
- 4) All students are expected to join with me in creating a welcoming environment that is respectful of your classmates who bring children to class.
- 5) Finally, I understand that among the most difficult aspects of parenting young children is sleep deprivation and exhaustion. The struggles of balancing school, work, childcare, and other day-to-day activities is tiring, and I will do my best to accommodate any such issues while maintaining the same high expectations for all students enrolled in the class. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

**Honor Code:** In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at (810) 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

**Preventing + Responding to Sexual Misconduct:** In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Brigham Young University prohibits unlawful sex discrimination against any participant in its education programs or activities. The university also prohibits sexual harassment—including sexual violence—committed by or against students, university employees, and visitors to campus. As outlined in university policy, sexual harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking are considered forms of "Sexual Misconduct" prohibited by the university.

University policy requires all university employees in a teaching, managerial, or supervisory role to report all incidents of Sexual Misconduct that come to their attention in any way, including but not limited to face-to-face conversations, a written class assignment or paper, class discussion, email, text, or social media post. Incidents of Sexual Misconduct should be reported to the Title IX Coordinator at [t9coordinator@byu.edu](mailto:t9coordinator@byu.edu) or (801) 422-8692. Reports may also be submitted through EthicsPoint at <https://titleix.byu.edu/report> or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours a day).

BYU offers confidential resources for those affected by Sexual Misconduct, including the university's Victim Advocate, as well as a number of non-confidential resources and services that may be helpful. Additional information about Title IX, the university's Sexual Misconduct Policy, reporting requirements, and resources can be found at <http://titleix.byu.edu> or by contacting the university's Title IX Coordinator.

**Students With Disabilities:** Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the University Accessibility Center (2170 WSC). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. The UAC can also assess students for learning, attention, and emotional concerns. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the UAC. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures by contacting the Equal Employment Office at (801) 422-5895, D-285 ASB.

**Mental Health:** Mental health concerns and stressful life events can affect students' academic performance and quality of life. BYU Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS, 1500 WSC, (801) 422-3035) provides individuals, couples, and group counseling, as well as stress management services. These services are confidential and are provided by the university at no cost for full-time students. For general information please visit <https://caps.byu.edu>; for more immediate concerns please visit <http://help.byu.edu>.

## CLASS SCHEDULE + READINGS

### WEEK 1

September 4      **Course Overview**

### WEEK 2

September 9      **Why Family History?**

Read: Henry B. Eyring, "O Remember, Remember," October 2007. (available [here](#)); Dale E. Renlund, "Family History and Temple Work: Sealing and Healing," April 2018. (available [here](#)); Amy Harris, "How Dead Cats, Your Siblings, Eighteenth-Century English Clergy, Making Lists, TED Talks, Evolutionary Biology, Susa Young Gates, and My Mom Can Save the World From Being Utterly Wasted," BYU Forum Address, 18 July 2017 (available [here](#))

September 11      **Getting Started with FamilySearch**

Read: Sunny Morton, "How to Find Your Relative on the Shared FamilySearch Family Tree," (available [here](#)); *Family History Guide*, Project 1: "Family Tree" (available [here](#)). Read through each of the 14 goals, set up a FamilySearch account, and complete as many of the goals as you can.

### WEEK 3

September 16

#### Genealogy Software

Read: *Family History Guide*, Project 7, Goal 4: "Genealogy Software" (available [here](#))

September 18

#### Source Citation

Read: Henry B. Eyring, "Gathering the Family of God," April 2017 (available [here](#)); Karen Clifford, "Why Document?," in *Complete Beginner's Guide to Genealogy* (4.1-4.17 – available [here](#))

In class: *Family History Guide* FamilySearch project 1, goal 8a ("Learn about sourcing and why it's important" (available [here](#)))

**\*Friday, September 20: Deadline to meet with Professor Jones during office hours\***

### WEEK 4

September 23

#### Research Methods (online + in person)

Read/View: Selections from *Family History Guide*, "Family History Basics" (About Genealogy, Family History Terms and Concepts – available [here](#)); FamilySearch Learning Center, Episode 2: The Research Process (available [here](#))

September 25

#### Crafting Research Goals

Read: Dallin H. Oaks, "Family History: In Wisdom and Order," *Ensign*, June 1989 (available [here](#)); *Family History Guide*, Project 4, Goal 3A "Learn Principles of Effective Research" (available [here](#))

**\*Proposal due via LS by 11:59 pm\***

### WEEK 5

September 30

#### FamilySearch Catalog, FHL Collection, FS Research Wiki

Read: FamilySearch research wiki page for your state/country (available [here](#)); FamilySearch Catalog for your state/country (available [here](#)); *Family History Guide*, Project 4, Goal 4 "Use FamilySearch . . . to find ancestor information" (available [here](#))

October 2

#### Beyond FamilySearch + Turning Research into Stories

Read: Explore Ancestry, MyHeritage, and/or FindmyPast; *Family History Guide*, explore their lessons on the major databases.



## WEEK 6

October 7

### Census Records

Read: BYU's U.S. census tutorial (available [here](#))

**\*Preliminary list of books and articles for research paper due via Learning Suite by 11:59 pm on February 16\***

October 9

### Census Records, Part II

## WEEK 7

October 14

### Civil + Church Records

Read: FamilySearch Wiki for civil (vital records) or church records in your locality

October 16

### Civil + Church Records, Part II

**\*Report attendance at Family History Lab Workshops by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, October 18\***

## WEEK 8

October 21

### Writing Family History

Read: Select one of the available readings available on LS. As you read, consider the author's intended audience and their reasons for writing about the particular family.

October 23

### Obituaries, Gravestones, Newspapers, Websites, + More

Read: Explore FamilySearch, Ancestry, MyHeritage, and Findmypast's catalogs for obituary, newspaper, and cemetery collections (by town, county, state, and country); "The Anatomy of Tombstones" (available [here](#))

**\*Draft of biography due to LS by 11:59 pm\***

## WEEK 9

October 28

### City Directories + Social Security Records

Read: Explore FamilySearch, Ancestry, MyHeritage, and Findmypast's catalogs for city directories relevant to your area; on Ancestry explore Social Security Death Index and Social Security Applications and Claims for any American ancestors who died after 1932.

**October 30**

**Other Records + Future Research**

Read: Choose a topic/location you're interested in learning about from FamilySearch's Learning Center. Read/view at least two lessons/videos (available [here](#))

**WEEK 10**

**November 4**

**The History of American Families**

Read: Stephanie Coontz, *The Way We Never Were*, 1-21 (available via LS); Shirley Hill, "The Evolution of Families and Marriage," in *Families: A Social Class Perspective* (available [here](#))

**November 6**

**The History of Family History**

Read: François Weil, *Family Trees: A History of Genealogy in America*, 8-77 (chapters 1 + 2, available via [HBLL](#)); Karin Wulf, "This Long-Ignored Document, Written by George Washington, Lays Bare the Legal Power of Genealogy," *Smithsonian.com*, June 18, 2019 (available [here](#))

**WEEK 11**

**November 11**

**NO CLASS: Work on Project**

**\*FGR due via LS by 11:59 p.m.\***

**November 13**

**The Spirit of Elijah, 1820-1893**

Read: Joseph Smith, Letter to "All the Saints in Nauvoo," September 1, 1842 (D&C 127 – available [here](#)); Jonathan A. Stapley, "Adoptive Sealing Ritual in Mormonism," *Journal of Mormon History* 37:3 (Summer 2011): 53-117 (available via [HBLL](#))

**WEEK 12**

**November 18**

**Proxy Work + Temples, 1893-1962**

Read: D&C 138; James B. Allen, Jessie L. Embry, and Kahile B. Mehr, *Hearts Turned to the Fathers*, 33-53, 121-160 (available via LS); Lisa Olsen Tait, "Susa Young Gates and the Vision of the Redemption of the Dead," in *Revelations in Context* (available [here](#))

**November 20**

**Family History + Temple Work, 1962-present**

Read: Allen, Embry, and Mehr, *Hearts Turned to the Fathers*, 167-205, 265-298; Tad Walch, "LDS Church's FamilySearch database to add same-sex families to Family Tree feature," *Deseret News*, June 14, 2018 (available [here](#))

**\*First Draft of Research Project due via LS  
by 11:59 p.m. on Friday, November 22\***

**WEEK 13**

**November 25 NO CLASS: Work on Final Project**

**\*Research Paper due via Learning Suite by 11:59 pm\***

**November 27 NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Holiday**

**WEEK 14**

**December 2 Family History Today**

Read: Weil, *Family Trees*, 180-216; Maud Newton, "America's Ancestry Craze," *Harper's Magazine*, June 2014 (available [here](#))

**\*Report completion of FamilySearch Indexing by 11:59 p.m.\***

**December 4 Family History, Politics, Problems, + Potential**

Read/Listen: Heather Andrea Williams, *Help Me to Find My People*, 190-200 (available via LS); "Race Underneath the Skin," *NPR Code Switch*, December 26, 2018 (available [here](#))

**WEEK 15**

**December 9 Why Family History? (Redux)**

Read: Bendroth, *The Spiritual Practice of Remembering*, 1-75.

**\*Final Project due via LS by 11:59 p.m.\***

**\*Report research hours via LS by 11:59 p.m.\***

**December 11 Why Family History? (Redux, Part II)**

Read: Bendroth, *The Spiritual Practice of Remembering*, 76-132.

**\*FINAL EXAM: Take Home – due to LS by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, December 18\***