

Fall 2015 | University of North Carolina, Greensboro
Prof. Watson Jennison | Email: wwjennis@uncg.edu | Office: MHRA 2143 | Phone: 334-4092
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, and Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

HIS 301: Race and Slavery Course Syllabus

Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, twelve million Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas. This class explores how one strand of this diaspora developed in what would eventually become the United States. We will examine how people of African descent struggled against their oppression to reconstitute their lives. We will also analyze how the African American identity, born in bondage, changed with the rise and fall of slavery in the United States.

Course Requirements: The requirements for this course include assigned readings for each class, periodic assignments and quizzes on the assigned readings, one paper, and two exams.

Assigned Readings: There are two books assigned for this class: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (1998) and Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, and *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (2000). Both books can be purchased at the University Bookstore. Additional readings are on Canvas and the internet. These readings will be listed under Files on Canvas by week as they become available. The assigned reading list may undergo minor changes, including the addition of primary source readings; students should be sure to consult the most current version of the syllabus on Canvas.

Electronic Devices: The use of laptops, tablets, cellular phones, or any other type of electronic device is prohibited during class.

Attendance and Late Policy: You are allowed two unexcused absences. After two unexcused absences, you will receive a zero for participation for that day. The instructor will excuse absences with a doctor's note or legitimate documentation of other emergencies. In addition, students will be dropped from the class for excessive absences. Assignments submitted in class are due at the beginning of the class period. Students who submit assignments after the deadline will be penalized with a grade deduction based on the lateness of the assignment. No assignments will be accepted one week after the due date. All assignments must be submitted in hard copy.

Plagiarism Policy: The University defines plagiarism as intentionally or knowingly "representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise."¹ (See the

¹ <http://sa.uncg.edu/dean/academic-integrity/violation/plagiarism/>

University's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) for further information.) All sources (books, articles, documents, internet sites, etc.) used in any paper or assignment must be properly cited or will be considered plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism will receive a zero and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the University.

Final Grade Composition

- Participation 10%
- Assignments 20%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Exam 25%
- Paper 25%

Participation: Participation in discussion is mandatory. **Students should be prepared to discuss the readings on the day that they are assigned.** Attendance alone is not sufficient for full participation credit.

Assignments: Students will be given brief in-class and take-home writing and research assignments based on the assigned readings. Students will also be periodically quizzed on readings and lectures.

Exams: There will be two exams in this class: one midterm exam on October 8 and one final exam on December 5.

Papers: Students are required to write a paper based on assigned readings and lectures, due on November 24. All sources in the papers should be properly cited according to the guidelines laid out in [The Chicago Manual of Style](#), which is available on-line.

Class Schedule

Week 1 (August 18, 20): African Myths and Realities

Tuesday: Introduction

Thursday: (Mis)Conceptions of Africa

Readings: “Ghana’s Uneasy Embrace of Slavery’s Diaspora,” *New York Times*, December 27, 2005 on internet; Robert Chrisman, “The Black Scholar Forum: A Symposium on Roots” on Canvas; Philip Nobile, “Uncovering Roots,” on Canvas

Week 2 (August 25, 27): The Creation of the Atlantic World

Tuesday: West Africa and the Development of Early Commerce

Readings: John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, pp. 1-71 (Part I and Part II) on Canvas

Thursday: The Rise of the Plantation Complex

Readings: John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, pp. 72-97 (Part III) on Canvas

Week 3 (September 1, 3): The Atlantic Slave Trade

Tuesday: Capture and Enslavement

Readings: John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, pp. 98-127 (Part IV) on Canvas

Thursday: The Middle Passage and Destinations

Readings: Contemporary Views of Slaving and Slaves on Canvas

Week 4 (September 8, 10): Early North American Slave Societies

Tuesday: Chesapeake and New England

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 1-63; *Testimony from Virginia Court Records* (1681) on Canvas; *New Netherlands Petition*, 1661 on Canvas

Thursday: Lowcountry and Louisiana

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 64-92

Week 5 (September 15, 17): Maturation of the Plantation Complex

Tuesday: Chesapeake and Lowcountry

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 93-176; *Virginia Slave Code* (1705) on Canvas; *The Stono Rebellion in South Carolina, 1739* on Canvas

Thursday: North and Louisiana

Reading: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 177-217

Week 6 (September 22, 24): Slavery and Freedom in the Age of Revolution

Tuesday: A War for Liberty?

Readings: Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, "The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, and the Atlantic Working Class in the Eighteenth Century," *Journal of Historical Sociology*, vol. 3, no. 3 (Sept. 1990), pp. 225-252 on Canvas; Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves, and the American Revolution*, pp. 1-18 on Canvas; "Slaves' Petitions For Freedom, 1773-1779" on Canvas; Henry Louis Gates, "Native Sons of Liberty," *New York Times*, Aug. 6, 2006 on Canvas

Thursday: The Haitian Revolution

Readings: Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804*, pp. 7-42 on Canvas

Week 7 (September 29, October 1): The Aftermath of Independence

Tuesday: “All Men are Created Equal”

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 217-289; “Negroes’ Protest Against Taxation Without Representation, 1780” on Canvas

Thursday: Constitutional Debates over Slavery

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 290-365

Week 8 (October 6, 8): Creating the Cotton Kingdom

Tuesday: Expanding the Borders of Slavery

Readings: Claudio Saunt, *A New Order of Things*, pp. 111-135 on Canvas

Thursday: **Mid-Term Exam**

Week 9 (October 13, 15): Internal Slave Trade

Tuesday: Class Cancelled – Fall Break

Thursday: The Internal Slave Trade

Readings: Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life*, pp. 245-274 on Canvas; Excerpts from Charles Ball, *Fifty Years in Chains, or Life of an American Slave*, on Canvas

Week 10 (October 20, 22): Life on the Plantation

Tuesday: The “Quarters”

Readings: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, chapters I-IX; *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, chapters I-VII

Thursday: Plantation Labor

Readings: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, chapter X; Steven Miller, “Plantation Labor Organization and Slave Life on the Cotton Frontier: The Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt, 1815-1840,” in *Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas*, pp. 155-69, eds. Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan, on Canvas

Week 11 (October 27, 29): Life in Town

Tuesday: Free Blacks and Free People of Color

Readings: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, chapters VIII-XIV; Shane White, “‘It Was A Proud Day’: African Americans, Festivals, and Parades in the North, 1741-1834,” *Journal of American History* (June 1994), pp. 13-50 on Canvas

Thursday: Urban Slavery

Readings: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, chapter XI and Appendix; *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, chapters XV-XXI

Week 12 (November 3, 5): The Controversy over Slavery

Tuesday: Abolitionism

Readings: Timothy Patrick McCarthy, "'To Plead Our Own Cause': Black Print Culture and the Origins of American Abolitionism," in *Prophets of Protest: Reconsidering the History of American Abolitionism*, eds. Timothy Patrick McCarthy and John Stauffer, pp. 114-144 on Canvas; David Walker, *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, Article I and Article IV on [internet](#)

Thursday: The Political Crisis of the 1850s

Readings: Hannah Geffert, "Regional Black Involvement in John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry," in *Prophets of Protest: Reconsidering the History of American Abolitionism*, eds. Timothy Patrick McCarthy and John Stauffer, pp. 165-182 on Canvas; "Harper's Ferry Editorials," 1859 on Canvas

Week 13 (November 10, 12): Civil War and Emancipation

Tuesday: The End of Compromise

Readings: W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, pp. 55-84 on Canvas

Thursday: Black Soldiers in Blue

Readings: Joseph T. Glatthaar, "Black Glory: The African-American Role in Union Victory," in *Why the Confederacy Lost*, ed. Gabor Boritt, pp. 135-162 on Canvas

Week 14 (November 17, 19): The Rise of Reconstruction

Tuesday: Rehearsals for Reconstruction

Readings: Eric Foner, *Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction*, pp. 76-106 on Canvas

Thursday: Radical Reconstruction

Readings: Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South*, pp. 216-264 on Canvas

Week 15 (November 24, 26): The Fall of Reconstruction

Tuesday: A Failed Revolution

Readings: Martha Hodes, "The Sexualization of Reconstruction Politics: White Women and Black Men in the South after the Civil War," in *American Sexual Politics: Sex, Gender, and Race since the Civil War*, pp. 59-74 on Canvas

Paper due at the beginning of class.

Thursday: Class Cancelled – Thanksgiving Holiday

Final Exam: Saturday, December 5, 3:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.