AMH4571: American Civil War & Reconstruction

University of Florida
Department of History
Spring 2012

Professor Sean Adams
Lectures, MW Period 4; Discussion Sections F
Lectures in Little Hall, Room 109

Course Description
This course will span three turbulent decades of American history from 1848 to 1877. It is roughly divided into three thematic and chronological sections. First, we will examine the growing political, economic, and cultural rift between the American North and South in the late 1840s and 1850s. Second, this course will focus upon the various military, social, and political facets of the Civil War and the complex process of emancipation. Finally, we will look also at both the great promise and the great failure of the Reconstruction years. An additional theme of this course will be memory and the history of the period, as the Civil War is one of the most memorialized and most controversial events in American history.

After completing this course, students will have a greater appreciation of the significant events in the history of the United States from 1848 to 1877, including the pivotal issues of slavery, political crisis, military conflict, and the competing visions of the reconstruction of the American South. Students also should expect to spend time analyzing primary sources, the “raw ore” of historical research, as well as synthesizing them into broader historical arguments. Over the course of the semester, students will also hone verbal and written arguments that use both primary and secondary sources in order to address complex historical questions. These exercises are designed to improve critical thinking and writing skills in a rigorous academic setting.

Required Readings
There are six (6) required texts available for purchase at most local bookstores. If you choose to purchase these books online, please make sure that you leave enough time for shipping. A tardy delivery will not be an acceptable excuse for not having the reading materials. In addition to these books, there will be various readings, images, and other primary sources available online via the course Sakai e-learning site at https://lss.at.ufl.edu/. These are required readings and will form the basis of many assignments. Whether you print them out as hard copy or not is up to you, but please be sure that you can access them in time for class.


The weekly readings are all due to be completed by the Friday discussion sections in which they are assigned. These readings are critical for success in both the discussion sections and the various written assignments that students will complete over the course of the semester. The schedule is important not only for this reason, but because if you fall behind you run the risk of getting lost as you try to catch up with the rest of the class.

**Grading Policy**

Your grade in this class will be determined by your performance on a variety of exercises ranging from participation in discussion sections, brief written assignments and longer exams. Your discussion section grade will be calculated using a blend of the participation in those sessions and brief writing assignments. Attendance at all lectures and discussions is critical and will reflect your commitment to the course. We will discuss the expectations of the written assignments in class and in discussion section. Your final grade will be calculated on the following basis:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Calculation</th>
<th>Grading Scale</th>
<th>Grade Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Exam: 20%</td>
<td>100-93=A</td>
<td>A=4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam: 25%</td>
<td>89-87=B+</td>
<td>B+=3.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section Grade: 30%</td>
<td>86-83=B</td>
<td>B=3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>82-79=B-</td>
<td>B-=2.67</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78-75=C+</td>
<td>C+=2.33</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75-72=C</td>
<td>C=2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71-69=C-</td>
<td>C-=1.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>68-66=D+</td>
<td>D+=1.33</td>
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The narrative core of this course will unfold during lectures on Monday and Wednesday mornings. Please be respectful to your fellow students by turning off all cell phones and pagers, arriving on time, and please avoid making excessive noise. You may use a computer or tablet to take notes, but any distracting web surfing, game playing, or other behavior will not be tolerated. Students who do not abide by these simple rules of courtesy will be asked to leave.

The instructions and materials for the assignments in this course are available online. There will be provisions for submitting graded materials online via the Sakai website. All students will be expected to turn in the major assignments to UF’s Turnitin Anti-Plagiarism Service. For instructions on how to do that, please see the course Sakai website.

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class, as it constitutes intellectual theft and academic dishonesty. If you turn in the work of others and try to pass it off as your own, you will fail that assignment and risk expulsion from the University of Florida. I will give you the guidelines, expectations, and other information regarding the written work in this course, so you really have no reason to cheat. I take these matters very seriously and will prosecute vigorously if provoked. Any possible rewards derived from plagiarism simply don’t justify the risk! All students must conform to UF’s honesty policy regarding cheating, plagiarism, and the use of copyrighted materials, which you can find at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.php. Your assignments will be monitored with the Turnitin Anti-Plagiarism Service, so please keep in mind that cheating on the assignments in this course will be much more difficult than actually doing the work.

**Lecture and Readings Schedule (Subject to Change by Instructor)**

**Week 1**

**January 9**  
Course Introduction

**January 11**  
North, South, East, West—Life in Antebellum America

Section One: A House Dividing

**Week 2**
- January 16  Martin Luther King Day—No Lecture
- January 18  Southern Slaves and Their Allies


**Week 3**
- January 23  Compromise or Truce?
- January 25  Bleeding Kansas


**Week 4**
- January 30  The Impending Crisis
- February 1  The Slave Power Conspiracy?


**Week 5**
- February 6  The Election of 1860
- February 8  Disunion! The Secession Crisis

Delivered in Rochester, New York on May 5, 1861” (e-learning site); Horwitz, *Midnight Rising*, pp. 191-290; Varon, *Southern Lady, Yankee Spy*, pp. 35-51.

Section Two: A War on Many Fronts

**Week 6**

February 13  The Yankee Leviathan and the Confederate Nation

February 15  On to Richmond! On to Washington!

**First Exam Due**


**Week 7**

February 20  The Political War

February 22  The Invasion of the North


**Week 8**

February 27  The War in the West

February 29  “If There is a Worse Place Than Hell, I Am In It”


**March 3-10**  Spring Break—Have a Good and Safe Holiday

**Week 9**

March 12  Turning Points?
March 14       Seeing the Elephant


Week 10
March 19       The Unruly North and the Occupied South

March 21       “Those Not Skinning Can Hold a Leg”

Readings: Sallie Brock Putnam, “Richmond Bread Riot” (1863) and “New York City Draft Riot” (1863) in Harrold, Civil War & Reconstruction, pp. 142-144; Varon, Southern Lady, Yankee Spy, pp. 107-184; Barney, The Making of a Confederate, pp. 108-140.

Week 11
March 26       From War to Crusade

March 28       The Final Days of the Confederacy


Section Three: Reintegration or Reconstruction?

Week 12
April 2        Wartime Reconstruction

April 4        Reconstruction or Reintegration

Second Exam Due

Readings: Masur, A Concise History of the Civil War, pp. 75-94; Abraham Lincoln, “Presidential Reconstruction” (1863), Alexander Gardner, “State Convention of Colored People of South Carolina, Memorial to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, 1865”

**Week 13**
April 9       The Rise and Fall of Andrew Johnson
April 11     The Radical Vision


**Week 14**
April 16   Radical Reconstruction in the South
April 18    Freedman into Citizen


**Week 15**
April 23    The Meaning of Free Labor
April 25   The Death of Reconstruction


**Final Exam Period: Wednesday, May 2, 12:30-2:30 p.m.**

**Contact Information**

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Office Hours: Wednesday 2-3 p.m.; Thursdays, 10-11 a.m.; by appointment.