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.

• 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.

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 (30%)

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 (This includes Blackboard posts), that you 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 and read 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 (30%)**

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 (1,500 to 1,800 words) should explore an historical debate surrounding a specific interpretive issue or topic. You will select three to five books as well as pertinent articles to analyze the evolution of a particular historiographical debate. 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 to 5 books but your paper cannot include books from your literature review essays (see below). The remaining monographs may come from the list of recommended readings or from Foner’s *The New American History*. Select a topic and provide a tentative bibliography (Word Attachment please) by **September 1**. Rough drafts (Word attachment please) are due **November 11**. **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.

**Review Essays (20%)**

During the course of the semester you will write four review essays (650 words). 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.**

**Literature Review Essays (20%)**

You will write two literature review essays (1,200 words). These papers are designed as mini-historiographical reviews of the assigned book and two other relevant secondary sources that speak to similar interpretive issues.

**Grading**

A= 93-100; A-=90-92; B+=87-89; B=83-86; B-80-82; C+=77-79; C=73-76; C-=70-72; D+=67-69; D=63-66; D-=60-62; F= 50 or below

**Texts**

Hunter, *Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World*  
Anderson, *Imagined Communities*  
Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*  
Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country*  
Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*  
Stampp, *Imperiled Union*  
Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution*  
Foner, *The New American History*
Class Schedule

August 18  Introduction

August 25  What is Historiography?
*On Blackboard
+J-Store
# E-Reserve


Assignment: Blackboard Discussion (All Groups)

September 1  Conflict in Colonial America

Discuss: Daniel K. Richter, Facing East from Indian Country

Suggested Readings: Claudio Saunt, A New Order of Things, James H. Merrell, Into the American Woods; Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier; Daniel K. Richter, Facing East from Indian Country; Susan Sleeper-Smith, Indian Women and French Men; Anthony Wallace, Death and Rebirth of the Seneca

Assignment: Groups A, B, and C 650 word review essay

September 8  Constructing Race


Assignment: Blackboard Discussion (All Groups)

September 15  Creating a Slave Society

Discuss: Edmund Morgan, American Slavery, American Freedom

Suggested Readings: Jack Greene, Pursuits of Happiness, Peter Wood, Black Majority; David Brion Davis, The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture; Allan Kullikoff, Tobacco and Slaves; Robin Blackburn, The Creation of Modern Slavery

Assignment: Group A (650 word review essay due)
Group B (Blackboard Assignment)

**September 22** The Practice of Cultural and Social History

**Discuss:** #Neil Campbell and Alasdair Kean, Introduction in American Cultural Studies; Alice Kessler-Harris, “Social History,” in The New American History; James Scott, Domination and the Art of Resistance

**Assignment:** Blackboard Discussion Board (All Groups)

**September 29** Identity in Revolutionary America

**Discuss:** Phyllis Whitman Hunter, Purchasing Identity in the Atlantic World: Massachusetts Merchants, 1670-1780.

**Assignment:** Group C (650 word review essay)

**Group A (Blackboard Assignment)**


Suggested Readings: Perry Miller, Errand into the Wilderness; John Demos, A Little Commonwealth; Edmund Morgan, The Puritan Dilemma, Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood; Carol Karlson, The Devil in the Shape of a Woman; Richard Bushman, From Puritan to Yankee

**October 6** Revolutionary Politics

**Discuss:** Gary Nash, The Unknown American Revolution and #Alfred F. Young, “Introduction,” in Beyond the American Revolution


**Assignment:** Groups B (650 word review essay)

**Group C (Blackboard Assignment)**

**Group A (1,200 word literature review includes #Alfred F. Young, “Afterword: How Radical Was the American Revolution,” in Beyond the American Revolution and #Alan Kulikoff, “The American Revolution, Capitalism, and the Formation of the Yeoman Classes,” in Beyond the American Revolution)

**October 13** Jacksonian Markets and the Making of a Middle Class

**Discuss:** Paul Johnson, Shopkeeper’s Millennium

Assignment: Groups A (650 word review essay)
Group B (Blackboard Assignment)

October 20 Hegemony and Resistance: The Slave Experience


Assignment: Blackboard (All Groups)

October 27 Gender Battles

Discuss: Christine Stansell, City of Women

Suggested Readings: Mary Ryan, Women in Public; Nancy Issenberg, Sex and Citizenship in Antebellum America; Mark Carnes, Ed., Meanings of Manhood; Nancy Hewitt, Women’s Activism and Social Change; Loriz Ginzburg, Women and the Work of Benevolence; Drew Gilpin Faust, Mothers of Invention; Ellen Dubois, Feminism and Suffrage; Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, Within the Plantation Household

Assignment: GroupsC (650 word review essay)
Group A (Blackboard Assignment)

November 3 Causes of the Civil War

Discuss: Eric Foner, Free Soil, Free Labor, and Free Men; #Mark Smith, “Listening to the Heard Worlds of Antebellum America” and responses from reviewers in Journal of the Historical Society (2000); Kenneth Stampp, Chapter Seven in Imperiled Union

**Assignment:** Groups B (650 word review essay on Foner)  
Group C (Blackboard Assignment)  
Groups A (1,200 word literature review includes #William Gienapp, “The Crime Against Sumner: The Caning of Charles Sumner and the Rise of the Republican Party” in *Civil War History* 1979 25 (3) and Kenneth Stampp, “Race, Slavery, and the Republican Party of the 1850s,” in *The Imperiled Union*

**November 10** Creating National Identity

**Discuss:** Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; #David Potter, “The Historians Use of Nationalism and Vice Versa,” in *The South and the Sectional Conflict*

**Assignment:** Blackboard Discussion (All Groups)

**November 11** First Drafts of Historiography Paper Due (Word Attachment by 9:00 a.m.)

**November 17** Week Off

**November 24** Thanksgiving Break

**December 1** Confederate Nationalism

**Discuss** Drew Gilpin Faust, *The Creation of Confederate Nationalism*


**Assignment:** Blackboard Discussion (All Groups) and Final Historiographical Papers Due