History 3903- THE WRITING OF HISTORY – FALL, 2012 –

Instructor: Kenneth E. Hendrickson, Jr., Regents’ & Hardin Distinguished Professor of American History, Emeritus

Text: Michael J. Galgano, et.al., Doing History

All writing projects require research and a thorough understanding of the use of the English language in terms of vocabulary, grammar, and punctuation. This course is designed to introduce the student to the manner in which these requirements are met when writing in the field of history.

Each of you will be given a project assignment which will require that you do the necessary research and write a 20-30 page essay that would be suitable for publication. Each assignment will deal with a presidential election.

When a historian begins a project he/she knows that the first requirement is to search for and find all the relevant primary and secondary sources that will be needed to produce a satisfactory piece of work. In your case you must search for and locate as many of these sources as possible even though they might not all be available. Among the important sources you will find are the following:

- Books (biographies, autobiographies, memoirs, and monographs)
- Articles in professional journals
- Articles in contemporary magazines
- Articles and editorials in newspapers
- Professional papers
- Government documents
- Relevant court cases

Each week you will be required to report on your research. These reports must be thorough and show significant progress.

Once your research is complete you will begin to write. You will be required to present a rough draft of your paper three weeks before the end of the semester. I will edit these and return them for any needed corrections. Your final draft will be due on the last day of class. When complete your paper must deal with the following issues:

- Historical context – that is, what was happening in the country at the time of the election.
- Candidates for nomination.
- Candidates for office – Including vice presidents.
- Issues and how they are addressed by each candidate.
• Supporters.
• Opponents.
• Primaries – if any.
• Conventions.
• Campaigning.
• Outcome.
• Interpretation- that is, why did one side or the other win?

Your grade will be based on the quality of your research, your class participation, your paper, and a final examination that will deal with:

• Punctuation
• Spelling and Distinctive Treatment of Words
• Names and Terms
• Numbers
• Quotations
• Illustrations, Captions, and Legends
• Tables
• Abbreviations
• Documentation in Notes and Bibliographies
• Documentation – Author – Date Citations and Reference Lists

All these issues will be discussed in class. You will be given a preliminary examination on these items at the beginning of the semester. The outcome will not affect your grade.

Class Schedule:

Aug 27 – Class organization and Preliminary Test
Sept 3 – Labor Day – no class
Sept 10- Lecture and Discussion
Sept 17 – Lecture and Discussion
Sept 24-Lecture and Discussion
Oct 1 – Lecture and Discussion
Oct 8 Lecture and Discussion
Oct 15- Lecture and Discussion
Oct 22-Lecture and Discussion
Oct 29-Lecture and Discussion
Nov 5-Lecture and Discussion – Rough Drafts
Nov 12-Lecture and Discussion – Rough Drafts returned for Corrections
Nov 19-Lecture and Discussion
Nov 26-Lecture and Discussion – Final Drafts due
Dec 3-Discussion of Papers and Final Examination.