

History 6687 Spring 2009
Readings in the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction

Keith S. Bohannon, Department of History, University of West Georgia

This course meets on Thursdays from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm on the third floor of the Technology Learning Center (TLC) in Room 1203.

Office Hours: Monday, 10-11, 1:30-4:30; Wednesday, 10-11, 1:30-4:00; Thursday, 5:00-5:30; Friday, 10-11 and by appointment

Office & phone: Technology Learning Center, Room 3247 678-839-6045

Email: Kbohanno@westga.edu

Course Description The principal goal of the course is to introduce students to significant monographs and articles that examine the origins, scope, and consequences of the U.S. Civil War, the bloodiest conflict in the history of this country. The course will address central questions such as why the war happened, why the North won/South lost, and how the war affected various elements of American society. The readings include works of political, social, military, religious, and cultural history.

This course is organized topically and the majority of class time each week will be spent discussing the assigned readings. Class meetings will focus on understanding the author's main arguments and providing a critical evaluation of the reading.

Learning Outcomes

1. An understanding of important historiographical questions/debates
2. An ability to analyze critically primary and secondary sources
3. To sharpen writing, reading, and research skills through written assignments
4. An ability to lead discussions and make oral presentations

Grading

Book reviews (3 total)- 40%

Leading discussion- 10%

Class participation- 10%

Research Paper- 40%

No extra credit is offered in this course.

Assigned Texts

Note: In addition to the books listed below, there are also readings for Weeks 3 and 4 placed online on electronic reserve. Instructions will be handed out in class explaining how to access the online readings.

Foner, Eric Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men

Dew, Charles B. Apostles of Disunion

Gienapp, William E. Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America

Gallagher, Gary W. The Confederate War

Berlin, Ira, ed. Free At Last

Faust, Drew G. Mothers of Invention

Miller, Randall G. ed. Religion and the American Civil War
Neely, Mark E. The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction
McPherson, James Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam
Nolan, Alan T. Lee Considered
Ash, Stephen V. A Year in the South: 1865
Cashin, Joan, The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War
Blight, David, Race and Reunion

Book Reviews- Students will turn in typed (twelve-point font), double-spaced, critical reviews that are three to four pages in length about three of the assigned books. The reviews should include not only a summary of the book's main argument, but also a critical assessment of the work. Numerous grammatical errors will lower your grade. Students are advised to familiarize themselves with scholarly book reviews by reading examples from publications such as Civil War History, The Journal of Southern History, or The Georgia Historical Quarterly.

Two of your reviews must be turned in before the midpoint of the semester (week seven). The third book review must be turned in by the last day of class.

If a student quotes or paraphrases from the assigned book or any other printed or online source, he/she must provide footnotes or endnotes citing the source. The paper must utilize the proper format for footnotes/endnotes as described in the Chicago Manual of Style (also described in section 5.3 of The History Student Writer's Manual). Papers that contain footnotes/endnotes that do not follow the required format will be handed back without a grade. Students that quote or paraphrase a source but do not provide footnotes/endnotes are guilty of plagiarism (see below).

Research Paper- Each student will write a typed (twelve-point font), double-spaced research paper between 15 and 17 pages in length. The paper must examine at least eight to ten works bearing on an important question related to the Civil War. Your paper should provide an argument that engages existing historiography.

Students need to set up meetings with me at some point during the first four weeks of class to decide on a topic and begin research. On February 12 students will turn in an introduction and annotated bibliography of sources. The introduction should explain the historical question being posed in the paper and your tentative answer to the question. The finished version of the paper must be turned in by the last day of class.

Class Discussion- Each graduate student will lead one discussion of weekly reading assignments during the semester. You must tell me by the second class meeting when you want to lead discussion. Students will then submit written lists of questions that they intend to ask the class. These lists are due no later than three days prior to the discussion.

Late assignments- Assignments must be turned in during class on the dates given below. One letter grade will be deducted per day for all assignments turned in late.

Attendance- Regular attendance is critical to earning a passing grade in this course. Attendance will be taken every class period and will be factored into your class

participation grade at the end of the semester. If a student misses class, it is his/her responsibility to find out what was missed.

Cheating- I expect students to understand and comply with the University of West Georgia's policies on Academic Honor and Academic dishonesty. They may be found in the student handbook. Cheating in any form (including plagiarism- presenting someone else's words as your own without properly citing them) will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will receive an F on the assignment and probably an F in the course.

Writing Center- Students who would like assistance with writing are encouraged to see the instructor during his office hours and/or go to the Writing Center on the first floor of the TLC.

Reading Assignments- The books must be read prior to the dates given in the course schedule. There is no textbook in this course, but students wishing to utilize one should consult James McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom or Michael Fellman, et al., This Terrible War.

There are also a number of online reserve readings. Directions for gaining access to these readings will be handed out during the first week of class.

Schedule of class meetings and assignments

Week One- January 8 Introduction

Week Two- January 15 Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men
Deadline for submitting date to lead discussion

Week Three- January 22 Online reserve readings: Henry Wilson, "A Slave Power Conspiracy;" Alexander Stephens, "The Confederate Cornerstone" and "A Need for Justification;" Eric Foner, "Cultural and Ideological Origins;" Eugene Genovese & Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Southern Slaveholders Against the World;" David Potter, "Why the Republicans Rejected Both Compromise and Secession;" Michael Holt, "Party Dynamics and the Coming of the Civil War"

Week Four- January 29 Dew, Apostles of Disunion **Online reserve reading:** Daniel Crofts, "The Unionist Offensive"

Week Five- February 5 Gienapp, Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America

Week Six- February 12 Berlin, ed., Free At Last (See handout for assigned sections)
Introduction and bibliography for research paper due

Week Seven- February 19 McPherson, Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam

Week Eight-February 26 Faust, Mothers of Invention

Week Nine- March 5 Cashin, The War Was You and Me Read: “Deserters, Civilians, and Draft Resistance in the North;” William Blair, “We Are Coming Father Abraham- Eventually: The Problem of Northern Nationalism in the Pennsylvania Recruiting Drives of 1862;” Nina Silber, “A Compound of Wonderful Potency: Women Teachers of the North in the Civil War South;” Joseph T. Glatthaar, “Duty, Country, Race, and Party: The Evans Family of Ohio”

Week Ten- March 12 Miller, Religion and the American Civil War

March 16-20 Spring Break

Week Eleven- March 26 Gallagher, The Confederate War

Week Twelve- April 2 Neely, The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction

Week Thirteen- April 9 Nolan, Lee Considered

Week Fourteen- April 16 Ash, A Year in the South: 1865

Week Fifteen- April 23 Blight, Race and Reunion

Week Sixteen- April 30 **Online readings:** Excerpts from Gaines Foster, Ghosts of the Confederacy and Tony Horwitz, Confederates in the Attic

Note: I reserve the right to modify this syllabus, particularly to add unannounced quizzes that will take place at the beginning of class. These quizzes will be given if I feel the class has not been keeping up with the readings. The quiz grades will count as part of your class participation grade.