

Spring 2018 | University of North Carolina, Greensboro
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Office Hours: Mondays, noon - 1:00 p.m., Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., and by appointment

HIS 712: Slavery in the Americas Course Syllabus

When we refer to slavery in the United States now, we tend to think of the “Old South,” a mythologized world of cotton, big houses, and magnolias. Southern antebellum slavery, however, was one of the final incarnations of a system of labor that had emerged in the Atlantic almost five hundred years before and had transformed repeatedly before appearing in the Black Belt in the middle of the nineteenth century. From its introduction in the Americas onward, chattel slavery had a profound influence on the colonial societies that emerged in the wake of Columbus’s arrival. Yet, neither the impact nor the character of the institution was uniform. To understand the complexity of slavery, then, it is necessary to trace the institution’s evolution across time and space. This class examines the origins and development of slavery before and after its arrival on the North American mainland and explores the unique nature of slavery in the U. S. while placing the “peculiar institution” in a hemispheric context.

Course Requirements: The requirements for this course include assigned readings for each class and three papers.

Assigned Readings: There are fourteen books assigned for this course. For the list of books, see the class schedule below. In addition, I highly recommend that each of you acquire Robin Blackburn, *The Making of New World Slavery: From the Baroque to the Modern, 1492-1800* (London: Verso Press, 1998). All of the books can be purchased at the University Bookstore.

Electronic Devices: The use of laptops, tablets, cellular phones, or any other type of electronic device is prohibited during class.

Attendance and Late Policy: Attendance in class is mandatory. The door will close ten minutes after class starts. Once the door closes, students will no longer be admitted to the class and will be considered absent. Students are allowed one absence, excused or unexcused, without an impact on their grade. For the second and every subsequent absence, students will receive a five-point grade deduction. Students who submit assignments after the deadline will be penalized with a grade deduction based on the lateness of the assignment. No assignments will be accepted one week after the due date. All assignments must be submitted in hard copy

Plagiarism Policy: The University defines plagiarism as intentionally or knowingly “representing the words of another, as one’s own in any academic exercise.”¹ (See the University’s [Academic Integrity Policy](#) for further information.) All sources (books, articles, documents, etc.) used in any paper or assignment must be properly cited or will be considered plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism will receive a zero and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the University.

Final Grade Composition

- Participation 25%
- 8- to 10-page papers (3 x 25%) 75%

Participation: Participation in discussion is mandatory. **Students should be prepared to discuss the readings on the day that they are assigned.** Attendance alone is not sufficient for full participation credit.

Papers: Students are required to write three eight- to ten-page papers (due on **February 16, March 23, and April 27**). All sources in the papers should be properly cited according to the guidelines laid out in [The Chicago Manual of Style](#), which is available on-line.

Class Schedule

Week 1: January 10

Introduction

Week 2: January 17

David Wheat, *Atlantic Africa and the Spanish Caribbean, 1570-1640* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016)

Week 3: January 24

James Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003)

Week 4: January 31

Robert Harms, *The Diligent: A Voyage Through the Worlds of the Slave Trade* (New York: Basic Books, 2002)

Week 5: February 7

¹ <http://sa.uncg.edu/dean/academic-integrity/violation/plagiarism/>

Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The Rise of the Planter Class in the English West Indies, 1624-1713* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1972)

Week 6: February 14

Laurent Dubois, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2004)

First paper due at noon on Friday, February 16

Week 7: February 21

Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery: The Uncovered Story of Indian Enslavement* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016)

Week 8: February 28

Wendy Warren, *New England Bound: Slavery and Colonization in Early America* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2016)

Week 9: March 7

No Class – Spring Break

Week 10: March 14

Edmund Morgan, *American Slavery, American Freedom: The Ordeal of Colonial Virginia* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1975)

Week 11: March 21

Rashauna Johnson, *Slavery's Metropolis: Unfree Labor in New Orleans During the Age of Revolution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016)

Second paper due at noon on Friday, March 23

Week 12: March 28

Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery, and Survival in Early Baltimore* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009)

Week 13: April 4

Daina Berry, *The Price for their Pound of Flesh: The Value of the Enslaved, from Womb to Grave, in Building a Nation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2017)

Week 14: April 11

Edward Baptist, *The Half Has Never Been Told: Slavery in the Making of American Capitalism* (New York: Basic Books, 2014)

Week 15: April 18

Winthrop D. Jordan, *Silence and Tumult at Second Creek: An Inquiry into a Civil War Slave Conspiracy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996)

Week 16: April 25

Thavolia Glymph, *Out of the House of Bondage: The Transformation of the Plantation Household* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008)

Third paper due at noon on Friday, April 27