

# COLLOQUIUM IN AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1865

**Dr. Mark Elliott**

**History 701-01**

**Wed 5:30-8:20**

**MHRA 1204**

**FALL 2020 Office Hours: Schedule a Zoom meeting**

## **DESCRIPTION:**

The purpose of this reading-intensive course is to introduce graduate students to the major historiographical debates and latest trends in scholarship in American history. Because the scholarship is vast, it is impossible to address all of the important debates that exist in the field of pre-1865 American history. Rather than cover a “greatest hits” of historical works, this class highlights the most recent developments in American historiography. Political, social, cultural, economic, and intellectual history approaches are represented; regional, national, transnational, and global approaches are sampled; categories of analysis and perspectives on the past include labor and class, race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, and other important themes.

Students should approach this course as an opportunity to work on the skills required of professional historians. These include the ability to read scholarship for its thesis/argument, understand the historiographical debates that scholarship engages, and develop one’s own critical perspective on the work of other historians. All students will be expected to treat opposing viewpoints fairly without distortion or oversimplification and engage in historiographic debates with professionalism. Students should strive not only to grasp the major debates accurately, but also to figure out where they stand personally within these debates. The techniques learned in this class will enable students to explore many more historiographical debates beyond what is covered in this foundational course on their own.

Each class meeting is organized around the discussion of one book as the main reading for the week, and supplementary readings. To place a book in dialogue with the historiography, students will also read short companion articles and make presentations from the supplementary reading lists. Students will share book reviews and summaries with each other and work collectively to broaden their base of knowledge. There will be a cumulative final exam to prepares students for the qualifying exams for MA and PhD students.

## **GOALS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. Reading secondary sources efficiently, identifying main arguments, critically evaluating methodologies and assess historiographic contributions.

2. Participating in sophisticated academic debates and exchanges while maintaining the requisite civility and respect for one's colleagues.
3. Delivering informative and useful oral presentations to peers.
4. Formal writing in specific genres of the profession, including book reviews, reflective essays, and presentations of research findings.
5. Establish a foundation for scholarly expertise on pre-1865 American historiography.

## **COURSE POLICIES:**

### **Participation:**

You are expected to complete each week's reading before class so that you can participate constructively in a class discussion. Your participation grade will be based on the overall *quality* of your contributions to the class—not the quantity of contributions you make—and the professionalism with which you conduct yourself in scholarly discussion and debate. You can earn up to 6 points per class discussion. Each class discussion will be graded as follows: No constructive contributions to discussion = 0 points. Minimal participation = 1-3 points. Strong participation = 4-5 points. Outstanding participation = 6 points.

Attendance is mandatory. One missed class will not affect your grade, other than lost participation points. Each class missed after the first one will lower your participation grade by 10 points (in addition to the lost participation points).

### **Presentations:**

Each student will be assigned three presentations over the course of the semester. Presentations will last from 12-15 minutes (speakers will be asked to conclude at 15 minutes). One of these will be a presentation on the main reading for the week, and a second one will be on book chosen from the supplementary reading list. For these presentations, the presenter will be responsible to introduce the author, **concisely** summarize the argument, discuss the scholarly reception of the book, and assesses its historiographical significance. The student must also craft 3-5 questions for discussion arising from the reading. In the supplementary book presentation, the student will summarize the book in more detail for the other students in the class who have not read it, and make comparisons and connections between the supplementary reading and the main reading for the week. The third presentation will be based on one of the articles assigned for the week. This presentation will be shorter, roughly 5 minutes, and will not require a discussion of the article's reception.

### **Discussion Forum**

The Canvas site allows for class discussion to continue beyond the normal time/place constraints of the classroom. You are required to make at least ONE substantial thoughtful comment *week of at least 200 words*, and ONE constructive/observational reply to another student's posting each week. Your substantial comment must be posted by 12:00 noon on Tuesday so that your classmates can read and respond to it

before the class meets on Wednesday. But you do not have to wait until Tuesday! In fact, you are encouraged to post early in the week. You need not have finished the reading when you post—you may post your reaction to any aspect of the book. Then, you must read the other posts and respond to one of them by class time on Wednesday. Your response to another student's posting must be a thoughtful and constructive response (such as if you were having a conversation in the same room with them). Please make your comments ORIGINAL. If someone has made a point you wanted to make find something else to say.

Your grade will be based on the substance of your posting which includes the thought and effort you put into it as well as whether it meets the minimum word length. You can post more than twice a week, but make sure that you have at least *one substantial posting each week of at least 200 words*, and one reply.

### **Written Work:**

There will be two significant papers over the course of the semester and a take-home final. Each paper will be a comparative review of two books assessing their contributions to the larger historiography. One book must be one of the main readings of the week on the syllabus, and the other must come from the supplementary reading list from the same week as the main reading chosen. The Final Exam will be a take-home essay format based on the material covered in the class this semester.

<b>DUE DATES:</b>	<b>Dual Book Review #1:</b>	<b>October 12 at 9 pm.</b>
	<b>Dual Book Review #2:</b>	<b>November 16 at 9 pm.</b>
	<b>Final Exam Essay:</b>	<b>December 7 at 9 pm.</b>

Detailed assignment sheets describing the expectations, length, and due dates for the writings assignment will be posted on Canvas. Late papers will be penalized for each day the paper is late. All written assignments must be completed and turned in through Canvas in order to pass the class.

### **Grading Breakdown:**

78 Points	Participation in class discussion. (You can earn up to 6 points per week)
30 Points	Main Reading Presentation
30 Points	Supplementary Reading Presentation
10 Points	Article Presentation
78 Points	Canvas Posts (You can earn up to 6 points per week).
100 Points	Comparative Book Review #1
100 Points	Comparative Book Review #2
75 Points	Final Exam

## Final Grade Scale:

**A** 465-500; **A-** 450-464; **B+** 435-449; **B** 415-434; **B-** 400-414; **C+** 385-399; **C** 365-384; **C-** 350-364; **D+** 335-349; **D** 315-334; **D-** 300-314; **F** 299 or less.

## Accommodations:

UNCG is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with recognized disabilities should register with the Office of Accessibility Resources & Services (OARS). OARS is located on the second floor of the Elliott University Center (EUC) in Suite 215 and maintains a webpage at <http://ods.uncg.edu/>. ([Links to an external site.](#)) The mission of OARS is to provide, coordinate, and advocate for services which enable undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities to receive equal access to a college education and to all aspects of university life.

## Academic Integrity Policy:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. All papers will be turned in using the “Turn It In” function on Canvas which automatically scans your paper for plagiarism. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and the penalties for plagiarism. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details: <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/> ([Links to an external site.](#))

## REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG’s Bookstore):

The books listed below are available for purchase at the bookstore. Other readings can be accessed on Canvas. \*Free access to e-book is available through Jackson Library on-line catalog.

1. Russell Shorto, *The Island at the Center of the World: The Epic Story of Dutch Manhattan*
2. \*Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West*
3. Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship*
4. James Kloppenburg, *Toward Democracy: The Struggle for Self-Rule*
5. \*Lyons, Clare. *Sex among the Rabble: An Intimate History of Gender and Power in the Age of Revolution, Philadelphia, 1730-1830*
6. Kathleen Duval, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution*
7. \*Joanne Freedman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*
8. \*Paul Polgar, *Standard-Bearers of Equality: America’s First Abolition Movement*
9. Claudio Saunt, *Unworthy Republic: The Dispossession of Native Americans*
10. \*Edward Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery and the Making of American Capitalism*
11. Amy Greenberg, *A Wicked War: Polk, Clay, Lincoln and the 1846 Invasion of Mexico*
12. Bruce Levine, *The Fall of the House of Dixie*
13. \*Thavolia Glymph, *Women in the Civil War*

# Required UNCG Syllabus Language on COVID

As UNCG returns to face-to-face course offerings in fall 2020, the campus community must recognize and address concerns about physical and emotional safety. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Wearing a face covering that covers both nose and mouth \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- Observing [social distance \(Links to an external site.\)](#) in the classroom
- Engaging in proper hand washing hygiene when possible
- [Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19 \(Links to an external site.\)](#)
- Staying home if you are ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for maintaining appropriate social distance during class and facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seat at every class meeting and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking and social distancing requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow these basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and social distancing requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact [OARS \(Links to an external site.\)](#) (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.

Health and well-being impact learning and academic success. Throughout your time in the university, you may experience a range of concerns that can cause barriers to your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling [336-334-5874](tel:336-334-5874), visiting the website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> ([Links to an external site.](#)) or visiting the Anna M. Gove

Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> (Links to an external site.) or reaching out to [recovery@uncg.edu](mailto:recovery@uncg.edu)

### **COVID-19 Spartan Shield Video**

UNCG Chancellor Frank Gilliam has challenged us to create a Culture of Care at UNCG where we all wear face coverings and social distance, less to protect ourselves but rather more to protect everyone around us. It shows that you care about the well being of everyone around you. We have created this video featuring your student body presidents to better explain how and why this is so important.

Please watch this video before the first day of classes.