

HIST 365
History of The U.S. South
University of Nebraska
William G. Thomas

Summer 2012

Contact Information:

612 Oldfather Hall

work: 472-2414

home: 421-0918

email: wgt@unl.edu

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 11:00-12:45

Course Description:

This course covers the history and development of the U.S. South from colonial times to the 20th century. The South as a region has set the pace of economic growth in the late twentieth century U.S. and risen to political prominence recently as the proving ground of all presidential candidates. The South's grip on the economic, social, religious, political, and cultural character of the U.S. has been long and deep. This course will broadly survey the development of the South as a region and examine its context in the growth of the Atlantic World, the United States, and other regions and cultures.

The formation and consequences of racial and regional identities, first, are at the center of this course. Second, this course explores the encounters of Southerners of all races with the changing, modernizing world economy and society. Chronological treatments include the following major subjects: the encounter of Indians, Europeans, and Africans c. 1607, the development of slavery, the meaning and legacy of the Civil War, the development of segregation, the emergence of the Civil Rights movement, and the persistence of sub-regions in the South, especially Appalachia, and the emergence of the "Sun Belt" South. This course will use a wide array of digital history projects for students to investigate primary sources--letters, diaries, newsreel films, photographs, and maps from and about the region. Students of all backgrounds are welcome in this course to learn about the U.S. South and its history.

Course Objectives:

- to give students the experience and opportunity to do history for themselves and

participate in it through gathering evidence, communicating ideas, and engaging with historical scholarship.

- to improve fluency and proficiency in and historical thinking, essay writing, and critical analysis.
- to develop knowledge of the history of the American South as a region and the Atlantic World context of its development from 1570 to the present--the events, structures, ideas, and people that shaped the region and their relevance today.

Course Readings:

Books:

Stephen Innes and T. H. Breen, *Myne Owne Ground: Race and Freedom on Virginia's Eastern Shore*

Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul*

Steven Ash, *A Year in the South*

Danielle L. McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street: Black Women, Rape, and Resistance*

Edward L. Ayers and Bradley Mittendorf, *The Oxford Book of the American South*

Selected Essays:

Barbara J. Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," *Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward*. Ed. J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson. New York / Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

William G. Thomas, III and Edward L. Ayers, "The Differences Slavery Made: A Close Analysis of Two American Communities," *American Historical Review* (December 2003), <http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/AHR>

Required Electronic Archives:

Virginia Center for Digital History/UVA--www.vcdh.virginia.edu

- *Virtual Jamestown*--www.virtualjamestown.org
- *Geography of Slavery*
- *Valley of the Shadow: Two Communities in the American Civil War*
- *Civil Rights Television News Archive*

Southern Spaces, Emory University--www.southernspaces.org

Films:

The New World (released 2005)

Rising Up

Gone with the Wind

Glory

Grading:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| 5 page Review Essay 1 | 20 % of Final Grade |
| 5 page Review Essay 2 | 20 % of Final Grade |
| Final Exam | 20 % of Final Grade |
| Assignments (writing) | 20 % of Final Grade |
| In class presentations/discussion | 20 % of Final Grade |

Academic Policies:

Attendance at all lectures and class periods is required. Essays will not be accepted in email format or as attachments, only as hard copy handed in at class session. Assignments will not be accepted after the due dates except in cases where students can document an illness, family emergency, or university-related responsibility that prevented them from completing the assignment on time.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodation to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln Writing Center can provide you with meaningful support as you write for this class as well as for every course in which you enroll. Trained peer consultants are available to talk with you as you plan, draft, and revise your writing. Please check the Writing Center website for locations, hours, and information about scheduling appointments. (<http://www.unl.edu/writing/>)

Participation will be graded on completion of occasional in-class writing assignments and hand-ins (one-page typed lists for each of the website assignments). Please remember to bring these to class the day they are due for discussion.

Grading Scale

| | | | |
|----|--------|----|----------|
| A+ | 97-100 | C+ | 77-79 |
| A | 94-96 | C | 74-76 |
| A- | 90-93 | C- | 70-73 |
| B+ | 87-89 | D+ | 67-69 |
| B | 84-86 | D | 64-66 |
| B- | 80-83 | D- | 60-63 |
| | | F | below 60 |

Academic Honesty:

All students are expected to adhere to the University policies regarding academic honesty set forth in the Undergraduate Bulletin. Cases of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, misrepresentation) will be handled in strict accordance with the guidelines of the University. Violations of academic honesty will result in an F in the course and referral to the Dean of Students.

Schedule of Assignments:

(note: all assignments and due dates are subject to change as necessary in the semester)

Week 1: Problems in Southern History

6/4 Introduction--What is the South?

6/5 *Oxford Book of the American South (OBAS)*--Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*; W. J. Cash, *The Mind of the South*; Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*; Ralph Ellison, *Invisible Man*; Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*. Review each, read one selection thoroughly, prepare to present to the class a detailed analysis of the themes of one. Read all selections for final examination.

6/6 *Virtual Jamestown*--explain the colonization process in the Chesapeake--economic, social, and/or legal. Select three (3) documents to present in class. Submit one page analysis of these documents in a post to Blackboard Discussion Thread and prepare to discuss in class. <http://www.virtualjamestown.org>

6/7 Film in class discussion: *The New World*

6/8 Discussion: Innes and Breen, *Myne Owne Ground*

Week 2 Slavery

6/11 *The Geography of Slavery*--why do slaves and indentured servants run? Find three (3) examples of runaways and briefly explain the evidence for their motivations. Submit post to Blackboard Discussion Thread and prepare to present your findings in class. <http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/gos.html>

6/12 OBAS--Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative*; Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*; Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*.

6/13 Thomas and Ayers, "The Differences Slavery Made: A Close Analysis of Two American Communities" <http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/AHR>

6/14 In class film discussion: *Gone with the Wind*
Read OBAS-- Margaret Mitchell, *Gone with the Wind*

6/15 Discussion: Walter Johnson, *Soul by Soul*

First 5-page Review Essay on either Innes and Breen or Johnson
Due: 6/15 5 p.m.

Week 3 Civil War

6/18 *Valley of the Shadow--Letters and Diaries*--select one family in the Civil War (Augusta or Franklin), bring 1 document to class which explains a decision to either support or resist secession or fighting in the Civil War. Find out as much as you can about this family in other Valley sources. <http://valley.vcdh.virginia.edu>. Prepare to discuss your family in class (5 minute presentation)

6/19 *Valley of the Shadow--Newspapers*--how did Northern and Southern editors characterize the conflict, what language and symbols did they use to describe their respective sectional positions in the war? Select 2 exemplary documents for discussion and bring to class with list of key points. Submit list in post to Blackboard Discussion Thread and prepare to discuss in class. <http://valley.vcdh.virginia.edu>

6/20 In class film discussion *Glory*

6/21 Discussion: Stephen Ash, *A Year in the South, 1865*
sections on Cornelia McDonald and John Robertson

6/22 Discussion: Stephen Ash, *A Year in the South, 1865*
sections on Louis Hughes and Samuel Agnew

Week 4 Emancipation, Reconstruction, and Segregation

6/25 OBAS--Black Citizens of Tennessee, *Letter to the Union Convention*;
William Faulkner, *Wash*; Charles Chesnutt, *Dave's Neckliss*.

6/26 Barbara J. Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," *Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward*, ed. J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982).

6/27 OBAS--Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery*; W. E. B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*.

6/28 OBAS-- Twelve Southerners, *I'll Take My Stand*; James Agee, *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*; Zora Neale Hurston, *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

Week 5 Civil Rights Movement South

7/2 *Television News of the Civil Rights Era*--select three (3) films that reveal

the key components of the struggle for black freedom and equality, both resistance to change and pressure to change. Prepare to present 1 film in class. Submit post to Blackboard Discussion Thread. <http://www.vcdh.virginia.edu/civilrightstv>

In class film discussion: NBC News, "Are the Sit-ins Justified"

7/3 Discussion: Danielle T. McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, 1-154
In class film discussion and writing assignment: *Rising Up*

7/4 JULY 4th HOLIDAY

7/5 Discussion: Danielle T. McGuire, *At the Dark End of the Street*, 155-233

7/6 Final Examination

Review of *Southern Spaces* (www.southernspaces.org) Presentations--pick one of the events/conferences/interviews/presentations and write a 5-page analytical review with reference to 3 other readings/documents in this course.

William G. Thomas
HIST 365
Summer 2012

Brief Guidelines on Essay Writing:

- Do not use the 1st person
- Avoid generalizations and qualifiers (such as, very, pretty much, sort of)
- Use only the past tense

Essay Grading Guidelines:

What is an "A" paper?

Follows assignment criteria and addresses questions
Contains a well-written, clearly presented thesis statement
Contains clearly organized and fully developed arguments in every area of the paper--
balanced with evidence for each major argument
Includes a range and depth of sources and evidence to support arguments
Ideas demonstrate thought beyond the obvious
Very few or no grammar mistakes, superior style, polished prose
"A+" grade: the paper demonstrates exceptional thought beyond the obvious
"A-" grade: the paper demonstrates all of the criteria for an A grade, but with some
deficiency in one area.

What is a "B" paper?

Follows assignment criteria and addresses questions
Contains a thesis statement
Contains clearly organized arguments
Slightly underdeveloped arguments
Includes necessary sources and evidence to support the argument, but without the range
and breadth of an A paper
Avoids summarizing and repetition
Some grammar or spelling errors
"B+" grade: the paper demonstrates all of the criteria for an "A" paper, but is deficient in
two areas
"B-" grade: the paper demonstrates all of the criteria for a "B" paper, but with some
additional deficiency in one area.

What is a "C" paper?

Follows assignment criteria and attempts to address questions
Thesis statement is unclear
Arguments are identifiable, but not clearly organized
Arguments are too brief and underdeveloped

Few (minimum required) sources and evidence to support the main points

Unnecessary summarization and repetition

Several grammar and spelling mistakes

"C+" grade: the paper demonstrates all of the criteria for a "B" paper, but is deficient in two areas

"C-" grade: the paper demonstrates all of the criteria for a "C" paper, but with some additional deficiency in one area.

What is a "D" paper?

Does not follow assignment criteria and does not address questions

Arguments are not identifiable

Arguments are not developed

Sources are few (at minimum or below) and/or improperly used

Several grammar and spelling mistakes

"D+" grade: the paper demonstrates all of the criteria for an "C" paper, but is deficient in two areas

"D-" grade: the paper demonstrates all of the criteria for a "D" paper, but with some additional deficiency in one area.

What is an "F" paper?

Does not follow assignment criteria and does not address questions

There are no arguments

Few or no sources identified

Severe grammar and spelling mistakes

Evidence of plagiarism is an automatic failing grade, regardless of paper quality