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History 701 Colloquium: U.S. to 1865

Objectives:

This is a seminar course that provides an overview of the key questions and scholarly debates in the history of America to 1865. Graduate students will also consider the wide variety of methodological approaches employed by historians. By the end of the semester you should be able to do the following:

- Explain the central interpretations of American history from the colonial era through the Civil War. Through weekly readings and student-prepared historiography papers, you should also be familiar with the major secondary works of each period.
- Define differences among the Progressive, Consensus, and Radical schools of history and demonstrate how the ideological assumptions of the three schools continue to shape interpretive differences among historians.
- Understand how historians construct different conceptual frameworks based on race, class, and gender.
- Write an analytical historiographic essay.

Evaluation:

Participation 40%
Historiography Paper 20%
Response Papers 40%

Attendance Policy:

Faithful attendance is essential. You are allowed one excused absence. **If you miss more than one class, there will be a 5% reduction of your final grade for each absence. Beyond even this penalty, a student who neglects attendance and preparation risks failing the course.**

Participation (40%)

This assessment will be based on three criteria:

- 1) This is a seminar, not a lecture course. Each week pairs of students will lead class discussion. The discussion leaders will meet as a team with me before they are scheduled to lead class, preferably on Tuesday. In class, discussion leaders will ask questions about the common readings and how it relates to broader historiographic trends. They will not lecture to their fellow students.
- 2) Thorough preparation for this class is essential. All readings should be done before class. It is imperative that you have either handwritten or typed notes that outline the central questions and arguments of the assigned readings.
- 3) It is essential that you contribute to class on a consistent basis, that you intellectually engage with your peers, and that you are an active listener. In order to create an inviting environment for everyone to participate, please follow the guidelines:
 - Be ready to explain the broader argument and sub-themes of the assigned material and how the various readings fit together or diverge.
 - Instead of just criticizing a book, focus on understanding the contributions of the assigned readings and why they have had a lasting influence on the field.
 - You should feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and support them with evidence. You should also be willing to change your mind and concede to others when they make persuasive, well-reasoned arguments. Please challenge each other in a polite and courteous manner.
 - The success of a discussion depends on group interaction. Listen carefully and respond to your peers. There should be a dynamic give-and-take between the discussion leaders and the rest of the class. This can only happen if you elaborate upon the assertions of classmates or ask for clarification if you don't understand. Simply answering the questions will not lead to vigorous debate, and the discussion leaders will end up giving a monologue.
 - Make your point succinctly, avoid repetition, and stick to the subject.

Historiography Paper (20%)

This assignment is designed to help you do the following:

- Explain how and why the themes of a particular field have changed over time. To accomplish this, you need to be sensitive to the types of questions that historians have asked and to how those questions are continually debated and redefined.
- Understand how the work of historians is influenced by the time in which they live.
- Learn different historical methodologies and how the application of those theories has created new lines of inquiry and different interpretations.

Your paper (**5 to 7 pages**) will focus on an interpretive issue that is based upon 3 to 4 books that you select as well as any pertinent articles. Be certain that your chosen

monographs are published in different time periods in order to reflect the development and breadth of that particular field.

Potential topics will span the Colonial period to the Civil War. I strongly encourage you to select one of the assigned readings as one of your 3 or 4 books. The remaining two or three monographs will come from the list of recommended readings. Rough drafts are due **October 27**. **You must turn your written assignments in on time. Late papers will receive a letter grade deduction for each day after the due date.**

All historiography papers should be typed and double spaced. Use Turabian, Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations for footnote formatting for specific quotations or paraphrases.

Response Papers (40%)

You will write a **two-page response paper** every week. Each assignment should be typed and double spaced. Please use a reasonable sized font (11 or 12) and margins. You will treat these short papers as analytical reviews of the week's assigned monograph. It is essential that you dissect the argument of the book and the major interpretive themes that support the author's thesis. **Do not merely summarize the content of the book.**

Texts

Hunter, Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World
Dublin, Women at Work
Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men
Frye and Wood, Come Shouting to Zion
Huston, Calculating the Value of the Union
Klien, Unification of a Slave State
Campbell, When Sherman Marched North
Genovese, The Slaveholders' Dilemma
Richter, Facing East from Indian Country
Johnson, Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market
Linderman, Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War

All texts are available at the bookstore.

Class Schedule

August 18 Introduction

August 25 What is Historiography?

*On electronic reserve

+J-Store

Discuss: *Grob and Billias, Introduction in Interpretations of American History; +Jonathan M. Wiener, "Radical Historians and the Crisis in American History, 1959-1980" in The Journal of American History 76 (September 1989); +John Higham, "Changing Paradigms: The Collapse of Consensus History," in The Journal of American History 76 (September 1989)

September 1 Conflict in Colonial America

Discuss: Daniel K. Richter, Facing East from Indian Country (Two- to three-page response paper due)

September 8 The Backcountry

Discuss: Rachel Klein, The Unification of a Slave State (Two- to three-page response paper due)

September 15 Old Salem Backcountry Conference and Atlantic World Conference

See <http://www.uncg.edu/his/events.html>

September 22 Slavery in the Atlantic World

Discuss: Frye and Wood, Come Shouting to Zion (Two-to three-page response paper due)

September 29 Identity in Revolutionary America

Discuss: Phyllis Whitman Hunter, Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World: Massachusetts Merchants, 1670-1780. (Two- to three-page response paper due)

October 6 Revolutionary Politics

Discuss: David McCullough, John Adams. (Two- to three-page response paper due)

October 13 Jacksonian America and Industrialization

Discuss: Thomas Dublin, Women at Work (Two- to three-page response paper due)

October 20 The Anti-Slavery Movement

Discuss: Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men (Two- to three-page response paper due)

October 27 The Slave Experience

Discuss: Walter Johnson, Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market (Two- to three-page response paper due)

***Rough Drafts of historiographical papers due**

November 4 Week Off

Rough drafts, with comments, will be returned on November 1

November 10 The Slaveholding Class

Discuss: Eugene Genovese, The Slaveholders' Dilemma (**Two to three-page response paper due**)

November 17 Causes of the Civil War

Discuss: Huston, Calculating the Value of the Union (**Two- to three-page response paper due**)

FINAL PAPERS DUE NOVEMBER 18 BY 5:00 P.M.

November 24 Thanksgiving Break

December 1 The Civil War Soldier Experience and the Southern Home-front

Discuss: Gerald Linderman, Embattled Courage: The Experience of Combat in the American Civil War and Campbell, When Sherman Marched North (**Two page response paper due on each book**)