

## **History 701-01**

### **American History Colloquium to 1865**

**Robert M. Calhoun** [rmcalhoo@uncg.edu](mailto:rmcalhoo@uncg.edu) 334-5709

**Fall Semester 2004**

**Scope and Purposes of the Course:** To introduce graduate students to historical scholarship and interpretation in American history through the Civil War and training in the writing of critical historiographical essays and reviews.

### **Required Reading:**

David D. Hall, *Worlds of Wonder; Days of Judgment*

Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil's Snare*

Charles Royster, *The Fabulous History of the Great Dismal Swamp Company*

Bernard Bailyn, *The Ideological Origins of the American Revolution*

Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*

Richard Hofstadter, *The American Political Tradition and the Men Who Made It*

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun*

Gerda Lerner, *The Grimké Sisters from South Carolina*

Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*

John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, *Runaway Slaves*

### **Course Schedule:**

August 18 introduction to the course

August 25 The 17<sup>th</sup> Century: Religion; submit 750 word paper on Hall

September 1 The 17<sup>th</sup> Century: Society; submit 750 word paper on Norton

September 8 The Atlantic World; submit 750 word paper on Royster

September 15 no class; Conference on Public History and the Southern Backcountry,  
Recommended

September 22 The Pre-Revolutionary Period; submit 750 word paper on Bailyn

September 29 The Revolution; submit 750 word paper on Wood

October 6 The Early Republic; submit 750 word paper on Ulrich

October 13 Early American Politics; submit 750 paper on Hofstadter

October 20 Antebellum Reform; submit 750 word paper on Lerner

October 27 Antebellum Slavery and Slave Life; submit 750 word paper on Genovese

November 3 Antebellum Slavery and Plantation Resistance; submit 750 word paper on  
Franklin and Schweninger

### **Guidelines for Weekly Papers:**

Students may approach the writing of papers on individual required books in any way they choose; however, in preparing each paper, students *must* situate the book historiographically: where did the book fit into scholarly interpretation; who did it challenge, who challenged it? How did wider forces in the academic world, in politics, and in culture shape the author's approach? Papers must, in some way, reflect historiography. Students should therefore read reviews of the book, essays by and about the author, excerpts from historiographically related books and articles.

November 10 Just for fun, read quickly two presidential biographies and be prepared to discuss the outcome of the 2004 election in historical terms.

November 17 In the light of the class readings and discussions, each student should submit a 2-3 page proposal for a longer (1,200 word) paper on a cluster of five to ten related books in American history before 1865. Share the paper with three other class members. Each "jury" of evaluators should present criticism of the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal and each proposal writer should respond.

December 1 and 8 Presentation of longer papers.

December 15 Longer papers due.

### **Resources and Bibliography:**

For models of longer book reviews see *Reviews in American History*, *William and Mary Quarterly*, and Jack P. Greene, *Interpreting Early America: Historiographical Essays*.

For a cultural interpretation of American historiography over the past one hundred years, see Peter Novick, *That Noble Dream: The "Objectivity Question" and the American Historical Profession*.

Current issues of *Reviews* and the *WMQ* are in the Serials Room, Jackson Library, recent issues available from the Serials Dept. desk, and bound volumes are in the stacks at E171 R480 and F221 W71 respectively. The Novick and Greene volumes are on one day reserve.

### **"Historiographical Discipline":**

Staying abreast of recent of recent scholarship and critical opinion in the field of History requires systematic attention. Historians develop a list of 5-10 quarterly journals to consult regularly. Read the reviews that interest you and use the publishers' ads as a shortlist of important new books. In American History such a list of journals should include the two national journals, *American Historical Review* and the *Journal of American History*; next in importance are the *William and Mary Quarterly* for early American history and two regional journals, the *Journal of Southern History* and the *New England Quarterly*. Most American historians have a special interest in a particular state, and every state has its own historical journal, some published by the state historical agency and some by a privately endowed historical society. Pennsylvania has one of each as did New York for many years. Keeping a notebook on book reviews is an excellent way to prepare for graduate comprehensive and general examinations.