

History 351: History of the Old South

Fall 2016

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Office hours: Mon. 2: -2:45, Wed. 4:30-5:30

6:30-7:10

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This course will introduce you to many debates about the distinctiveness of the South and help you understand the region's place within the American experience. We will explore the South, 1770-1860, with an emphasis on social, political, and cultural history. Of particular interest will be the role that slavery played in the economy, the culture and in politics. The viewpoints and experiences of enslaved and free African-American men and women, and white men and women from planter, farmer, and merchant families will form important topics, as we explore the intersecting worlds of different social groups. Course objectives: in general, to increase knowledge about and promote a better understanding of the changes in antebellum southern society and politics, to increase students' abilities to analyze, understand, and compare primary and secondary sources; and to enhance students' writing skills.

Grades will be based on the following:

midterm and final examinations (short answer & essay questions): 20 and 25 %

two 4-6 page double-spaced typed papers on assigned topics: 20 and 25 %

class participation (attendance, ability to discuss readings, in-class writing): 10 %

This course will be a mixture of lecture and discussion. Class attendance is important and you should come prepared to discuss or write about the assigned readings. Be sure to bring to class the assigned book or reading for that day. Prompts for papers will be distributed by paper and email about 10 days before they are due. Students are responsible for obtaining all handouts from class meetings. Papers and exams not received on time will lose one-third letter grade for each day late, unless other arrangements are made with the instructors.

Cell phones and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g., iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g., gaming, email, chat, etc.) can result in a significant deduction to your participation grade.

Academic integrity is a part of the George Mason honor code. Students may neither give nor receive help during examinations. A student must have done all of the research and writing on a paper to which her/his name is signed. Students who use the words of others must place the borrowed language in quotation marks or a block quotation and indicate the source in a footnote or endnote. Plagiarism is defined in the GMU honor code as "presenting as one's own, the words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgment." Honor violations will be referred to the Office of Academic Integrity and the Honor Committee for adjudication; and penalties can be severe.

If you find writing papers difficult, you may want to consult Mason's Writing Center for assistance. (<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>).

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703 993 2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Students with questions either about the class or their performances or grades should consult with the instructors during office hours or arrange a conference at another time by telephone or email.

Required Readings: (available in campus bookstore)

J. William Harris, *The Making of the American South. A Short History, 1500-1877*

William J. Cooper, Jr. *Liberty and Slavery: Southern Politics to 1860*

Lois Horton, *Harriet Tubman and the Fight for Freedom*

Charles C. Bolton and Scott Culclasure, *Confessions of Edward Isham: A Poor White Life of the Old South*

Elizabeth Varon, *We Mean to be Counted: White Women and Politics in Antebellum Virginia*

Charles Dew, *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War*

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| Aug. | 29 | Introduction to Class and the South |
| | 31 | A Colonial Society, Read Harris, 3-52, Cooper, ch. 1. |
| Sept. | 5 | Labor Day. NO CLASS. |
| | 6 | LAST DAY TO ADD CLASSES -- check your registration |
| | 7 | Slavery survives the Revolution. Read Harris, 53-68; Cooper, chs. 2-3, Lord Dunmore's Proclamation at http://www.learnnc.org/lp/pdf/lord-dunmores-proclamation-p4238.pdf |
| | 12 | The South in the New Nation. Read Harris, 69-84; and the Virginia Resolves of 1798: http://constitution.org/rf/vr_1798.htm |
| | 14 | Revolutions of 1800. Read Cooper, chs. 4-5. |
| | 19 | Nationalism and Sectionalism. Read Harris, 84-94; Cooper, ch. 6 |
| | 21 | Jackson and Nullification. Read Harris, 144-54, Cooper, chs. 7-8 |
| | 26 | Slavery as Social and Economic System. FIRST PAPER DUE |
| | 28 | Slaveholders: Aristocrats or Capitalists? Read Harris, 97-117. |
| Sept. | 30 | LAST DAY TO DROP COURSE |
| Oct. | 3 | Life in Slavery. Life in Slavery. Read Peter Kolchin, "Reevaluating the Antebellum Slave Community: A Comparative Perspective," <i>Journal of American History</i> , 70 (Dec., 1983): 579-601, JSTOR database, GMU library |
| | 5 | African American Slavery and Freedom. Read Harris, 121-34; Horton, 1-41, 103-25 |
| | 10 | NO CLASS. AUTUMN BREAK |

- 11 Proslavery and Antislavery Arguments. Read Harris, 135-43; and John C. Calhoun, "Slavery a Positive Good," in <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=71>
- 12 The Politics of Slavery. Read Cooper, ch. 9; Harris, 144-66;
- 17 **MIDTERM EXAM**
- 19 Nonslaveholding Whites. Read Bolton, intro, chs. 1-4
- 24 Nonslaveholding Whites. Read Bolton, ch. 5
- 26 Crime and Punishment. Read Bolton, ch. 7 and Apps B & C
- 28 **END OF SELECTIVE WITHDRAWAL PERIOD**
- 31 Southern Honor and Religion. Read Harris, 117-121; Dickson D. Bruce, Jr., "Society and Culture in the Old South: A Comparative View," *American Quarterly*, 26 (Oct 1974): 399-416, available on JSTOR database, GMU library website
- Nov. 2 Southern Religion, Black and White.
- 7 Southern Women and Benevolence Read Varon, ch. 1-2
- 9 Women, Work, and Politics. Read Varon, ch. 3; Bolton, ch. 6.
- 14 Women and the Family. **SECOND PAPER DUE**
- 16 The South and the Territories.
- 21 The Compromise of 1850 and Fugitive Slaves. Read Cooper, ch. 10; Varon, ch. 4;
- 23 **THANKSGIVING BREAK**
- 28 Kansas Nebraska, and the Big Breakup. Read Cooper, ch. 11; Harris, 167-83; Horton, 42-81
- 30 The Election of 1860 and Secession. Read Dew, 1-58, 83-103; Varon, Ch. 5
- Dec. 5 Secession and the Outbreak of War. Read Varon, Epilogue; Cooper, Epilogue; Harris, 184-222; Dew, 58-81; Horton, 130-39
- 7 Civil War and Emancipation. **RECEIVE TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM**
- 16 **TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM DUE BY 5 p.m.**