



HIST 3750
U.S. Civil War and
Reconstruction

Spring 2007
MWF 11:30 AM / Main 304

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Office Hours
MWF / 10:30 - 11:20,
1:15 - 2:15,
& by appt.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This lecture and discussion course examines the origins, implications, and meaning of the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction. The topics number among the most interesting and provocative in Americans' memory of their past—and we will undertake to explore the basis of the innumerable historical problems posed by such popularity and controversy. But the topics are also more significant than is typically supposed. More than just an end to slavery and doctrines of states' rights, the Civil War represented “the crossroads of our being.” More than just an effort to weld the distended union into a nation, Reconstruction stands as the quintessence of the American experience. Both interesting and significant, the topics of the U.S. Civil War and Reconstruction must be understood in rich and extensive detail by serious students of American history.

The instructor's philosophy of teaching plays a central role in this course. My task (as I see it) is to teach students *how to think, not what to think*. In this sense, history is both a *subject* of study and a *medium* of study useful for developing skills of critical thinking. Provided diverse material through lectures, classroom discussion, film study, and readings, students will analyze key issues from America's past, marshal compelling evidence, and arrive at their own conclusions. All the while, students will be expected to defend their arguments with clear and well-constructed reasoning.

As such, the course introduces students to the intricacies of historical thought. Besides providing students a basic understanding of historiography, the class emphasizes matters of historical memory and helps students distinguish myth from accurate historical fact and interpretation.

ASSIGNED READING

Books (available for purchase in the Utah State University Bookstore... and elsewhere)

Gienapp, William E., ed. *The Fiery Trial: The Speeches and Writings of Abraham Lincoln*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2002. ISBN: 0195151011.

Edwards, Laura F. *Scarlett Doesn't Live Here Anymore: Southern Women in the Civil War Era*. Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 2000. ISBN: 0252025687.

Freehling, William W., and Craig M. Simpson, eds. *Secession Debated: Georgia's Showdown in 1860*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1992. ISBN: 0195079450.

McPherson, James M. *What They Fought For, 1861-1865*. New York: Anchor Books, 1995. ISBN: 0385476345.

Weber, Jennifer L. *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North*. New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 2006. ISBN: 0195306686.

Books (cont.)

Foner, Eric. *Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction*. New York: Vintage, 2005. ISBN: 0375702741.

Additional Materials

In addition to the books listed on the previous page, students will receive numerous materials—maps, graphs, etc.—from the instructor. Students are accountable for all materials provided by the instructor.

ASSIGNED FILM STUDY (See page 5)

Gone With the Wind. MGM, 1939. 145 min. (excerpt)

“Death Runs Riot,” episode 4 of *The West*. PBS, 1994. 84 min.

“Ambition,” episode 1 of *Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided*. PBS, 2001. 60 min.

“We Are Elected,” episode 2 of *Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided*. 60 min.

John Brown’s Holy War. PBS, 2000. 90 min.

“The Cause, 1861” episode 1 of *The Civil War*. PBS & Florentine Films, 1989. 99 min.

“A Very Bloody Affair, 1862,” episode 2 of *The Civil War*. 69 min.

“Shattered,” episode 3 of *Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided*. 60 min.

“Forever Free, 1862,” episode 3 of *The Civil War*. 76 min.

“Simply Murder, 1863” episode 4 of *The Civil War*. 62 min.

“The Universe of Battle, 1863,” episode 5 of *The Civil War*. 95 min.

“The Dearest of All Things,” episode 4 of *Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided*. 60 min.

“Order and Disorder, 1825-1865,” episode 2 of *New York: A Documentary Film*. 30 min. (excerpt)

“This Frightful War,” episode 5 of *Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided*. 60 min.

Glory. Tristar Pictures, 1989. 117 min.

“Valley of the Shadow of Death, 1864” episode 6 of *The Civil War*. 70 min.

“Most Hallowed Ground, 1864” episode 7 of *The Civil War*. 72 min.

“War is All Hell, 1865,” episode 8 of *The Civil War*. 69 min.

“The Better Angels of Our Nature, 1865,” episode 9 of *The Civil War*. 68 min.

“Blind With Weeping,” episode 6 of *Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided*. 60 min.

“The Grandest Enterprise Under God,” episode 5 of *The West*. 84 min.

“Revolution,” episode 1 of *Reconstruction: The Second Civil War*. PBS, 2004. 90 min.

“Retreat,” episode 2 of *Reconstruction*. 90 min.

The Birth of a Nation. Republic Pictures, 1915. 70 min. (excerpt)

Abolition: Broken Promises. BBC, 2003. 50 min.

MATERIALS DISCLAIMER: This course abides by university policies regarding student objections of material content. Students must notify the instructor within the first two weeks of class (by Mon., Sept. 10) if any assigned materials are deemed objectionable or offensive. Otherwise students will be expected to fulfill all assignments as assigned. **Note:** I make it a point not to assign materials especially provocative. But please feel free to approach me if you have questions or concerns.

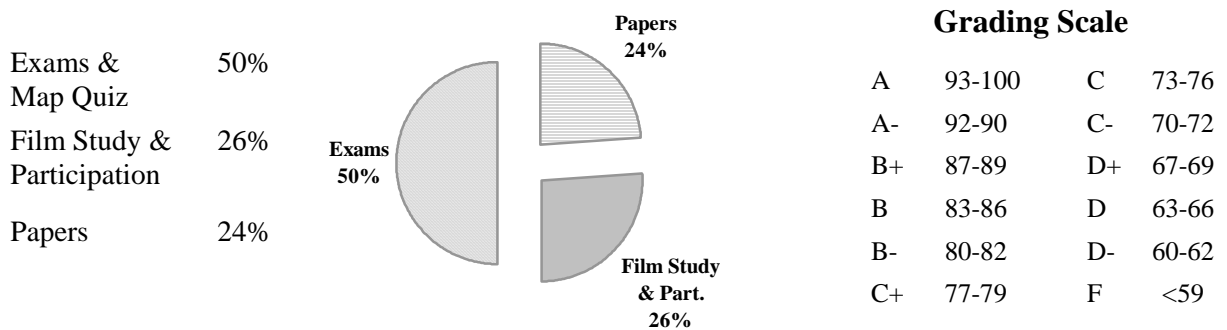
EVALUATION OF OVERALL COURSE PERFORMANCE

Students’ final course grades will be determined by two facets of evaluation, “tangible” and “intangible” grading:

Tangible Grading:

Students will receive grades for three exams and a map quiz (see page 4 below), grades for film study and participation (see page 5 below), and grades for three paper assignments (see page 5 below).

Each exam counts 15% of the final course grade. The map quiz counts 5%. Film study and participation totals 26%, and the combined paper grades together count 24%. Students’ final course grades therefore will be determined largely by the following formula:



Intangible Grading

Students’ tangible grades will set the “big picture” of their final course grades. But the “big picture” will/can be modified by up to three aspects of intangible grading:

1. Classroom Participation

History 3740 is a liberal arts course, and liberal arts courses are designed to foster an active and constructive classroom dialogue between instructor and students. As such:

1. Students who participate constructively in class will be rewarded. Rewards will be manifested in the form of an accelerated ***Film Study & Participation grade*** (meaning I will add +1 to +20 points to students’ final calculated Film Study & Participation grade).
2. Students who fail to participate constructively in class should expect a considerable negative impact on their ***Film Study & Participation grade*** (ranging from -1 to -20 pts).

Likewise, a liberal arts course demands courteous patronage by its student body. Translation: students are expected to attend class regularly, arrive to class punctually, remain in class for the duration of the class period, ***turn off cell phones*** and diminish the possibility of all other sources of annoyance to their fellow students’ classroom experience. If you must leave the

classroom during class, please feel free to do so. But be discreet (and courteous communication with the instructor beforehand or afterward doesn't hurt either).

Students are expected to abide by these standards of classroom decorum, meaning students who do so should expect no impact on their grades. **Students who fail to abide by these standards, however, should expect a considerable negative impact on their final *Film Study & Participation grade* (ranging from -5 to -60 pts).**

2. Improved Academic Performance

Learning is all about figuring out how to do things better. Students who demonstrate an admirable mastery of this dynamic will be rewarded handsomely.

Example: in a previous class, I had a French student (a student visiting from France) who initially didn't quite know what to make of my class. But after she failed the first exam horribly, she redoubled her efforts to good effect, scoring a B on the second exam and then an A on the third. By standard computation of averaging grades, she might have received a C or a B as a final course grade. But she received an A.

Of course she also completed (and passed) the Cumulative Final Exam.

3. Cumulative Final Exam

The Cumulative Final Exam is entirely voluntary. I repeat: students are not required to take the Cumulative Final.

Why might students take a voluntary exam? Because **students who pass the Cumulative Final receive an accelerated final course grade** ranging from +2 to +4 points. Students who perform extremely well on the Cumulative Final may receive an accelerated final course grade of greater than +4 points.

Note: Students who elect against taking the Cumulative Final should be aware that they will receive no "rounding help" in the absence of their taking the Cumulative Final. Example: a student with a final calculated "tangible" grade of 89 who elects against taking the Cumulative Final will receive an 89 (a B+ in other words, when 90 = A-) for his/her final course grade.

Details about the Cumulative Final will be provided in class.

4. Finally, it is worth noting all professors employ some variation of intangible grading, especially when considering student requests for **letters of recommendation**. Because professors want to recommend courteous, inquisitive, and thoughtful students who go far beyond the minimum asked of them, professors keep these considerations in mind at all times. It makes sense that students should also.

MEANS OF TANGIBLE ASSESSMENT

Exams (45% Final Course Grade)

Students must complete three exams. The first exam corresponds to the first third of the course's subject content, the second exam to the second third, and so forth.

Details about the exam format will be provided in class.

Exams typically take 50-70 minutes to complete. This fact, of course, poses a problem since our normal class period lasts only 50 minutes and our first two exams fall during normal class

periods. To sidestep this problem I've decided to assign the essay portion of the first two exams as take-home essay assignments. **Due at the beginning of the exam**, the essays should be typewritten with standard margins, font, etc. Details about the essays will be provided in class. The third exam falls during Final Exams Week, when we will have an extended period to complete the exam. Students will be required to write the essay portion of Exam 3 in class.

Map Quiz (5% Final Course Grade)

Students who seek in-depth understanding of the American past should be able to demonstrate a basic understanding of American geography. I therefore require students to complete a map quiz, administered during the third week of class. Details of the quiz will be provided in class.

Note: Students must score an 80 or higher on the map quiz (which is not especially difficult) to pass this course.

Film Study & Participation (26% Final Course Grade)

Who doesn't like to watch a good film? The roster of films for this course (see page 2) is loaded with them. Indeed, most of the films assigned in this class are "must see" titles for anyone with a learned interest in America's past.

For this course, **we will typically view films outside of class**. Details of film-study sessions and expectations will be provided in class.

Note: I realize film-study sessions may be inconvenient (even impossible) for some students to attend some of the time (or even all of the time). As such, film study is subject to a modified grading scale as follows:

Students who fail to attend a film study session will receive a grade of 60 for the assignment (rather than a 0).

Students who fail to attend any film study sessions will receive a grade of 60 for their final Film Study and Participation grade. (Remember: this grade is subject to modification by **classroom participation**.)

Papers (24% Final Course Grade)

Students will be required to submit three type-written papers. The papers should total **five-six pages** (excluding citations). Papers should also be double-spaced with standard 1-inch margins and typed in **Times New Roman 12 pt. font**.

Papers are expected to be well-written. Shortcomings of grammar and composition will negatively influence paper grades.

Students will be provided clear guidelines as to paper deadlines and expectations.

Revisions: Students who submit their papers **at least one day before the deadline** will be permitted to revise their graded papers if they so choose. Details about the revision process will be provided in class.

Late papers attrite 10 points per day (weekends included).

Each paper counts approximately eight percent of the overall course grade.

(See note on top of next page)

Note: All paper assignments must be completed to receive a final course grade of 70 or higher in this course.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Students are expected to abide by the university honor code at all times, especially its strictures against “unauthorized aid.”

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism very much constitutes “unauthorized aid.” Students will be provided clear instruction as to what constitutes plagiarism. **The History Department regards plagiarism a serious offence worthy of zero tolerance.**

DISABILITIES

I pledge my fullest cooperation with university counseling services. Please contact me and/or university counselors for advice and/or applicable documentation.

INSTRUCTOR ACCESSIBILITY

Please feel free to approach me if you have questions about the class or academic matters in general. **Please note that my office hours are posted at the top of page 1 of this syllabus.**

If you can’t approach me in person, **email is my preferred method of communication.** Students can usually expect a much faster response if they attempt to contact me by email than by phone. But if you must call, my office phone number is 797-3791.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 / Week of Jan. 7			
	Mon. 7	Course Introduction	
	Wed. 9	What Is History?	
	Fri. 11	America in 1840	
		Film Study 1 disc.: <i>Gone with the Wind</i> (excerpt)	

Week 2 / Week of Jan. 14			
	Mon. 14	America in 1840 (cont.) Edwards disc.	Edwards: 1-64
	Wed. 16	Slavery as a Positive Good	
		Film Study 2 disc.: “Death Runs Riot”	
	Fri. 18	Slavery as a Positive Good (cont.)	

Week 3 / Week of Jan. 21		
Mon. 21	<i>No Class / Martin Luther King Jr. Observance</i>	
Wed. 23	The Promise and Perils of Texas Map Quiz	
Fri. 25	Fugitives for Gold Gienapp disc.	Gienapp: xv-25
	Film Study 3 disc.: “Ambition” and “We Are Elected”	

Week 4 / Week of Jan. 28		
Mon. 28	Fugitives for Gold (cont.) Gienapp disc.	Gienapp: 27-84
Wed. 30	The Kansas Crisis and the Origins of the Republican Party Freehling disc.	Freehling: vii-79
	Film Study 4 disc.: “The Cause”	
Fri. 1	Paper 1 due / Freehling disc. The Election of 1860	Freehling: 80-159

Week 5 / Week of Feb. 4		
Mon. 4	Secession and Its Dissidents	Gienapp: 85-99
Wed. 6	Exam 1	
Fri. 8	Union—and Union Alone	
	Film Study 5 disc.: “A Very Bloody Affair” & “Shattered”	

Week 6 / Week of Feb. 11		
Mon. 11	Union—and Union Alone (cont.) McPherson disc.	McPherson: all
Wed. 13	A Transnational War	
	Film Study 6 disc.: “Forever Free” & “Simply Murder”	
Fri. 15	A Transnational War (cont.) Gienapp disc.	Gienapp: 99-150

Week 7 / Week of Feb. 18		
Mon. 18	<i>No Class / Presidents Day</i>	
Wed. 20	The Making of Emancipation	Gienapp: 151-184
Fri. 22	The Making of Emancipation (cont.)	
	Film Study 7 disc.: “The Universe of Battle”	

Week 8 / Week of Feb. 25		
Mon. 25	The Home Fronts: South Edwards disc.	Edwards: 65-123
Wed. 27	The Home Fronts: North	
	Film Study 8 disc.: “The Dearest of All Things” & “This Frightful War”	
Fri. 29	The Home Fronts: North (cont.) Weber disc.	Weber: ix-71

Week 9a / Week of Mar. 3		
Mon. 3	In-class film: “Order and Disorder” (excerpt) The Price of Justice	
Wed. 5	Weber disc.	Weber: 72-133
	Film Study 9 disc.: <i>Glory</i>	
Fri. 7	The Price of Justice (cont.) Paper 2 due	

Week 9b / Week of Mar. 10 / No Class – Spring Recess

Week 10 / Week of Mar. 17		
Mon. 17	The First Modern War	
Wed. 19	An Election for All Time Weber disc.	Weber: 134-217
	Film Study 10 disc.: “Valley of the Shadow of Death” & “This Hallowed Ground”	
Fri. 21	An Election for All Time (cont.) Gienapp disc.	Gienapp: 185-209

Week 11 / Week of Mar. 24		
Mon. 24	Exam 2	
Wed. 26	Envisioning the End	
	Film Study 11 disc.: “War is All Hell” & “The Better Angels of Our Nature”	
Fri. 28	Envisioning the End (cont.)	Gienapp: 211-227

Week 12 / Week of Mar. 31		
Mon. 31	In-class film: “Blind with Weeping”	
Wed. 2	Lincoln in American Memory	
	Film Study 12 disc.: “The Greatest Enterprise Under God”	
Fri. 4	The Slavery Origins of Reconstruction Foner disc.	Foner: xi-67

Week 13 / Week of Apr. 7		
Mon. 7	The Promise and Perils of Presidential Reconstruction	
Wed. 9	Justice Emergent	
	Film Study 13 disc.: “Revolution”	
Fri. 11	Justice Emergent (cont.) Foner disc.	Foner: 68-127

Week 14 / Week of Apr. 14		
Mon. 14	The New South Edwards disc.	Edwards: 118-189
Wed. 16	Violence Emergent	
	Film Study 14 disc.: “Retreat”	
Fri. 18	Violence Emergent (cont.) Foner disc. Paper 3 due	Foner: 128-188

Week 15 / Week of Apr. 21		
Mon. 21	America in 1877 Foner disc.	Foner: 189-238
Wed. 23	Reconstruction in American Memory	
	Film Study 15 disc.: <i>Broken Promises & Birth of a Nation</i> (excerpt)	
Fri. 25	Retrospection	

Finals Week / Week of Apr. 28		
Fri., May 2, 9:30 am	Exam 3 Cumulative Final Exam (if applicable; see page 4) / after Exam 3	