History 6687  Fall 2015  
Readings in the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction

Keith S. Bohannon, Department of History, University of West Georgia
This course meets on Tuesdays from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm on the third floor of the Technology Learning Center (TLC) in Room 3205.

Office Hours: Monday, 10-11, 1:30-3:00; Tuesday, 4:00-5:30; Wednesday, 1:00-3:00; Friday, 9-11 and by appointment

Office & office phone: Technology Learning Center, Room 3247  678-839-6045
Email: Kbohanno@westga.edu  Note: I do not use Courseden. When emailing instructors, please use your UWG email address.

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

This course is organized topically and each week’s class meetings 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
- Provide an understanding of important historiographical questions/debates
- Improve students’ ability to analyze critically primary and secondary sources
- Sharpen writing, reading, and research skills through written and oral assignments
- Provide experience leading discussions and making oral presentations

Grading
Book reviews (3 total) - 40%
Leading discussion - 10%
Overall class participation - 10%
Research Paper - 40%
No extra credit is offered in this course.

Assigned Texts
Ash, Stephen V., A Massacre in Memphis
Berlin, Ira, Free at Last
Cashin, Joan E., The War Was You and Me
Dean, Adam, An Agrarian Republic
Fahs, Alice, The Imagined Civil War
Gallagher, Gary W. The Union War
Gienapp, William E. Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America
Janney, Caroline, Remembering the Civil War
McPherson, James, Crossroad of Freedom: Antietam
Neely, Mark E. The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction
Nolan, Alan T. Lee Considered
Varon, Elizabeth, Disunion: The Coming of the Civil War

Book Reviews- Students will turn in typed (twelve-point font), double-spaced, critical reviews that are 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 should 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. These journals are accessible online through the JSTOR database on the University of West Georgia Library website.

The first book review is due on Oct 6. You will have the chance to rewrite this review if you are not satisfied with your initial grade. The second book review will be due on Nov 10. The third book review must be turned in by the last day of class, Dec. 1.

If you quote or paraphrase from the assigned book or any other source, you must provide footnotes or endnotes citing the source. The paper must utilize the proper citation format as described in Kate Turabian/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 returned without a grade. Students that quote or paraphrase from 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 fifteen and seventeen pages in length. The paper must examine at least six published works bearing on a significant topic related to the Civil War. The paper must include footnotes or endnotes (see paragraph in the section “Book Reviews” for guidance on this) and a bibliography. Your paper should provide an argument that engages existing historiography.

Students need to set up meetings at some point during the first three weeks of class to decide on a topic and begin research. On Sept. 29 you will turn in an introduction and annotated bibliography of sources. The bibliography must include at least two primary sources. The introduction should explain the historical question being posed in the paper and your tentative answer to the question. The final version of the paper must be turned in by Dec. 7.

Class Discussion & participation- Class meetings consists solely of discussions of assigned texts, therefore it is critical that students participate in the discussion on a weekly basis. 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 two 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 (including weekends) 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 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 contact the instructor and 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.
Schedule of class meetings and assignments

**Week One- August 25**  Introduction

**Week Two- Sept 1**  Varon, *Disunion, The Coming of the Civil War*  Deadline for submitting date to lead discussion

**Week Three- Sept. 8**  Gienapp, *Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America*

**Week Four- Sept. 15**  Dean, *An Agrarian Republic*

**Week Five- Sept 22**  Nolan, *Lee Considered*

**Week Six- Sept. 29**  Berlin, ed., *Free At Last*  (See handout for assigned sections)  INTRODUCTION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY FOR RESEARCH PAPER DUE

**Week Seven- Oct. 6**  McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam*  FIRST BOOK REVIEW DUE

**Week Eight- Oct. 13**  Fahs, *The Imagined Civil War*


**Week Ten- Oct. 27**  Historiographical essays on electronic reserve  Instructions will be given in class on how to access these

**Week Eleven- Nov. 3**  Gallagher, *The Union War*

**Week Twelve- Nov. 10**  Neely, *The Civil War and the Limits of Destruction*  SECOND BOOK REVIEW DUE

**Week Thirteen- Nov. 17**  Ash, *A Massacre in Memphis*

Nov 24- Thanksgiving Break

**Week Fourteen- Dec 1**  Last day of class  Janney, *Remembering the Civil War*  FINAL BOOK REVIEW DUE

**RESEARCH PAPER (paper copy) due on Monday, Dec. 7 by 5:00 p.m.**

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