

Topics in African American History

Professor Schweninger

Examining America's great paradox__slavery in a land of liberty__the aim of this course is to discuss important issues involving race and slavery in American history. Beginning with West Africa and the Atlantic Slave Trade, we will consider slavery during the colonial and national periods, emphasizing the years between the American Revolution and the Civil War. We will ask, among other questions, how and why the "peculiar institution," as it was called, endured for nearly two_and_a_half centuries.

The required reading, roughly seventy-five pages per week, will come from four books: Donald Wright, African Americans in the Colonial Era and African Americans in the Early Republic (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson Publishers, 2000 and 1993) [hereafter AACE and AAER]; John Hope Franklin and Loren Schweninger, In Search of the Promised Land: A Slave Family in the Old South (New York: Oxford University press, 2006) [hereafter ISPL]; and John Hope Franklin and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans, eighth edition (New York: McGraw Will, 2000) [hereafter FSTF]. The books are on close reserve in Jackson Library. The schedule of assignments is listed below.

In addition to the required reading, graduate students should photocopy, read, and be prepared to discuss one essay, article, or book chapter relating to each week's assignment. Many scholarly articles now can be found on line through Jackson Library's "Journal Finder"; others can be found in books and periodicals on the 7th and 8th floors of the Library. The bibliographies in the books cited above are a place to begin. You should choose refereed scholarly writings. The outside readings should be compiled into a twelve-chapter anthology complete with a table of contents, a fifteen- or twenty-page introduction discussing the themes and contents of the selected readings, and a bibliography.

At each class session, undergraduate students should be prepared to summarize briefly one of the assigned chapters. Undergraduates should also write a five-page-page paper analyzing and critiquing one of assigned chapters.

Both the completed anthologies and papers are due on April 28.

During each class session, following a lecture, time will be set aside for a discussion of the required and outside readings.

There will be a mid-term and a final examination. Both will include objective and essay questions. At least one question on the final exam will be comprehensive.

Attendance is required. Missing more than one class could result in the lowering of your final grade. One third of the final grade will be the midterm, one third the final, and one third your class participation and the anthology or paper.

My office is 2105 in the Moore Humanities Research Administration Building [MHRA} and my hours are Mondays 4:30_6:30, or by appointment.

Schedule of Assignments

First Week: January 14 Housekeeping matters

Lecture: Historians and African-American History

Second Week January 28

Lecture: West Africa

Reading Assignment: Chapter 1 AACE; Chapter 2, FSTF

Third Week February 4

Lecture: The Atlantic Slave Trade

Reading Assignment: Chapter 2 AACE; Chapter 3, FSTF

Fourth Week February 11

Lecture: Colonial America

Reading Assignment: Chapters 3 AACE; Chapter 4, FSTF

Fifth Week February 18

Lecture: Revolutionary America

Reading Assignment: Chapter 4 AAER; Chapter 5, FSTF

Sixth Week February 25

Lecture: Blacks in the New Republic

Reading Assignment: Chapter 1 AAER; Chapter 6, FSTF

Seventh Week March 3

Lecture: The Great Uprooting

Reading Assignment: Prologue, Chapter 1 ISPL; Chapter 7,
FSTF

Eighth Week March 17 mid-term examination

Ninth Week March 24

Lecture: The South's Peculiar Institution

Reading Assignment: Chapter 2 AAER; Chapter 8, FSTF

Tenth Week March 31

Lecture: Slaves' Reaction to Bondage

Reading Assignment: Chapter 3 AAER; Chapters 2, 3, ISPL

Eleventh Week April 7

Lecture: Free Blacks: North and South

Reading Assignment: Chapter 4 AAER; Chapter 4, ISPL

Twelfth Week April 14

Lecture: Pan Africanism and Colonization

Reading Assignment: Chapter 5, ISPL

Thirteenth Week April 21

Lecture: The Sectional Conflict

Reading Assignment: Chapter 10, FSTF; Epilogue, Chapter 6, ISPL

Fourteenth Week April 28 (anthologies and papers due)

Lecture: Freedom During the Civil War

Reading Assignment: Chapters 11, FSTF

Fifteenth Week May 5 final examination