



HISTORY 264.01E: A NATION DIVIDED EARLY AFRICAN-AMERICAN HISTORY COURSE SYLLABUS: SPRING 2013



Unknown Artist, The Old Plantation (late 18th c.)
Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Center, Williamsburg, Virginia

Instructor: Associate Professor John H. Smith

Class Location/Time: Ferguson Social Sciences 143 / Tues. & Thurs. 11:00 a.m.-12:15 p.m.

Office Location: Ferguson Social Sciences 117

Office Hours: Mondays, 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m, 1:00-4:00 p.m., or by appointment

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COURSE INFORMATION

Course Prerequisites/Co-requisites: None

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Textbooks Required:

Deborah Gray White, Mia Bay, & Waldo E. Martin, Jr., *Freedom on My Mind: A History of African Americans*, Vol. I Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2013 ISBN13: 978-0-312-64883-1

Various items posted to eCollege's "Webliography" and "Doc Sharing" (TBA)

Regarding the textbook: Students are responsible for procuring the course textbook before the first class meeting. Those who are unable to do so should not approach the Instructor to ask for any special consideration. Also, the correct editions of the textbook must be acquired, as the readings quizzes are based upon the edition actually being used, and the use of older editions or different books may—and in many cases will—result in an inability to answer quiz questions properly and contribute adequately to class discussions.

Course Description:

The purpose of this University Studies course is to draw students into a deeper investigation of particular themes in United States history relating to division and conflict, and how Americans have variously surmounted—or just as often failed to surmount—obstacles which separate people from one another. This course focuses on the rise and development of slavery in North America from the sixteenth century until its abolition in the United States during the Civil War and Reconstruction periods (1861-77). Special emphasis is placed on the rise and development of African-American culture within the "peculiar institution" in British North America/the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Through the reading of primary and secondary source documents, students will investigate and debate various theories concerning the rise of slavery and the roles played by racism, culture, religion, and science in the history of slavery, as well as recognize the triumph of the human spirit in the midst of horror and degradation. The ultimate objective of this course is to understand slavery as a universal—and ongoing—human problem, rather than one attached to any particular race, either as perpetrators or as victims.

Student Learning Outcome:

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of encounters between social groups in the United States, and the consequences such encounters had on American culture and politics.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

This course consists of a series of activities and assessments to assist students in achieving the outcomes/objectives for the course and instructional units/modules. Each week students will work on various combinations of readings, discussions, and research.

Participation: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of encounters between social groups in the United States, and the consequences such encounters had on American culture and politics.

Participation in class discussions is intended to allow students to discuss substantively issues pertaining to the topics at hand, and will serve to inform the Instructor about how well students are absorbing course content. Facility in oral communication will thus be developed through these activities.

What is participation, exactly? Participation is defined as attendance to class meetings, asking questions of the Instructor, and answering questions posed by the Instructor or otherwise commenting on the subjects at hand.

Is participation required? No, but it is a major portion of the course grade. Refusal to attend class, pay attention to lectures and discussions, or engage in a dialogue with the Instructor and with one's classmates will result in a very low participation grade average. Conversely, those who demonstrate interest in the course material will see higher participation grades than those who do not.

How is participation graded? The Graduate Assistants will track class attendance and note the degrees to which students contribute to discussions or ask good questions, or engage in distracting or disruptive behavior. For each class meeting a grade is awarded, with differences between the two for the week averaged together. The scale works like this:

- Showing up to class and attentively sitting quietly: 75 (C)
- Asking good questions and/or offering relevant observations: 85 (B) – 100 (A)
- Chatting frequently with neighbors (10 pt. deduction)
- Playing with one's smartphone (20 pt. deduction)
- Leaving the classroom more than once or for an extended time: (20 pt. deduction)
- Leaving class soon after taking a quiz and not coming back: 0 (F)
- Disrupting the class meeting or not showing up to class at all: 0 (F)

Note how engaging in more than one type of behavior meriting a grade deduction can turn quickly from a B into an F, so consider yourself advised.

Readings Quizzes: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of encounters between social groups in the United States, and the consequences such encounters had on American culture and politics.

The readings quizzes are designed to test students' comprehension of the readings for each particular day a quiz is administered, testing the depth of their knowledge of the topic(s) at hand and their analytical skills. Administration will be random, and each quiz will take up no more than 10 minutes of class time at the beginning of each class period. Grading will be on a 0-10 point scale for each quiz, with a running average maintained through the semester that will be adjusted to a score from 0-100 at the end of the semester.

Final Exam: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcomes: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of encounters between social groups in the United States, and the consequences such encounters had on American culture and politics.

The final exam, to be administered via eCollege, will be an open-book examination wherein students will be required to write substantive analytical essays in response to a series of

questions within a two-hour time period. Students will be required to utilize their absorption of the course content, supplemented by their use of the course texts as evidentiary support, in order to compose fulsome responses to questions that test their understanding of the course content.

Research Paper: (100 pts., 25% of course grade)

Student Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the nature of encounters between social groups in the United States, and the consequences such encounters had on American culture and politics.

The research paper is designed to usher a group of students into a deeper exploration of aspects of the development of slavery and African-American culture through the use of the course texts and the consultation of outside sources in the form of scholarly books and articles (see below). Students will gain basic instruction in the art of researching and writing academic essays.

Students will undertake their projects based upon a blind selection process, in which they will draw from a range of topics. Students will then conduct research and write a paper that features an analysis of their topic.

The paper must conform to the following physical parameters:

- Processed using MS Word or WordPerfect in 12 pt. Times New Roman font
- 1-inch margins all around, and double-spaced text
- 8-10 pages in length (*not* including the bibliography)
- All sources must be cited using in-text (parenthetical) citation
- There must be a bibliography of works cited at the end of the paper
- All pages must be numbered

Failure to meet most or all of the above requirements will result in an automatic F for the assignment. Failure to do the assignment at all will result in an F for the course.

Concerning Turnitin

All groups will be required to submit the final draft of their paper to an eCollege dropbox, which will automatically run it through Turnitin (www.turnitin.com), a web-based plagiarism detection program. It scours the Worldwide Web and its database of all submissions (over 135 million so far) for evidence of "lifted" material indicative of plagiarism. It generates a report that notes the percentage of material that appears in other places, and highlights all examples along with the sources from which they came. I do not employ this service based on a prior assumption of guilt or nefariousness on the student's part, but rather as an aid to students learning how to avoid committing overt and incidental plagiarism, and students are asked to trust me to know how to use this service wisely and without prejudice. Please see Turnitin's FAQ page for answers to how the service works, after which you may consult with me for further information and assurances.

Grading

Grading will be calculated using a standard 10-point scale, with course elements weighted accordingly:

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
0-59	F

Participation (100 pts.)	25%
Research Paper (100 pts.)	25%
Readings Quizzes (10 pts. each)	25%
Final Exam (100 pts.)	25%

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

As this course is conducted through eCollege, students will require the following hardware and software:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. Windows XP or newer, and Internet Explorer 6.0 or newer is best.

Internet access/connection—high speed preferred (not dial-up).

Word Processor (preferably Microsoft Word 1997-2003 or newer).

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuc-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement:

Office hours are given at the top of this syllabus, and are posted outside of my door. Arrangements can be made if a student cannot meet with me during regular office hours for consultations. Email is the most reliable method of reaching me outside of my office. Expect a reply within 24 to 36 hours. Students may also be able to reach me by phone during office hours. In the event that a student leaves a voicemail, do not leave a callback number, but rather send an email or wait to see me during office hours.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Academic Honesty

It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and the instructor that no form of plagiarism or cheating will be tolerated. Plagiarism is defined as the deliberate use of another's work and claiming it as one's own. This means ideas as well as text, whether paraphrased or presented verbatim (word-for-word). You are neither required nor expected to come up with original ideas about, or new interpretations of, American history. It is more important for students to understand why events unfolded in the ways they did, and what other scholars have said and written about them, so use proper citation in papers where appropriate (see paper assignment above). **However, anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will automatically fail the assignment in question, may summarily fail the course, and could be subject to disciplinary action by the University.**

Likewise, **no element of the course grade is negotiable or optional**, meaning that failure to take the exam or to submit the research paper in the absence of compelling, documented circumstances preventing one from doing either or both ***will result in automatic failure of the course***. *The instructor's evaluative judgment of tests and examinations is final*, and will not be subject to revision except in cases of mathematical error.

Class Decorum

All students must show respect toward the Instructor and the Instructor's syllabus, presentations, assignments, and point of view. Students should also respect each others' differences. If the Instructor determines that a student is not being respectful toward other students or the Instructor, or is otherwise behaving in an inappropriate manner, it is the Instructor's prerogative to remove the student from the class either temporarily or permanently, as the case requires.

Note: Failure to comply with any of the Instructor's policies will result in immediate deregistration from the course.

University Specific Procedures:

ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

**Office of Student Disability Resources and Services
Texas A&M University-Commerce
Gee Library 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu
[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)**

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Jan. 15-24: From Africa to America, 1441-1619

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 1

Jan. 29-Feb. 7: African Slavery in North America, 1619-1739

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 2

Feb. 12-14: African Americans in the Age of Revolution, 1740-1783

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 3

Feb. 19-28: Slavery and Freedom in the New Republic, 1783-1829

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 4

Mar. 5-28: Black Life in the Slave South, 1820-1860

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 5

Note: Spring Break, Mar. 11-15

Apr. 2-11: The Northern Struggle for Freedom, 1830-1860

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 6

Apr. 16-23: Freedom Rising in the Civil War. 1860-1865

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 7

Apr. 25-May 2: Reconstruction, 1865-1880

Readings:

Freedom on My Mind, chap. 8

May 8-12: Final Exam (on eCollege)

*Research Paper Due May 8