

HIS 426/526: Topics in the Civil War and Reconstruction:

"American Nationalism and the Second Founding"

Course Description:

This course examines the transformation of American nationalism in the middle of the 19th century, with a particular focus on how the reforms of the Reconstruction period, and resistance to them, have remade national law and political culture. Historians have begun to view the profound changes that the nation underwent during the Civil War and its aftermath as a "Second Founding" of the country that profoundly changed the constitutional framework and governmental power relations within the nation. The class will examine what the "First Founding" left unresolved about American nationhood, and how the conflicting ideas about national identity played a central role in the Civil War. The experience of the Civil War then generated more variations of American national identity that had to be reconciled in its aftermath. Antislavery nationalism may have triumphed in the war, but it also morphed into new forms during Reconstruction. Confederate nationalism may have been defeated but it transformed itself and survived long beyond the Confederacy itself. We will conclude the course by exploring the lasting legacies of this period for American nationalism. Students will read both primary and secondary sources and conduct their own historical research on areas of this topic of interest to them.

Meeting Time: MW 2:00-3:15

Meeting Place: MHRA 1211

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.)

History Department Social Media:

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/uncghistory1/> (Links to an external site.)

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

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

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCmAM-qlz-IVzKR_YmoHq4A[Links to an external site.](#)

Student 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 Undertake original historical research by collecting and interpreting historical documents and framing creative analytical questions to drive their research.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. 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](#)

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 3 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 3 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 and Discussion Boards:

All students are expected to complete each class's reading ahead of time so that you can be informed and participate constructively in class discussion. In order to incentivize preparation for class, there will be an online quiz or discussion board that is due before the beginning of class every Wednesday. These quizzes will be based on the assigned videos and readings for the week.

Group Discussion Leader:

Each student will be assigned to lead a small group discussion of 4-5 students for Wednesday's class discussions. When serving as group leader, the student must prepare a list of discussion questions based on the material for that class, along with a 300-word (minimum) summary of the reading and their analysis of it. This document will be turned in for a grade via Canvas. During the group discussion lasting roughly 20 minutes, the leader will provide an introduction to the materials and then lead a discussion. They will be responsible to take notes on the student responses and reactions to the questions.

Research Presentation Video (undergraduate only):

Each undergrad student will make a substantial presentation this semester in the form of a video. Students will receive instruction in the methods of video creation and editing. The topic will be based on research of your own choosing that relates to Reconstruction. 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 presentation and research paper.

Research Paper:

The main project for this course is to guide students as they write a research paper of 2400-3600 words (roughly 8-12 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. I have developed a number of short assignments to guide you through the steps involved in producing a research paper.

Graduate Student Presentations:

Graduate students will make a 15-minute presentation to the class on one of the assigned books.

Peer Review Assessments (Graduate Students only):

Graduate students will be asked to evaluate and provide feedback to undergraduate students on some of the class assignments, including the presentation video, research paper, and group discussions.

Grading Breakdown:

Undergraduates:

-15 Points: Absence Penalty

- 75 Points: Class Discussion (SLO 5)
- 75 Points: Weekly Quizzes (SLO 2,3)
- 50 Points: Discussion Group Leader (SLO 5)
- 75 Points: Primary Source Analysis (SLO 2)
- 5 Points: Choose a Research Topic (SLO 1)
- 20 Points: Annotated Bibliography (SLO 1)
- 100 Points: Video Research Presentation (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5)
- 100 Points: Final Research Paper (including draft) (SLO 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

Graduate Students:

- 75 Points: Class Discussion (SLO 5)
- 50 Points: Discussion Group Leader (SLO 5)
- 100 Points: Weekly Discussion Board (SLO 2,3)
- 50 Points: Class Presentation on Reading (SLO 5)
- 75 Points: Primary Source Analysis (SLO 2)
- 25 Points: Peer Review Assessments (SLO 4, 5)
- 5 Points: Choose a Research Topic (SLO 1)
- 20 Points: Annotated Bibliography (SLO 1)
- 100 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.