

**Instructor:** John Kaiser

**Location & Time:** MHRA 2209, Thursdays 6:00 – 8:50

**Office Hours:** MHRA 2114, T.B.A. and by appointment

**Email:** jjkaiser@uncg.edu

## **Course Description**

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This course examines political, economic, cultural, social, and constitutional events in the American South from 1607 through 1877.

## **Purpose**

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What is the South? Historians have debated this question for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Is the South unique within the nation as a whole? What continuities or discontinuities exist within Southern History from one century to the next? This class will engage students in these larger historical debates as we study the history of the American South from the colonial period through Reconstruction.

## **Learning Objectives**

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1. Describe the major regions within the South and the importance of agriculture within the Southern economy and culture.
2. Describe and analyze the demographic distribution of slaves in the South.
3. Explain the origins and development of Southern pro-slavery ideology.
4. Compare slave cultures within the South and discuss how they impacted the day-to-day life of the enslaved.
5. Explain the various ways in which slaves resisted their owners' attempts to control their labor and lives.
6. Explain slavery as a system of labor and racial control within the context of the nation and the larger Atlantic World.
7. Describe the structure of white southern society and how it reinforced and/or undermined the interests of slaveholders (and by extension slavery).

## **Exams & Papers**

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This course will have two exams. The first will be an in-class (closed book) mid-term exam consisting of either one long essay or several short essays. The second will be the final exam which will include both take home and in-class components. The take home portion of your exam (and your paper) will be submitted through SafeAssign.

You will also be required to write one paper (6-8 pages, double-spaced) evaluating Wayne's *Death of an Overseer* within the context of our previous discussions. I will provide opportunities in class to discuss the text and the paper. Later in the course I will provide a handout with further details on the assignment. The final version is due April 14<sup>th</sup>.

**Grading**

\*\*\*Grade Breakdown for the Course\*\*\*

Participation	20%
Quizzes	10%
Paper	20%
Midterm Essay Exam	25%
Final Exam Essay Exam	<u>25%</u>
<b>Total: 100%</b>	

Grading Scale

The following grading scale will be used to evaluate student performance:

93 and above A	88-89 B+	78-79 C+	68-69 D+	59 and below F
90-92 A-	83-87 B	73-77 C	63-67 D	
	80-82 B-	70-72 C-	60-62 D-	

**Attendance**

We meet only once a week, so missing even a single class means that you have missed a significant portion of the course. You are allowed one (1) unexcused absence. After that I will deduct 2 points from your final grade at the end of the course. For example, if your participation grade is a 86% and you've missed four classes your grade will be reduced to an 80%. Contact me in advance, if possible, to let me know about any absences. Also, remember that an excessive number of absences (more than five) can result in being dropped from the course (not to mention problems come exam time).

**Participation & Academic Integrity**

Your participation is very important to this course. I expect you to be prepared to discuss the assigned readings with the class. At points during the semester I may assign certain documents in advance for individual students to present to the class. This should not be a cause for worry. The process will be informal and shouldn't cause any discomfort (remember that we are there to support one another in our individual educational endeavors).

You are expected to know and follow the university's code of conduct with regard to plagiarism. Check the UNCG website for further details.

**Required Texts**

All of the following texts are available at the campus bookstore. Almost all of them are also available on Amazon.com (although if you do such remember to make the delivery date leaves you sufficient time to review the material before class).

Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*

Cash, *Mind of the South*

Escott et al., *Major Problems in the History of the American South*, volume I.

Wayne, *Death of an Overseer*

Finkelman, *Defending Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Old South: A Brief History with Documents* (2003)

Additional readings are available on e-reserve. Please print them off and bring them to class. The library charges a VERY cheap rate (especially for double-sided pages), and this allows me to keep costs down for you (as it is considerably cheaper than requiring additional books).

**Calendar** (\*all Documents come from the *Major Problems* text)

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**Week 1: What is the South?**

January 13<sup>th</sup>

- DOCUMENTS: None
- READINGS: Cash, *Mind of the South*, pp. 30-60  
 Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 1 (pp. 1-28)  
 Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, pp. 102-122 (e-reserve)

**Week 2: The Founding of the South: Southern Distinctiveness and the Origins of Slavery Part I**

January 20<sup>th</sup>

- DOCUMENTS: Nathaniel Bacon's Rebellion in Virginia (1675-1676)  
 Virginia's Statutes (1630-1705)  
 South Carolina Restricts the liberties of Slaves (1740)
- READINGS: Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 2 (pp. 45-63)  
 Kolchin, *American Slavery*, preface and Chapter 1 (pp. 3-27)

**Week 3: The Establishment of Southern Culture: The Origins of Slavery Part II and Slavery Matures**

January 27<sup>th</sup>

- DOCUMENTS: Elizabeth Sprigs Describes Harsh Conditions of Servitude (1756)  
 Runaway Slave Advertisements from South Carolina (1743-1784)  
 Merchant Robert Pringle Observes Life... (1739-1743)  
 Reverend Charles Woodmason Decries the "Wild Peoples"... (1768)
- READINGS: Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 3 (pp. 80-102)  
 Kolchin, *American Slavery*, pp. 28-62 (on e-reserve)

**Week 4: The Revolutionary South**

February 3<sup>rd</sup>

- DOCUMENTS: Two Attempts at Converting the Carolina Backcountry (1775)  
 Lord Dunmore's Proclamation (1775)  
 Constitutional Clauses Referring to Slavery (1787)
- READINGS: Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 4 (pp. 112-35)  
 Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 141-157 (on e-reserve)

**Week 5: Southern Nationalism (The South in the New Nation)**

February 10<sup>th</sup>

- DOCUMENTS: The Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions (1798, 1799)

Southern Congressmen Defend Slavery in Missouri (1820)  
 John C. Calhoun Defends Slavery (1837)  
 READINGS: Wayne, *Death of an Overseer* (“Democracy and Justice,” 157-179)  
 Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 5 (pp. 154-172)

**Week 6: Paternalism (The Eighteenth-Century South)**

February 17<sup>th</sup>

DOCUMENTS: The Cotton South (map)  
 Baldwin Examines Frontier Law (1835-1837)  
 Life in Louisiana (1838, 1839, 1841)  
 Experiences of William Johnson, a Free Black (1838-1842)  
 READINGS: Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, Book One (skim pp. 3-113)  
 Kolchin, *American Slavery*, pp. 93-132 (on e-reserve)  
 Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 6 (pp. 191-206)

**Week 7: The Black South, Slave and Free: The Slave Experience (Part I)**

February 24<sup>th</sup>

DOCUMENTS: Harriet Jacobs Laments Her Trials... (1828)  
 George and Lucy Skipwith Write Their Master (1847, 1857, 1859)  
 Charleston’s Free Blacks Fear Reenslavement (1859-1860)  
 READINGS: Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 133-169 (on e-reserve)  
 Davis, *Inhuman Bondage*, 205-231 (on e-reserve)  
 Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, pp. 450-458, 535-540 (choose one or more additional topics between pages 443-585 that interest you and read them as well).  
 Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 7 (pp. 221-248)

**Week 8: Southern Honor**

March 3<sup>rd</sup>

DOCUMENTS: In-class handout  
 READINGS: Gordon-Reed, *Race on Trial*, chapter 3, “Celia’s Case (1857)” (pp. 48-60) (available on e-reserve)  
 Greenberg, *Honor and Slavery*, preface and p. 1-50 (chapters 1 and 2) (available on e-reserve)  
 Wyatt-Brown, *Honor and Violence in the Old South*, pp. 3-39 (available on e-reserve) (skim this reading)

**Week 9: NO CLASS....SPRING BREAK**

March 10<sup>th</sup>: SPRING BREAK!!!

**Week 10: Non-slaveholding Whites**

March 17<sup>th</sup>

DOCUMENTS: Diary of a Yeoman (1838-1841)  
 Helper Attacks Slavery (1857)  
 Hundley Defends Nonslaveholders (1860)  
 READINGS: Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 8 (pp. 266-289)

Cash, *Mind of the South*, pp. 60-102

**Week 11: Slavery Justified (The Antebellum Plantation)**

March 24<sup>nd</sup>

DOCUMENTS: None

READINGS: Finkelman, *Defending Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Old South: A Brief History with Documents* (2003)

**Week 13: Sectionalism**

March 31<sup>th</sup>

DOCUMENTS: Resolutions of the Nashville Convention (1850); *Dred Scott v. Sanford* (1857); Hammond Praises King Cotton (1858); Southern Editors Speculate on Secession (1860-61); Letters of Support to Senator Johnson (1860-61); The Jones Family Responds to Republican Victory (1860-61)

READINGS: Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 10 (pp. 344-360)  
Kolchin, *American Slavery*, pp. 169-200 (available on e-reserve)

**Week 14: The Confederate Experience (The Confederate States of America)**

April 7<sup>th</sup>

DOCUMENTS: Brown Attacks Conscription (1862); Nonslaveholders Protest... (1861, 1863); The Confederacy Struggles with Desertion... (1863); The Life of Confederate Soldiers (1861-1863); The Confederacy Debates Emancipation (1865)

READINGS: Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 11 (pp. 383-393)  
No Additional Readings (work on your paper)

**Week 15: Emancipation and Reconstruction (The Death of the Old South)**

April 14<sup>th</sup>

DOCUMENTS: Stevens Advocates the Redistribution of Land (1865)  
Fears of the "Negro Vote" (1867)  
Testimony on the KKK (1871)  
Representative Elliot Demands Federal Civil Rights (1874)

READINGS: Escott, *Major Problems*, Chapter 12 (pp. 412-430)  
Kolchin, *American Slavery*, 200-239 (available on e-reserve)

\**Death of an Overseer* Paper due @ the beginning of class

**Week 16: Looking @ the Old South from the New South**

April 21<sup>st</sup>

READINGS: T.B.A.

**FINAL EXAMS:** April 28-30, May 2-4 (specific time T.B.A.)