

HIST 455/555: Civil War & Reconstruction – Fall 2009

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208 East Hall -- 677-5571 101 Arts & Sciences -- 677-5221

Course Time and Place:

This course meets in East Hall 111 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:30-10:45 a.m.

Office Hours:

Mondays and Fridays from 9-10:30 am and Thursdays from 1-2:30 pm in East 208, although you can arrange to see me anytime. I will be in one of my offices almost every day. Give me a call. If I'm in, chances are we can meet.

Required Readings:

- Christopher J. Olson, *The American Civil War: A Hands-on History*. Hill & Wang, 2007.
- Nat Brandt, *In the Shadow of the Civil War: Passmore Williamson and the Rescue of Jane Johnson*. University of South Carolina Press, 2007.
- Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North*. Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Jason Phillips, *Diehard Rebels: The Confederate Culture of Invincibility*. University of Georgia Press, 2007.

Catalog Description:

Explores the economic, political, military and social aspects of the Civil War and Reconstruction era.

Course Objectives:

This course covers the Civil War era and Reconstruction. We will start with the antecedents of the war, spend most of the semester on the war itself, and finish up with a discussion of Reconstruction. This is not a military history course, although we will spend a fair amount of time on military issues. We will devote an equal amount of time to the social, political, economic and diplomatic issues of the period. Because of time limitations, we will not have the opportunity to give as much attention as you may desire to every important, interesting, and controversial topic of this period. However, we will discuss a wide range of issues about which you will be expected to think and form your own opinions. You will have the opportunity to explore particular areas of interest in your research paper.

Course Requirements – Undergraduates:

The instructor expects each student to keep up with the schedule of readings that appears on this syllabus. You will have a much better idea of what's going on if you have done the reading. These assignments, along with information from the lectures and discussions, will provide the material for the exams. There are 420 possible points to be earned in this class. There will be three (3) essay/ID exams. Each exam will be worth 100 points. Bring a big bluebook and pen(s) to each exam. You will also write a short research paper worth 100 points, which is explained in more detail below. A preliminary bibliography for the paper will be worth 20 points. Your course grade is determined by your average and is based on a standard 10-point scale.

Course Requirements - Graduate Students

Graduate students will meet the same requirements as the undergraduates. However, you will write a research paper that is 20-25 pages long, plus notes. It will be worth 200 points. You also have the option of writing an historiographic essay of the same length instead of a research paper.

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken every day in class. Students with more than two unapproved absences will have half a letter grade (20 points) deducted from their final grade.

THERE WILL BE NO CURVE.**Technology in the Classroom:**

During this course, we will explore integrating laptop computers into the broader curriculum. My goal is not for you to use technology for its own sake. Instead, we are going to use online resources just as professional historians do: to improve our research skills and to increase our access to primary source materials so that we can better interpret the events that we study. This will help you write better research papers this semester but will also improve your critical thinking skills beyond this course. In the Semester Schedule that appears below, you will see references to two different kinds of in-class exercises, Research Skills and History Laboratory.

Research Skills will dominate the first part of the semester. For the last 10-15 minutes of each designated class period, we will explore one of the many online tools (primarily databases) that historians use to identify the primary and secondary sources they use in their research. You will use these same resources to gather information for your semester research papers.

History Laboratories are days where members of the class will be split up to use multiple online primary sources to explore the events of a given month during the Civil War. During the first part of each class period, each student will be assigned a specific newspaper, periodical or document set and will identify what they think are the interesting points raised in that publication throughout the entire month in question. We will then come together as a class to talk about what we collectively learned, taking into account the perspective, bias, and location of each publication. We will also discuss what wasn't found in the course of our investigations.

Term Paper

Everybody in the class has different interests that may or may not be covered in the lectures or the readings. The term paper gives you the chance to explore a topic that you find particularly interesting. I recognize that some of you may not have written this kind of paper before. If that is the case, make sure you talk to me early in the semester so I can get you on the right track. This paper is not an exercise in torture -- it should be **fun**. You will want to consult the Civil War & Reconstruction Research Paper Guidelines (see end of syllabus) throughout the process.

TOPIC

You may choose any appropriate topic between 1850 and 1877 that is relevant to the class. All topics must be approved by the instructor no later than September 17th. Approval requires a one-on-one consultation during my office hours. I will be as flexible as possible on topics. If you're not sure about a topic, we'll sit down together and find one that interests you.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

You will turn in a bibliography at the beginning of class on October 13th. The bibliography must contain both primary and secondary source materials, with separate sections for each. Primary sources might include period newspapers and magazines, diaries, memoirs, government documents, and official records. Secondary sources must include a combination of monographs and journal articles. The

bibliography should be as complete as possible by this time, although I expect you will include even more material in the final paper.

FORMAT

The text of the paper will be not less than 8 nor more than 10 pages in length. I will stop reading at the bottom of page 10. It must be double spaced, typed in a standard 12-point font with appropriate margins, and have page numbers in the upper right hand corner of the page. Endnotes should start on a separate page after the text, are not considered part of the 8-10 pages, and should be used for citing both direct quotations and ideas that appear in the body of the paper. Notes and format will follow the Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). The finished paper must have a cover page listing the title of your paper, your name, the class, and the date. Staple everything together in the upper left hand corner of the page.

THESIS

Each paper must be built around an organizing thesis that demonstrates your ability to interpret your sources. A thesis does not need to be particularly complex to be effective, but it **must** be there.

GRADING

The paper is worth 100 points, or approximately 1/4 of your final grade. You will automatically lose 5 points if you miss the deadline for choosing the topic (September 17th). Your bibliography (due on October 13th) is worth an additional 20 points. The paper is due at the beginning of class on December 1st. You will turn in both a hard copy of your paper and will email me a Microsoft Word file of your paper. The paper will be graded for grammar and style as well as content.

Makeups

Makeups must be taken within two weeks of a missed exam and will only be given if the student has a university-approved absence. **It is your responsibility to arrange the makeup.** Unless there are extenuating circumstances, makeups not completed within two weeks will have a score of zero entered on the grade sheet. Students with unexcused absences will not be allowed to take a makeup.

Writing Essay Exam Questions

When writing essays, it is important that you build your answer around some kind of thesis statement. Be blunt and put your thesis in the opening paragraph. The remaining paragraphs should strengthen your thesis while answering the question. I often write essay questions that ask you to explain different aspects of a basic question. You may find it easiest to make each of these aspects the subject of its own paragraph. Be sure to support your essay throughout with details from lectures and your readings. Make it **crystal clear** to me that you understand the material. Finally, include a strong conclusion where you tell me what you just told me in the rest of the essay.

Semester Schedule

Topics and dates are subject to change.

- 01 Sept: Introduction to the Course
Research Skills: Interlibrary Loan accounts
- 03 Sept: Compromise & Confrontation 1820-1860, Part I
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 1-3.
Research Skills: WorldCat
- 08 Sept: Compromise & Confrontation 1820-1860, Part II
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 4.

- Research Skills: JSTOR
- 10 Sept: Northern/Southern Society & Slavery
Research Skills: America: History & Life
- 15 Sept: Election of 1860 & the Secession Crisis
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 5-6.
- 17 Sept: History Laboratory: May 1861
Assignment: Research paper topics due
Research Skills: Project Muse
- 22 Sept: Union and Confederate Strategy
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 7-8.
- 24 Sept: First Bull Run (Manassas)
Research Skills: Newspapers - *New York Times*, *Brooklyn Daily Eagle*, Valley of the Shadow
Project newspapers, *Richmond Daily Dispatch*
- 29 Sept: The Naval War & Blockade
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 13.
- 01 Oct: **FIRST EXAM**
Readings covered: *The American Civil War*, ch. 1-8, 13; Brandt, *In the Shadow of the Civil War*
- 06 Oct: Northern & Southern Leadership
- 08 Oct: Civil War Soldiers
- 13 Oct: The War in the Mississippi River Valley
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 12.
Assignment: Preliminary bibliography due
- 15 Oct: NO CLASS: Northern Great Plains History Conference
- 20 Oct: Peninsula Campaign
- 22 Oct: Antietam (Sharpsburg)
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 10.
- 27 Oct: Fredericksburg/Chancellorsville
- 29 Oct: Gettysburg
- 03 Nov: History Laboratory: July 1863
- 05 Nov: Northern & Southern Political Discontent
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 11.
- 10 Nov: **SECOND EXAM**
Readings covered: *The American Civil War*, ch. 10-12; Weber, *Copperheads*
- 12 Nov: Northern & Southern Society During the War
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 9, 15.
- 17 Nov: Legislative Implications of the War
- 19 Nov: Tennessee/Atlanta Campaign & the March to the Sea
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 14.
- 24 Nov: Grant in the East
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 16.
- 26 Nov: NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Recess
- 01 Dec: History Laboratory: October 1864
Assignment: Research paper due
- 03 Dec: Wartime Reconstruction
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 17.
- 08 Dec: Post-War Reconstruction
Readings: *The American Civil War*, ch. 18.

10 Dec: The Myth of the Lost Cause

15 Dec: **FINAL EXAM from 7:30-9:30 am**

Readings covered: *The American Civil War*, ch. 9, 14-18; Phillips, *Diehard Rebels*

Freedom in Learning:

Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact Dr. Matthew Moen, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, to initiate a review of the evaluation.

Disability Services:

Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester.

Ernetta L. Fox, Director
 Disability Services, Room 119 Service Center
 (605)677-6389
 Web Site: www.usd.edu/ds
 E-mail: dservices@usd.edu

College of Arts & Sciences Plagiarism Policy:

The College of Arts and Sciences considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The College supports the imposition of penalties on students who engage in academic dishonesty, as defined in the "Conduct" section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook. No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. At the discretion of the instructor, a student caught cheating or plagiarizing may be:

- Given a zero for that assignment.
- Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- Dropped from the course.
- Failed in the course.

KEEP THIS SYLLABUS AND REFER TO IT OVER THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER.
 WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK QUESTIONS.

Updated 19 August 2009

HIST455/555: Civil War & Reconstruction
Guidelines for Research Papers
Fall 2009

Topic Selection

You have tremendous latitude when it comes to picking a topic for your paper. In general, you may choose any appropriate topic between 1850 and 1877. Be creative -- there are lots of perfectly acceptable topics out there that do not have a direct bearing on the war. For example, recent classes have written about the origins of baseball, 19th century medicine, the 1862 Sioux War, abolitionism, and immigration policy. That is not to say that good papers cannot be written about the war -- there are hundreds of wonderful wartime topics to choose from -- but you should not unnecessarily limit yourself.

In general, you should begin your search by thinking about the kinds of things that interest you. You might be surprised to find some very interesting research subjects that deal with the same questions and issues that interest us today. Once you have a general interest identified (or if you are absolutely stumped) you should make an appointment to see me in my office. We will discuss your potential topic and I will help you refine or discard it in favor of something else.

Basic Requirements

Every successful research paper will do the following:

- The text of the paper will be not less than 8 nor more than 10 pages in length. I will stop reading at the bottom of page 10. The paper must be double spaced, typed in a standard 12-point font with appropriate margins, and have page numbers in the upper right hand corner of the page. Endnotes should start on a separate page after the text and are not considered part of the 8-10 pages.
- Your paper should be built around a clearly defined thesis. In other words, your paper should be making an argument of some kind. Often, the simpler the argument, the better. Sample thesis statements look like this:
 - For a paper about antebellum politics: "The economic upheaval characterized by the Market Revolution shattered the spirit of accommodation that existed between the North and the South before the Mexican War. As the country considered what to do with land acquired in the war, that upheaval transformed national political parties into sectional parties."
 - For a paper about the Battle of Antietam: "Robert E. Lee's army was not able to bring its full power to bear on the Battle of Antietam because environmental conditions and supply issues greatly reduced its manpower before the battle was ever fought."
 - For a paper about Reconstruction: "Andrew Johnson's personality flaws and political ineptitude created the clash with Congress that ultimately led to his impeachment and near removal from office."
- Be patient when it comes to formulating a thesis. Realistically, you will have a general idea about where your paper is going when you start your research but will not have immersed yourself enough in the sources to generate a succinct thesis. Don't worry, that will come with time. When you start writing, you should have a clearer idea but will probably not have a fully developed thesis until you are well into your paper. At that point, you will need to go back, revise what you've written and integrate the finished thesis into your paper.
- Your paper should include a concise conclusion where you reiterate the argument developed from your thesis and assess the validity of your interpretation.
- Your paper should include a minimum of five (5) different primary sources. Primary sources are

any materials generated at the time of the event/person/concept you are studying. You will probably use written sources the most, but be aware that photographs, music, art, and statistical tables might also be considered primary materials.

- Your paper should contain a minimum of eight (8) different secondary sources. Secondary sources are books and articles written by historians about the subject (or related subjects) that you are researching.
- Style (especially that used in your endnotes) will follow the format outlined in the Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html) or in a recent edition of Kate Turabian, *Student's Guide for Writing College Papers*.

Grading

Papers will be graded according to the following criteria:

- The "A" Paper – Excellent
Characterized by sound organization and rich content. This paper has a strong thesis, with equally strong supporting evidence in terms of both numbers and quality of sources. The points made are very specific, clearly proving the efficacy of the writer's argument. The paper is extremely well-written, showing evidence of several drafts and repeated polishing of style. This is a paper that would teach anyone but a European military historian something new about the topic, and would do it in a way that would make a reader want to reread the paper.
- The "B" Paper - Above Average
More than meets the basic requirements outlined above and contains minimal spelling and grammatical errors. The paper's thesis is cogent, clear and well-developed. The arguments supporting the thesis use compelling evidence and provide clear answers to the reader, leaving little to the imagination.
- The "C" Paper – Average
Meets the basic requirements outlined above and contains few spelling and grammatical errors. The paper is reasonably well organized, with a thesis that becomes obvious in the first few pages and then matures through the rest of the paper. The actual information presented, however, does not grab the reader's attention. A "C" paper often fails to take the reader beyond simple generalities, prompting frequent questions like "How many?" "When?" "In every case?" and "Why?" It also could often use better sources; while it meets the general criteria for numbers of sources, the quality is lacking.
- The "D" Paper – Minimal
Might be mistaken for a rough draft rather than a finished product. There are probably a few good ideas floating around in its pages, but they have not been organized or well-developed. The paper may also be marred by serious stylistic, grammatical and spelling errors. Sources are minimal in terms of both numbers and quality.
- The "F" Paper - A Complete Disaster
This is not a college-level paper. The subject matter is garbled, unorganized and contains few or no acceptable source materials. The paper is probably the result of one quick trip to the library or the web, and one night (and not a very long one at that) of non-stop writing.
NOTE: It is possible for a well-written, clearly organized and well-sourced paper to earn an "F". Any paper that shows evidence of plagiarism will automatically receive a failing grade. I will show no mercy, which means no second chances.

Other Helpful Hints

- Range broadly in your search for source materials. Often, students get so engrossed in their topic that they fail to establish a broad research base. Just because you have tracked down a

substantial body of relevant primary material does not mean that your paper has a complete bibliography. What is often missing is the supporting secondary literature to show that you haven't written your paper in a vacuum and that you understand the basic historical issues connected to your topic. Be creative in building both a primary and secondary bibliography. Many students limit themselves to materials on the immediate topic at hand. That should not be the case. For example, if you were writing a paper on women in the war, you could easily include monographs/journal articles about the role of women in the 19th century, reform movements, women and labor, the Market Revolution, class structure, religion, etc.

- Avoid using contractions.
- Avoid use of "feel" and "felt." To be particularly avoided is any construction with the phrase "he felt he"/"Smith felt he." Use instead, as appropriate, such verbs as believed, concluded, asserted, argued, described, contended, judged, and noted.
- Avoid using the first person.
- Use the active voice whenever possible, but remember that there are times when the passive voice is more appropriate.
- Use a consistent short title for a book, article, document collection, etc., after the first complete citation in the notes.
- Check publication information to be sure that you give original publication information as well as appropriate reprint information.
- Be careful when using abbreviations -- avoid using them too much. Explain or define abbreviations that are used.
- Quotations: it must be clear who is being quoted. Is it a modern author or an historical figure? In most cases it is best not to let a quotation "stand alone." Instead, be sure to preface or identify the source of the quotation.
- Do not use the phrase "a lot."
- Avoid overusing block quotations. Usually a long quote can be broken up and worked into the flow of the narrative.
- Never completely trust your spell-checker. Always read through the finished paper yourself, checking homonyms, unusual proper and place names, etc.
- Just because something is written in a book does not necessarily mean it is true. Be discriminating in your use of evidence.