



HIS 411A - Seminar in Historical Research and Writing: "Reconstruction in History and Historical Memory"

Meeting Time: MW 3:30-4:45

Meeting Place: MHRA 2204

History Department website: <https://his.uncg.edu> (Links to an external site.)

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/> (Links to an external site.)

Professor Mark Elliott

Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4 or by appointment

E-mail: me Elliot@uncg.edu

Faculty webpage: <https://his.uncg.edu/faculty/elliott.html> (Links to an external site.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

No period of American history has been as revised as thoroughly as the period of Reconstruction after the Civil War. Subject to highly-politicized interpretations, Reconstruction has been grossly

distorted in both popular culture and professional history. From the films *Birth of A Nation* and *Gone with the Wind* to the scholarship of William Dunning and Claude Bowers, propaganda has often overshadowed historical accuracy in the most influential accounts of Reconstruction. During the era of the Civil Rights movement, moreover, historical debates over Reconstruction often mirrored partisan divides over the politics of civil rights. This course will explore both the history and the historical memory of Reconstruction, using this period as an example to better understand the ideological stakes that can be involved in the recounting of history. The class will examine the evolution of historical writing on Reconstruction, and the portrayals of Reconstruction in popular culture, while weighing these portrayals against original primary sources from the era. The students will examine different historiographical schools of thought about Reconstruction, including the emerging historical work that views Reconstruction as a "Second Founding" of the nation based on principles of civic equality. Taking a "long" perspective on this era, the course will not restrict its focus to the years 1865-1877 but rather will follow the public debate over this historical period well into the 20th century. Student research projects may examine any aspect of the history or memory of Reconstruction.

Prerequisites: For social studies licensure students: HIS 430 and permission of instructor. For all other history majors: HIS 391 and permission of instructor.

LEARNING GOALS:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify an appropriate research topic and pertinent primary and secondary sources.
2. Critically analyze various primary sources within their historical context.
3. Evaluate historiographical debates within an historical field.
4. Undertake original historical research by collecting and interpreting historical documents, and framing creative analytical questions to drive their research.
5. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing.

Communication:

You must read your email regularly. I will make periodic announcements regarding important information about the course, accessible in the "Announcements" tab. You should use your settings to have announcements arrive in your email inbox. I will provide feedback on assignments under comments. I might also send you a message via Canvas or an email to your UNCG email address if needed. It is your responsibility to monitor and read all of these communications in a timely manner. Please allow me a full day to respond (and don't expect replies on weekends and holidays), but I'll usually reply sooner.

Accessibility:

It is the University's goal that online learning experiences be as accessible as possible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. For students with recognized

disabilities, please see the resources below. Students must be able to access Canvas and attend live discussion sections via Zoom. For this, you will require a computer and online access.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with recognized disabilities should register promptly 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.](#)) [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. Students who have concerns about accessing any of the course material should contact OARS for assistance or let the professor know immediately.

Health and Well-Being Statement:

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, 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

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 through Canvas so that the “Turnitin” function will scan your paper for plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense of academic dishonesty that involves taking the work of another person and misrepresenting it as your own. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and UNCG's policies regarding [plagiarism](#) ([Links to an external site.](#)). Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details and definitions: [UNCG Academic Integrity Policies](#)

UNCG COVID-19 Policy:

"As we return for Fall 2022, all students, faculty, and staff and all visitors to campus are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. While face-coverings are optional in most areas on campus, individuals are encouraged to wear masks. All individuals and visitors to campus are asked to follow the following actions:

- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene.
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19.
- Staying home when 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.
- Completing a [self-report](#) when experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, testing positive for COVID-19, or being identified as a close contact of someone who has tested positive.
- Staying informed about the University's policies and announcements via the [COVID-19](#)

Students who are ill, quarantining, or isolating should not attend in-person class meetings, but should instead contact their instructor(s) so alternative arrangements for learning and the submission of assignments can be made where possible.

As we continue to manage COVID-19 on our campus, we are following the lead of the local health department and we will adjust our plans to balance student success, instructional requirements, and the hallmarks of the collegiate experience with the safety and wellbeing of our campus community."

Assignments:

More information will be provided on each of the above assignments in the corresponding Canvas assignment. Please see the Canvas assignment for details.

Attendance:

Attendance is required for this class and will be recorded each meeting. There are no excused or unexcused absences (please no doctor's notes). Each student may miss up to 2 classes with no grade penalty. These unpenalized absences are meant to cover all emergencies and illnesses (including Covid-19 infection). Each absence in excess of 2 will lower your final grade by - 15. Students are responsible for completing on time all work assigned (or due) on days in which they are absent.

Quizzes:

You are expected to complete each class's reading ahead of time so that you can informed and participate constructively in class discussion. In order to incentivize preparation for class, there will be a quiz every Wednesday at the beginning of class. These quizzes will be based on the videos and readings for the week. If you come late to class, you will miss the quiz and will have to do an alternative assignment if you want to make up the lost points.

Group Discussion Leader:

Each student will be assigned to lead a small group discussion of 4-6 students for Wednesday's class discussions. When serving as group leader, the student must prepare by crafting a list of discussion questions based on the material for that class. They should also write a page or so of their own reaction to the course material. During the group discussion lasting roughly 20

minutes, the leader will lead a discussion and take notes on the students responses and reactions to the questions.

Research Presentation Video:

Each student will make a substantial presentation in the form of a video. Students will be trained in the methods of video editing and filming. Based on research on a topic of your choosing that relates to Reconstruction, students will create a video presentation of their findings, and must appear in your own video. The video must be 7-10 minutes long. It must present an argument and support that argument with primary source evidence. Your video will be graded on the effectiveness of the presentation, along with the persuasiveness of the argument.

Annotated Bibliography:

Students will turn in an annotated bibliography that details the sources they will use for their research paper.

Research Paper:

The main project for this course is to guide students as they write a research paper of 4500-6000 words (roughly 15-20 pages) in length. Writing a successful research paper takes time, planning, and many revisions. This is not a project that can be completed the night before it is due. In order to help you plan, I have developed a number of short assignments to guide you through the steps involved in producing a research paper.

Grading Breakdown:

-15 Points:	Absence Penalty
50 Points:	Weekly Quizzes (SLO 1,2,3)
50 Points:	Discussion Group Leader (SLO 5)
75 Points:	Primary Source Analysis (SLO 2)
5 Points:	Choose a Research Topic (SLO 1)
25 Points:	Research Paper Outline (SLO 2)
20 Points:	Annotated Bibliography (SLO 1)
50 Points	Peer Review Assessments (SLO 4, 5)
80 Points:	Final Research Presentation (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)
125 Points:	Final Research Paper (including draft) (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

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.

Required Readings:

Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*

Prince, K. Stephen, *Radical Reconstruction, A Brief History With Documents*

Tourgee, Albion W. *A Fool's Errand* (1879)

All other readings are available on Canvas