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 bondage 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 Course Documents on Canvas 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 under Course Information.

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

Attendance: Attendance in class is mandatory. The door will close ten minutes after class starts. After ten minutes, students will no longer be admitted to the class and will be considered absent. Each student is allowed two absences. After two unexcused absences, students 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. After ten absences, students will receive an automatic F.

Late Assignments: All assignments must be submitted in hard copy. Unless otherwise specified on the syllabus, papers are due in class 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. If a student leaves a paper in the professor’s mailbox, it is the student’s responsibility to check that the professor has received the paper.
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 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 15%
- Assignments 20%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Exam 20%
- 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 13 and one final exam on December 1.

Papers: Students are required to write a paper based on assigned readings and lectures, due on November 4. 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 23, 25): African Myths and Realities**

Tuesday: Introduction

Thursday: (Mis)Conceptions of Africa

**Week 2 (August 30, September 1): The Creation of the Atlantic World**

¹ [http://sa.uncg.edu/dean/academic-integrity/violation/plagiarism/]
Tuesday: West Africa and the Development of Early Commerce

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

**Week 3 (September 6, 8): The Atlantic Slave Trade**

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

Thursday: The Middle Passage and Destinations
Readings: Contemporary Views of Slaving and Slaves on Canvas

**Week 4 (September 13, 15): 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 20, 22): Maturation of the Plantation Complex**

Tuesday: Chesapeake and Lowcountry

Thursday: North and Louisiana
Reading: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 177-217

**Week 6 (September 27, 29): Slavery and Freedom in the Age of Revolution**

Tuesday: A War for Liberty?

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 (October 4, 6): The Aftermath of Independence**

Tuesday: “All Men are Created Equal”

Thursday: Constitutional Debates over Slavery

**Week 8 (October 11, 13): 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 18, 20): 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 25, 27): 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

**Week 11 (November 1, 3): Life in Town**

Tuesday: 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 VIII- XXI
Thursday: Class Cancelled

*Paper due at noon on Friday, November 4.*

**Week 12 (November 8, 10): The Controversy over Slavery**

Tuesday: Abolitionism

Thursday: The Political Crisis of the 1850s

**Week 13 (November 15, 17): Civil War and Emancipation**

Tuesday: The End of Compromise

Thursday: Black Soldiers in Blue

**Week 14 (November 22, 24): The Rise of Reconstruction**

Tuesday: Rehearsals for Reconstruction

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 29, December 1): 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

Thursday: Final Exam