

The Modern South

HIS394
Instructor: Dr. Susan W. Thomas

T/Th 2:00-3:15

SOEB 219

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Office Hours: T/Th 11-1:00, MHRA 2214, or by appt.

This is both a Writing and Speaking Intensive course with some separate and some integrated components to fulfill these requirements. These are addressed under the Assignments and Grading Section.

Contact me at the above email with any questions or comments about the class or the assignments. I always check and respond to email within 24 hours. If I email you, please let me know that you have received my message.

Required Texts

Daniel, Pete. *Lost Revolutions: The South in the 1950s*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

Wilson, Charles Reagan. *Judgment & Grace in Dixie: Southern Faiths from Faulkner to Elvis*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007 (originally published 1995).

Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. Commemorative Edition. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Other readings: As noted on the syllabus/available on Blackboard.

Course Description

Through a combination of selected primary and secondary source readings, class discussion, film, music, and art, we will concentrate on several overlapping themes regarding the social, political, and economic development of the Modern South. Some of the areas we will examine are the significance of localism and tradition, the primacy of race, the endurance of political conservatism, and the religious underpinnings that have defined the South for generations. Using both a chronological and thematic approach, we will explore why the South has been identified as a historically unique region, and attempt to determine how that supposed uniqueness has been a part of the national historical experience. We will look at the origins of stereotypical ideas about what it means to live in the South and try to evaluate the validity of such assumptions in today's world.

Course Goals/Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course, students will demonstrate their success in achieving the following course-specific goals:

1. Tracing the arc of economic, social, and political development in the twentieth century South.
2. Identifying the major historical forces and ideas that have created southern identity.
3. Comparing the South in its various phases of development to the remainder of the nation.
4. Demonstrating a grasp of how the South has influenced America's national identity.

In keeping with the College of Arts and Sciences' Learning Goals for History Majors, students will focus on improving their skills in the following areas:

1. Analyzing the role of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods. (Historical Comprehension)
2. Historicizing and contextualizing both primary and secondary sources representing different points of view. (Historical Analysis)
3. Conducting original research using primary and secondary sources. (Historical Research)
4. Using evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past while developing an argument. (Historical Interpretation)

Writing Component (60%)

You will have two textual analysis papers and two exams for this course. For textual analysis, you will respond to queries regarding two of the three required texts for the course. In each case, you will write a five-page interpretation/analysis of the text which will then be subject to editing and revision for a final grade.

Both exams will be essays completed at home and submitted on the due date. The Midterm will be edited and returned for revision before you receive a final grade. The final exam will not go through this process.

In addition to the two analytical papers and exams, you will write four brief (2 pg) response pages addressing some of the shorter readings on the syllabus. These assignments will undergo peer review, revision, and editing for a final grade.

Finally, you will engage in informal (ungraded) writing by posting weekly on the Discussion Board and submitting Journal entries on Blackboard.

Speaking Component (20%)

Aside from regular involvement in class discussions, each student will complete three oral exercises during the semester.

1. Book Review: You will each read a book related to the Modern South and present it to the class. This book will tie in with your Class Discussion Leader component.
2. Debate: You will each participate in a debate panel twice during the course of the semester.
3. Discussion Leader: As the semester ends, students will take turns leading the class in discussion of their chosen topic (Book Review).

Rubrics and Guidelines will be posted on BB to explain further what each of these assignments entails.

Missed Assignments or Exams

You will **not** have an opportunity to make up missed in class assignments or quizzes. I allow make-up exams only with a documented excuse.

Breakdown for grades:

- Exams 1 and 2 = 20%
- Textual Analysis (4) = 5% ea. = 20%
- Response Papers (2) = 10% ea. = 20%
- Oral Component (Debate/Review/Discussion Leader) = 20%
- Participation and Attendance = 20%

Grade scale: 93 and above = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-; 67-69 = D+; 63-66 = D; 60-62 = D-; all below 60 = F

Participation and Attendance (20%)

Attendance will be crucial to doing well in the course, and I do take roll. Aside from school related absences (sports/theater, etc.), I allow 3 absences before I begin deducting points from your attendance grade. My policy is to deduct one point from your final average for every unexcused absence beyond the three you are granted to begin the course. If an emergency situation arises, please email me as soon as you know you will not be in class and make arrangements with someone to get notes.

Participation grades will take into account the degree to which you engage in class discussions, whether asking or answering questions, or contributing to an ongoing discussion. Simply attending class without joining in regular discussions will not merit an A for this portion of your grade.

Techonology in the Classroom

I allow the use of laptops in the classroom for note-taking purposes or for other class-based uses (i.e., accessing documents on Blackboard). Turn off phones and I-Pods and place them out of sight when class begins.

Student Responsibilities/Classroom Decorum

Each student bears the responsibility to attend class regularly and complete all assignments on time. Students will work together to create an open and respectful class environment in which each person's contribution is equally important. When students disagree with one another, with the readings, or with me, we will all remain courteous and express our views without intent to disparage or harm others.

Check your iSpartan email account regularly. This is the system I will be using to contact you, should the need arise. My email address is at the top of the syllabus for your reference.

Learning Disabilities and Other Concerns:

UNCG is committed to meeting the needs of all students and providing options for persons with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are available to those students with diagnosed disabilities. If you require accommodations, it is your responsibility to communicate your needs to your professor as soon as possible.

*****Academic Integrity and Plagiarism*****

In all assignments, students are expected to do their own work and abide by the Honor Code. You must provide references for materials consulted and/or quoted in your writing assignments. Plagiarism is a serious offense that could result not only in failure for the particular assignment, but also in failure for the entire course. We will discuss plagiarism further before the first analytical essay assignment.

Lectures and Readings

Check Blackboard at the beginning of each week to find the assigned readings listed on the syllabus. The syllabus is a guide that is subject to change if I decide to eliminate a particular reading or substitute something else in place of one. Likewise, if unforeseen conditions warrant canceling class, I may have to adjust the syllabus according. I will inform you whenever I make changes to the online syllabus. As you

do the readings, always take notes or jot down questions to facilitate your engagement with the material in class.

Questions to keep in mind:

- What does it mean to be southern?
- What is the connection between the Civil War and how southern culture developed over the next century?
- Why has the South been seen as a unique region?
- Is the South still a region apart today?

Course Schedule

Readings are listed under the dates we will cover the material in class, which means you are required to **read the assigned material prior to coming to class**. All documents and any other supplementary materials will be posted on Blackboard.

Week One: Who are We? Defining the South

Tues Jan 15: Introduction to Course/Review Syllabus

Thurs Jan 17: Readings (all on BB): “The South: What is it, where is it?”; “Hot, Humid, Sad”; and “Southern Culture on the Skids?”

*****Begin Reading *Strange Career of Jim Crow***

Week Two: Where did we Come From? Reflections on the Old South/Civil War and Reconstruction

Tues Jan 22: John Beck, “Introduction to Southern Culture”

Thurs Jan 24: Readings (all on BB): “When the Yankees Came,” “Black Activism and the Ku Klux Klan”

Week Three: What Have we Believed? The Lost Cause

Tues Jan 29: “Soldiers, Christians, and Patriots”

Thurs Jan 31: “Women, Religion, and the Lost Cause” and “The Religion of the Lost Cause”

Week Four: What Have we Hoped For? Aspiring Toward a New South

Tues Feb 5: “Henry Grady and the New South”

Thurs Feb 7: “Promoting a New South: Immigration, Race, and Alabama on Wheels”

*****Draft Response Paper on *Strange Career* Due**

*****Begin Reading *Judgment & Grace in Dixie***

Week Five: Seeing the South—Tourism and Southern Culture

Tues Feb 12: “Welcome to Dixie” (Cox Dreaming of Dixie)

Thurs Feb 14: “Exhibiting Southernness in a New Century”

☆Week Six: The Divided South (Oral Component)

Tues Feb 19 Debate 1

“Rage for Order,” and “The Culture of Segregation” (Major Problems)

Thurs Feb 21: Book Review 1 Presentations

*****Final Revision of Response Paper 1 on *Strange Career* Due**

Week Seven: Working in the South: Land, Labor, and Industry

Tues Feb 26: : “Bound Labor in Southern Agriculture” and “Black Farmers’ Demonstration”

Thurs Feb 28: “The Lives and Labors of the Cotton Mill People”

*****Draft Response Paper on *Judgment & Grace in Dixie* Due**

*****Begin Reading *Lost Revolutions***

Week Eight: Reforming the South—From Progressivism to the New Deal

Tues Mar 5: Exam One Due in Class

“The Woman Suffrage Movement in the Inhospitable South” (Major Problems)

Thurs Mar 7: “New Deal in the South” (NYT) “A New Deal for Southern Women”

☆**Week Nine: SPRING BREAK!**

Week Ten: The Fighting South (Oral Component)

Tues Mar 19: “The Impact of WWII on the American South” and “North Carolina at War”

Thurs Mar 21: **Book Review 2 Presentations**

*****Final Response Paper *Judgment & Grace in Dixie* Due**

Week Eleven: Healing the South—Race Relations and Freedom Struggles

Tues Mar 26: “Black as Folk: the Southern Civil Rights Movement and the Folk Music Revival” (Crespino, ed.) “Black Freedom Struggles” (Major Problems)

Thurs Mar 28: Debate 2

*****Draft Response *Lost Revolutions***

☆**Week Twelve: Hard Choices—Coming to Terms with the Changing South**

Tues Apr 2: “Forever Southern” (Boles) “The Cold War at the Grass Roots” (Crespino)

Thurs Apr 4: Book Review 3 Presentations

“The Air Conditioner and Southern Culture,” and “Will Dixie Disappear?”(Major Problems)

Student Led Discussions:

Week Thirteen: Southern Culture, Part I (Immigration and Demographics)

Tues Apr 9: NYT on Immigration/NC, “Globalization, Latinization, and the Nuevo New South”

Thurs Apr 11: *Mother Jones* “Hispanic Diaspora,” and “New People in the New South”

*****Final Response Paper *Lost Revolutions***

Week Fourteen: Southern Culture, Part II (Music and Entertainment)

Tues Apr 16: “We Always Tried to be Good People”

Thurs Apr 18: “From Muskokee to Luckenbach: Country Music and the ‘Southernization’ of America” (Cobb)

Week Fifteen: Southern Culture, Part III (Religion and Politics)

Tues Apr 23: “Red Necks, White Sheets, and Blue States” (Crespino ed.)

“The New Christian Right in Virginia” (Major Problems)

Thurs Apr 25: Final Exam Due in Class