

Civil War America

Syllabus for HIS 226

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Office hours: M 11-noon, MW 1-2pm

Unlike a survey course, the aim of this course is to develop a deeper understanding of the history of the United States, specifically the period from 1830 to 1880. There are many historians who feel that this era was the most important of our past. While some may disagree with that sentiment, it is inarguably a period of great interest for Americans. More books have been written on the American Civil War than any other period of American history.

History is the “explanation of change over time,” as one of my professors defined it. The study of history is an important component of a sound liberal arts education. Here is one answer to the question, [why study history?](#) Another purpose of this course, and one I feel is equally important as those above, is that everyone involved has an enjoyable time. For this to happen it is necessary that everyone participate in the class. Please, ASK QUESTIONS. This is a way for all of us to learn.

The question is always asked: [What can you do with history?](#) An objective of this class is not only a knowledge of history, but to help the student develop a methodology of examining evidence and learning to report on it in a clear and concise manner. In the future you may have a boss who will ask you for a three-page report on a project you are in the middle of. You will have to examine the files, going through the data and finding the significance. This is what a historian does. So in a way, just about everyone can use historical methodologies on their job.

Course Description

This course will study the origins of the Civil War and its immediate consequences and lasting effects for the nation, closely examining the social, political, economic and cultural forces during the period. Students will review such topics as sectional conflict, industrialization, reform and abolitionism, race relations, class, gender and constitutional issues.

Required Texts

The following books and resources will be used:

Woodworth, *This Great Struggle*

Holzer and Gabbard, eds., *1863: Lincoln's Pivotal Year*

Handouts:

Alcott, *Civil War Hospital Sketches*

Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience and Other Essays*

Homework Assignments

Method of Evaluation

- 1) Essays- There will be a total of two essay assignments due for this course. Material for the essays will come from a combination of lecture, discussion, video presentation, and your readings. These essays will constitute fifty percent of your final grade. Words of wisdom: “Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Autograph your work with excellence.” J. Guidobono
- 2) [Research Paper](#)- Each student will research a specific topic of their choice, culminating in a formal paper. This will be a polished piece of work: double spaced and typed, logical and clear progression, clear introduction and conclusion, as well as other aspects of good writing will be expected. It is expected that your paper will adhere to the [MLA format](#) (use “In-Text Citations: The Basics”). More details will be passed out in class. This paper will be worth thirty percent of the final grade.
- 3) [Book review](#)- We will be reading a variety of novels that are appropriate for the course. Each student will read one, discuss in class, and then write a book review. Guidelines will be given out to the class. This section will constitute ten percent of your final grade.
- 4) Good Citizenship- The social component of learning is an important part of the process. For that to happen, you must come to class and be ready to participate. Any absences beyond two will count against you. Class participation is also an important component of this. It is important to be prepared to take part in discussion and then be an active member of your group and class when the time comes. To facilitate this, students will write reaction papers for the discussion section of the week. A total of six must be completed. This section will constitute ten percent of your final grade.

Course Objectives

The objectives for this course are varied, being specific to U.S. history, and supportive of the Liberal Arts and Sciences objectives. Working through a variety of methodologies, the successful student will develop the skills necessary to:

- Read and interpret historically relevant information.
- Access current technology to obtain historical information.
- Use analytical and critical thinking skills to assess historical data.
- Articulate an understanding of the major themes and issues of our history.

- Use the English language, both in written and verbal forms, to communicate his/her thoughts and ideas.

Grading Scale

Grade	Equivalent	Quality Points
A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	0.7
F	0-59	0.0

College Withdrawal Policy

A student who finds it necessary to discontinue a course MUST complete a withdrawal form obtained from the Registrars Office. Students may withdraw from class anytime during the first thirteen weeks of the semester without being in good standing or obtaining prior permission of the instructor. Students who fail to properly withdraw and discontinue coming to class will be assigned an "F" grade. Eligibility for refund of tuition is based upon date of withdrawal when received by the registrar. Verbal withdrawals will not be accepted.

Learning Disabilities Statement

If you have a disability that may affect your progress in this course, please meet with a Disability Service Provider (DSP) as soon as possible. You can make an appointment with a DSP by calling 860.215.9017. Please note: 1.) For academic adjustments, you will have to provide documentation of your disability to the DSP. 2.) Instructors cannot provide adjustments until you have delivered written authorization (from a DSP) to the instructor. 3.) Adjustments take effect when you deliver your written authorization to the instructor in person (provided there is adequate time for the instructor to make necessary arrangements). 4.) Adjustments do not apply to tests/assignments that were due prior to your delivering written authorization to your instructor in person.

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