

History 300: Introduction to Historical Method

The Underground Railroad and Slavery

Fall 2011

Prof. Spencer Crew

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Office: East Building room 207B

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:00 – 1:00 and by appointment

History 300 introduces history majors to the process of writing an original research paper. In addition it fulfills all or part of the writing-intensive requirement for the history major. In this course we will focus on researching slavery and the Underground Railroad. Your research projects will grow out of your increased understanding of the operation of these activities and the many different people involved in them. The Underground Railroad story offers an opportunity to see how civil disobedience and interracial cooperation changed the way many people came to think about the institution of slavery and the people victimized by it.

You do not need to have previous knowledge about the Underground Railroad or slavery for this course. You will gain that knowledge in the course of the semester. I do assume that you have experience in historical analysis and understand the difference between primary and secondary sources, can identify the main thesis of a scholarly work, and have previously used footnotes. This is your opportunity to take that knowledge and become a historian by producing a well researched and thoughtfully presented **10 – 12 page** research paper.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703.993.2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Drop/Add deadlines:

Last Day to Add: September 6, 2011

Last Day to Drop: September 30, 2011

Selective Withdrawal Period: October 3 - October 28, 2011

Required Texts:

John N. Arnold, *History A Very Short History*

Fergus M. Bordewich, *Bound for Canaan*

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass An American Slave*

Kate Clifford Larson, *Bound for the Promised Land Harriet Tubman, Portrait of an American Hero*

Stuart Seely Sprague, *His Promised Land, The Autobiography of John P. Parker*

William Still, *The Underground Railroad*

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*

Grading:

20% Attendance and class participation

5% Library assignment and topic selection

10% In class essay paper

10% Rough Draft of paper

15% Final paper presentation

40% Final paper

Failure to complete any of the written assignments will result in automatic failure of the class. Each student will also have a mandatory conference with the instructor; failure to have this conference will result in automatic failure of the class.

All assignments must be turned in during the class period designated by the instructor. Late materials will be penalized one-half grade for each day after the due date. Material received on the due date, but after the class period will be penalized one-half grade. After the due date has passed, late material must be turned in before 5:00 and verified by the program coordinator in the Robinson Office of the East Building in order to be counted for that day.

If you are unable to turn in an assignment due to an emergency, you must bring a written note from a doctor or the dean. If at all possible, contact me ahead of time so that we can arrange for an alternative time for you to complete the work.

The class participation grade will be based on the students' preparation for and contribution to class discussions. In preparing for class students should complete all the required readings and be ready to answer questions regarding the reading. A student's discussion grade will be evaluated not according to the amount of talking that student does, but rather according to whether that student contributes thoughtfully and constructively, based on a careful consideration of the readings. Students cannot contribute to class discussions if they are absent, consequently, repeated unexcused absences will be reflected in their participation grade.

All plagiarism cases will be automatically submitted to GMU's honor committee. According to GMU's honor code, plagiarism includes the following: **1.** Presenting as one's own words, the work, or the opinions of someone else without proper acknowledgement. **2.** Borrowing the sequence of ideas, the arrangement of material, or the pattern of thought of someone else without proper acknowledgement.

Schedule:

1 Sept. *Introduction to the Underground Railroad*

Turabian, pp. 5 -47

8 Sept. *Thinking about history and thinking about sources*

Arnold, chapters 1 - 7

15 Sept. *A Personal View of Slavery*

Douglass, all; Sprague and Parker, pages 7 - 70

Visit to the George Mason Library

22 Sept. *Slavery, escape, and the evolution of the Underground Railroad*

Borgewich, Introduction thru chapter 4

Turabian, pp. 48-70

Selecting a topic and setting goals for your paper

In class discussion and collaboration

29 Sept. African Americans and the Underground Railroad

Bordewich, Chapters 5 – 7, Sprague and Parker, pages 71 - 165

6 Oct. **Essay discussion in class:** Prepare a 2 – 3 page essay explaining your ideas and arguments for your final research paper. You should indicate why you think this idea is important and how you expect to discuss it in your final paper. This paper should include at least 3 footnotes in proper form.

Turabian, pp. 70-81, 133-282

13 Oct. Visit to the Library of Congress on **Friday October 14th**

- 20 Oct. *William Still and the Underground Railroad*
 Still, all
- 27 Oct. *Harriet Tubman*
 Larson, Introduction thru chapter 9
- 3 Nov. *Outline Discussion* –individual conversations with the professor
- 10 Nov. Research and writing
- 17 Nov. Research and writing
- 1 Dec. **In class presentation of draft paper**
- 8 Dec. **In class presentation of draft paper**
- 12 Dec. **Final paper due**