

HIS 389-01: West Africa during the Atlantic Slave Trade
Spring 2015 – T/R 3:30 - 4:45, 2211 MHRA

Jonathan Fowler

Email: jmfowler@uncg.edu

Course Objectives:

In this course we will examine how the trade between European and African merchants that began in the fifteenth century turned into a trans-Atlantic slave trade. We will focus on this development primarily from the perspective of the West African societies that were involved in this trade, and we will be especially concerned with questions about how the slave trade was organized on the African side, and how the trade in slaves and its abolition affected West Africa. Major themes to be addressed include: cross-cultural encounters and conflicts; commodities and assortment bargaining; ‘master narratives’ and ‘slave narratives’; history and memory; diaspora and ‘creolization’; ‘double consciousness’ and the Atlantic world; and gender and demography.

Student learning goals – At the successful completion of this course, a student should be able to:

- Explain the chronological development of the Atlantic Slave Trade and its abolition;
- Review major effects of the Atlantic trade on West Africa and the African diaspora;
- Discuss the importance of geography and chronology in studying historical events.

Course requirements include: a beginning-of-semester quiz based on course reading (worth 10% of final grade); two tests based on the course text (Lindsay) and an end-of-semester in-class essay based on course text (Equiano), (each 15% and together worth 45% of final grade); short writing assignments (graded as 0, 2 pts., 4 pts., or 6 pts. each, the total worth 35% of final grade); and general class participation, attendance, and assignments incorporated into group work (worth 10% of final grade). **NO MAKE-UP TESTS; SHORT WRITING ASSIGNMENTS NOT ACCEPTED AFTER THE CLASS PERIOD DURING WHICH THEY ARE DUE.**

***** Attendance policy: Prompt attendance at all lectures and discussions is mandatory; two points will be taken off the final grade for each unexcused absence; excused absences must be documented. Students engaging in electronic messaging or online activity will be ejected from the class and will receive an unexcused absence for that day. Note: This is not a distance learning class. Emails and attachments over email will not be accepted.

All assignments must be your own work, in your own words. Borrowing ideas from someone else is plagiarism unless you cite the source you are borrowing from. If you borrow exact wording from another source, you must use quotation marks and cite the source. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. You must comply with the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy. It is online at <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu>

Required textbooks: Lindsay, Lisa. Captives as Commodities: The Transatlantic Slave Trade (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2008).

Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative and other Writings (Penguin Books, revised edition 2003).

Other required readings (on Blackboard) can be found on the course schedule.