

Fall 2009 | University of North Carolina, Greensboro
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Office Hours: Mondays, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. and Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m.

HIS 301: Race and Slavery Course Syllabus

Between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries, twelve million Africans were forcibly transported to the Americas. This class explores how one strand of this diaspora developed in what would eventually become the United States. We will examine how people of African descent struggled against their bondage to reconstitute their lives. We will also analyze how the African American identity, born in bondage, changed with the rise and fall of slavery in the United States.

Course Requirements: The requirements for this course include assigned readings for each class, periodic assignments and quizzes on the assigned readings, two papers, and two exams.

Assigned Readings: There are two books assigned for this class: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (1998) and Frederick Douglass and Harriet Jacobs, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, and *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (2000). Both books can be purchased at the University Bookstore. Additional readings are on blackboard, e-reserves, and the internet. These readings will be linked to the syllabus on Blackboard and listed under Course Documents on Blackboard as they become available. The assigned reading list may undergo minor changes, including the addition of primary source readings; students should be sure to consult the most current version of the syllabus on Blackboard under Course Information.

Attendance and Late Policy: You are allowed two unexcused absences. After two unexcused absences, you will receive a zero for participation for that day. The instructor will excuse absences with a doctor's note or legitimate documentation of other emergencies. In addition, students will be dropped from the class for excessive absences. Assignments submitted in class are due at the beginning of the class period. 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.

Final Grade Composition

- Participation 15%
- In-class Assignments 10%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Exam 25%
- Papers (2x15%) 30%

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.

In-class Assignments: Students will be given brief in-class and take-home writing and research assignments based on the assigned readings. Students will also be periodically quizzed on readings and lectures.

Exams: There will be two exams in this class: one midterm on October 21 and one final exam on December 14.

Papers: Students are required to write two papers based on assigned readings, the first due on September 23 and the second due on November 11.

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 Policies](#) for further information.) All sources (books, articles, documents, internet sites, 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 Office of Student Conduct for appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the University.

Week 1 (August 24, 26): African Myths and Realities

Monday: Introduction

Wednesday: (Mis)Conceptions of Africa

Readings: "Ghana's Uneasy Embrace of Slavery's Diaspora" *New York Times*, December 27, 2005 on [internet](#); Robert Chrisman, "The Black Scholar Forum: A Symposium on Roots," on [blackboard](#); Philip Nobile, "Uncovering Roots," on [blackboard](#)

Week 2 (August 31, September 2): The Creation of the Atlantic World

Monday: West Africa and the Development of Early Commerce

Readings: John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, pp. 1-71 on blackboard

Wednesday: The Rise of the Plantation Complex

Readings: John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, pp. 72-97 on blackboard

Week 3 (September 7, 9): The Atlantic Slave Trade

¹ <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/violation/plagiarism/>

Monday: Labor Day Holiday

Wednesday: The Middle Passage and Destinations

Readings: John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, pp. 98-127 on [blackboard](#); Excerpts from Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa*, in David Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*, on [blackboard](#)

Week 4 (September 14, 16): Early North American Slave Societies

Monday: Chesapeake and New England

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 1-63; *Testimony from Virginia Court Records* (1681) on [blackboard](#); *New Netherlands Petition*, 1661 on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: Lowcountry and Louisiana

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 64-92

Week 5 (September 21, 23): Maturation of the Plantation Complex

Monday: Chesapeake and Lowcountry

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 93-176; *Virginia Slave Code* (1705) on [blackboard](#); *The Stono Rebellion in South Carolina, 1739* on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: North and Louisiana

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 177-217; “Statement of Slave Rebels, 1741” from Daniel Horsmanden, *The Negro Conspiracy in the City of New York, 1741* on [blackboard](#)

First paper due at the beginning of class.

Week 6 (September 28, September 30): Slavery and Freedom in the Age of Revolution

Monday: A War for Liberty?

Readings: Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Riddiker, *Many Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*, pp. 211-247 on [blackboard](#); Simon Schama, *Rough Crossings: Britain, the Slaves, and the American Revolution*, pp. 1-18 on [blackboard](#); “Slaves’ Petitions For Freedom, 1773-1779” on [blackboard](#); Henry Louis Gates, “Native Sons of Liberty” *New York Times*, Aug. 6, 2006 on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: The Haitian Revolution

Readings: C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L’Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, pp. 85-117 on [blackboard](#)

Week 7 (October 5, 7): The Aftermath of Independence

Monday: “All Men are Created Equal”

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 217-289; “Negroes’ Protest Against Taxation Without Representation, 1780” on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: Constitutional Debates over Slavery

Readings: Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone*, pp. 290-324

Week 8 (October 12, 14): Creating the Cotton Kingdom

Monday: Class Cancelled – Fall Break

Wednesday: Western Expansion

Readings: Claudio Saunt, *A New Order of Things*, pp. 111-135 on [blackboard](#)

Week 9 (October 19, 21): Internal Slave Trade

Monday: The Internal Slave Trade

Readings: Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life*, pp. 245-274 on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: **Mid-Term Exam**

Week 10 (October 26, 28): Life on the Plantation

Monday: The “Quarters”

Readings: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, chapters I-IX; *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, chapters I-VII

Wednesday: Plantation Labor

Readings: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, chapter X; Steven Miller, “Plantation Labor Organization and Slave Life on the Cotton Frontier: the Alabama-Mississippi Black Belt, 1815-1840,” in *Cultivation and Culture: Labor and the Shaping of Slave Life in the Americas*, pp. 155-69, eds. Ira Berlin and Philip D. Morgan, on [blackboard](#).

Week 11 (November 2, 4): Life in Town

Monday: Free Blacks and Free People of Color

Readings: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, chapters VIII-XIV; Shane White, “‘It Was A Proud Day’: African Americans, Festivals, and Parades in the North, 1741-1834,” *Journal of American History* (June 1994), pp. 13-50 on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: Urban Slavery

Readings: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave*, chapter XI and Appendix; *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, chapters XV-XXI

Week 12 (November 9, 11): The Controversy over Slavery

Monday: Abolitionism

Readings: Benjamin Quarles, *Black Abolitionists*, pp. 168-96 on [blackboard](#); David Walker, *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, Article I and Article IV on [internet](#)

Wednesday: The Political Crisis of the 1850s

Readings: Hannah Geffert, "Regional Black Involvement in John Brown's Raid on Harpers Ferry," in *Prophets of Protest: Reconsidering the History of American Abolitionism*, eds. Timothy Patrick McCarthy and John Stauffer, pp. 165-182 on [blackboard](#); "Harper's Ferry Editorials," 1859 on [blackboard](#)

Second paper due at the beginning of class.

Week 13 (November 16, 18): Descent to War

Monday: The End of Compromise

Readings: TBA

Wednesday: Life Behind the Lines

Readings: W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America*, pp. 55-84 on [blackboard](#)

Week 14 (November 23, 25): From a War for Union to a War for Freedom

Monday: Black Soldiers in Blue

Readings: Joseph T. Glatthaar, "Black Glory: The African-American Role in Union Victory," in *Why the Confederacy Lost*, ed. Gabor Boritt, pp. 135-162 on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: Class Cancelled – Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15 (November 30, December 2): The Rise of Reconstruction

Monday: Rehearsals for Reconstruction

Readings: Eric Foner, *Forever Free: The Story of Emancipation and Reconstruction*, pp. 76-106 on [blackboard](#)

Wednesday: Radical Reconstruction

Readings: Steven Hahn, *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South*, pp. 216-264 on [blackboard](#)

Week 16 (December 7): The Fall of Reconstruction

Monday: A Failed Revolution

Readings: Martha Hodes, "The Sexualization of Reconstruction Politics: White Women and Black Men in the South after the Civil War," in *American Sexual Politics: Sex, Gender, and Race since the Civil War*, pp. 59-74 on [blackboard](#)

Final Exam: Monday, December 14, 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.