

Foundations of Genealogy

Getting Started and Doing it Right the First Time

Sydney F. Cruice Dixon
The Historical Society of Pennsylvania
Fall 2016

Class 1

Introduction to the Four Elements of Genealogy

- Discovery
- Proof and Documentation
- Organization
- Reporting and Sharing

Introduction to the Genealogical Proof Standard

- Conduct a reasonably exhaustive search
- Compile a complete and accurate citation for all sources of information
- Analyze and correlate the collected information to assess its quality as evidence
- Resolve any conflicts caused by items of evidence that contradict each other
- Arrive at a soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion

Introduction to the Types of Genealogical Documents

Introduction to Ancestry.com

- Searching
- Tree Building
- Collaboration
- Learning Center/Wiki

Records: Census Records

Class 2

Preparing for Research and Organization

- Research Goals - What is your Genealogical Question?
- Research Plans - Developing research strategies
- Research Implementation – Understanding documents, transcriptions, abstracts, and extracts

- Research Logs and Notes - Tracking where you have been

Mastering Ancestry.com

- Advanced search strategies
- Importing media
- Collaboration tools

Records: Vital Records and Their Substitutes

Class 3

Understanding and Citing Your Sources

- Who, What, When, Where (in), Where (is)
- Types of Citations

FamilySearch.org/The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

- Searching – Records/Microfilms, Catalogue, One World Tree
- Family History Wiki
- Family History Centers

Records: Church Records

Class 4

Evidence Analysis

- Types of Evidence
- Evidence Process Map

Tree Building and Timelines

- Putting your evidence into historical context

Records: Immigration and Naturalization Records

Class 5

Correlation of Evidence

- Organizing evidence to reveal patterns and conflicts

Just Google It!

Records: Maps, City Directories

Class 6

Resolving Conflicts in Evidence

- Weighing and balancing conflicts
- Developing explanations for conflicts
- Unresolved conflicts

Types of Repositories

- Libraries
- Archives
- Manuscript Collections

Records: Newspapers and Periodicals

Class 7

Reporting, Sharing and Written Conclusions

- Creating a piece of history
- Creating Genealogical Data Communications - Gedcoms
- Types of written conclusions

Records: Land Records and Probate Records

Class 8

Reporting, Sharing and Written Conclusions

- Proof Statements
- Proof Summaries
- Proof Arguments

Records: Military Records