

Spring 2007 University of North Carolina - Greensboro
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Colloquium: U.S. History Since 1865

This course will introduce students to some of the major topics and debates in U.S. history since 1865. We will study different genres of historical scholarship and examine a range of methods of historical thinking rather than covering all of the major figures and events. Fields that we will explore include: cultural history, transnational history, the history of sexuality, race, politics, foreign policy, and the environment. Throughout the semester we will explore the following questions when analyzing books and articles: What questions does the work set out to answer? What are its arguments and methodologies? What are the strengths and limitations of the approach?

Requirements (all percentages are approximate):

Participation and Class Presentation (35%): Everyone is expected to come to class prepared to engage in a detailed discussion of the week's reading. It is essential that you read thoroughly, make careful notes, and review your notes before class. You will be graded on the depth and insight of your contributions in class as well as your ability to respond to your peers and keep the discussion focused and moving forward. Attendance in class is mandatory. Absences will hurt your grade. The participation grade includes an oral presentation that each student will make to the class based on the topic of their final paper.

Weekly Assignments (45%): Each week you will write discussion questions, a two-page response paper, or a blackboard posting based on the readings. Assignments must e-mailed to me or posted by noon on the Tuesday before class (late assignments will be penalized). Everyone in the class must read the blackboard discussion before coming to class. You may participate in the blackboard discussion, even if you have written a longer paper.

Syllabus Assignment (20%): Each student will choose a subject to delve into in more depth. For your final paper, you will develop a syllabus for an advanced undergraduate/graduate historiography class on your topic. A 6-9 page paper will accompany the syllabus. A more detailed description of this assignment will be handed out in class. I am happy to read drafts submitted by April 13.

NOTE: Since this course focuses on interpretive issues, students who do not have a good grasp of U.S. history in this period should consult a textbook frequently. I have textbooks that I am happy to lend.

Grading:

I use the following grading scale: 93 and above A, 90-92 A-, 88-89 B+, 83-87 B, 80-82, B-, 78-79 C+, 73-77 C, 70-72 C-, 68-69 D+, 63-67 D, 60-62 D-, 59 and below F.

E-mail Policy and Blackboard:

E-mail is the best way to reach me. I always confirm receipt of messages and try to respond quickly. If you do not receive a response from me within 48 hours (and even sooner in response to assignments), you should assume that I did not receive your message and try again. If you do not receive confirmation from me, it means that I did not receive your message and you will not be credited for any information that you communicated.

I will use e-mail to contact you, so it is imperative that you check your UNCG email account regularly. I can only send class e-mails to UNCG accounts.

I will use the blackboard website to post copies of the syllabus, handouts, and announcements. It will also host our class discussion board.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of others without giving them credit. If something you write implies that you are the originator of words or ideas, they must be your own. If you use someone else's exact words they must be enclosed in quotation marks and followed by a citation. If you put someone else's ideas into your own words, you must give that person credit. Anyone who commits plagiarism will be penalized and reported to the Dean of Students.