

History 223 00 2, The Civil War and Reconstruction (3 credits)

Fall 2009

Cedar Crest College

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## COURSE INTRODUCTION

(Course Objectives, Format, Evaluation and Outcomes)

The Civil War was the bloodiest war in American history. Indeed, more American died in this conflict than died in all other American conflicts combined up to the Vietnam War. This course examines the events that led to the Civil War, the war itself, and the consequences of this struggle.

By means of assigned readings, films, and classroom lectures, students will gain a great deal of information about the Civil War era. But the purpose of this course goes well beyond the accumulation of data. Classroom discussion and the research paper will encourage students to ask intelligent questions about the Civil War, to think critically about evidence, and to apply the principles of logic to historical facts and theories. Of course, students will also gain considerable skill in dealing with historical primary and secondary sources.

Students often ask: What good is knowledge about the Civil War or, for that matter, knowledge about any historical subject? There are many answers to such a question. But one need only think of men and women who know nothing of the past. For them governments rise and fall, wars are fought, nations are dispossessed—without explanation. Trapped in the small world of their own experience, such people are similar to the superstitious folk of the past ages. They feel prey to forces beyond comprehension. At best they are given to apathy, at worst to paranoia.

Students who successfully complete this course will be well on their way to escaping such a condition. They will have gained a solid grasp of the Civil War era (assessed by tests, research paper, classroom discussion, etc.) They also will be able to understand and analyze local and national events, especially with regard to racial and regional issues.

With this in mind, the student needs to know how this course will be taught and how student work will be evaluated. Concerning the first question, I shall use several teaching methods, including lectures, films, classroom discussion, outside reading, and a research paper. In all of this, the approach is fairly simple: college students are adults, and so I expect them to shoulder much of the responsibility for their own education. Students must keep up with the reading and study diligently for tests. As to the evaluation of student work, the latter portion of this syllabus shows how much weight each course requirement will receive.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### READINGS

David W. Blight, *A Slave No More: Two Men Who Escaped to Freedom, Including Their Own Narratives of Emancipation*

Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War*

James M. McPherson, *Crossroads of Freedom: Antietam*

Please remember that used copies of the above books may be found at amazon.com

### FILMS

Ken Burns, The Civil War, Episodes I, IX

Freddy Fields, Glory

### PAPER

Due in class on November 12. For every unexcused day it is late, the paper will lose a letter grade. For information about this assignment, read the handout entitled "History 223 Project." Also read the handout entitled, "Citation, or How to Avoid Plagiarism." Your paper will not be graded unless your cover page includes the following statement signed by you: "I have carefully read and understand 'Citations, or How to Avoid Plagiarism.'"

### TESTS

There will be a test and a final exam. The test will be on October 1. The date of the final will be announced later. The test and exam will be essay and short answer in nature.

### GRADING

|                         |     |
|-------------------------|-----|
| Test (essay test)       | 30% |
| Final Exam (essay exam) | 30% |
| Paper                   | 30% |
| Classroom Participation | 10% |

(No extra credit work is allowed.)

## CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE

Students are required to show up for the exam, the test, and for book discussions. In addition, students should realize that they cannot do well in their classroom participation grade if they do not attend class and regularly take part in discussion. If you miss required work such as a test or an exam, you will only be allowed to take a makeup with a legitimate excuse. For example, illness much be documented with a note from a physician or from the student health service.

If you are unable to attend a class, it is your responsibility to get the missed notes. It is also your responsibility to be aware of any announcements—for example, assignments, schedule changes, etc.—that may have been given during class.

## COURSE WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE

November 9, 2009

## DISABILITIES

Students with documented disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss these needs with their professor during the first two weeks of class. Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should contact the Advising Center.

## OFFICE VISITS

Office visits are always welcome. If you would like to discuss course materials, classroom issues, etc., or if you just want to chat, please feel free to drop by. My office hours are Wednesday 11:00-11:30 a.m. and Thursday 11:00-11:30 a.m. I am also available by appointment on Tuesdays 9:30-9:45 p.m. If these times are not convenient, see me after class for an appointment.

THIS COURSE WILL BE TAUGHT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CEDAR CREST COLLEGE HONOR SYSTEM. CHEATING AND/OR PLAGIARISM WILL RESULT IN FAILURE OF THE COURSE. IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS, PLEASE SEE ME.

## COURSE OUTLINE

### THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION

- I. Origins of the Civil War
  - A. The South – Society, Politics, and Economics
  - B. The North – Society, Politics, and Economics  
Nascent Industrialization
  - C. Events Leading to War
    - Missouri Compromise (1820)
    - Nat Turner’s Rebellion (1831)
    - Nullification Crisis (1832)
    - Wilmont Proviso (1846, 1847) and the Compromise of 1850
    - Popular Sovereignty and the Battle over Kansas (1854-1858)
    - Dred Scott Case (1857)
    - John Brown’s Raid (1859)
    - The Election of Lincoln (1860-1861)
    - Reading: A Slave No More
  
- II. The Embattled North and South
  - A. A Comparative View
  - B. The Ascendancy of the Confederacy (1861)
    - Early Defeats and Victories
    - Fall 1862, Confederate Offensive
  - C. Antietam and the Emancipation Proclamation (1862-63)
  - D. The Turing of the Tide
    - Vicksburg, Gettysburg, and the Battle Above the Clouds (1863)
    - Grant Takes Command (1864)
    - The Bloody Summer of 1864
    - The Fall of Atlanta and the March to the Sea (1864)
    - The Final Battles
    - Readings: Crossroads of Freedom
  
- III. Reconstruction
  - A. The Assassination of Lincoln (1865)
  - B. The Lives of White and Black Southerners
  - C. The Fight for Control of Reconstruction
    - The Impeachment of Johnson (1868)
  - D. The Fight for Control of the South

- The Ku Klux Klan  
E. The Election of 1876  
F. The South Redeemed?  
Reading: This Republic of Suffering

History 223 Project  
Fall 2009

You will write a paper on some aspect of the Civil War (and its causes) or Reconstruction. Your research must come from both traditional sources (books, articles, etc.) and on-line sources (for example, the Valley of the Shadow Project, <http://valley.libvirginia.edu/>). In addition, your research must be based, at least in part, on the extensive examination of primary sources. For example, the Cedar Crest, Muhlenberg, and Lehigh libraries have primary works on the following subjects (do not think, however, that these are the only primary sources that these libraries have):

For Civil War-era politics: The New York Times, 1850s-1870s

For battles, tactics, etc: The War of the Rebellion (the official records of the armies of the USA and the CSA)

For slavery: George P. Rawick, ed., The American Slave (slave narratives from the Federal Writers Project, 1936-38)

For Ku Klux Klan: Senate Reports, 42<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess., No. 41; House Reports, 42<sup>nd</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> Sess., No. 22

For Mary Boykin Chesnut: C. Vann Woodward, ed., Mary Chesnut's Civil War

For Abraham Lincoln: Abraham Lincoln Association, Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln

Your paper should be seven-to-eight pages in length. It should be typed (double spaced), and it should have a title page and a bibliography. Footnotes (or notes) should be placed at the bottom of the page or at the end of the text. Citations within the text (for example: "Robert E. Lee accepted blame for the failure of Pickett's Charge (Jones, p. 451)" are not acceptable.

For security purposes, keep a second copy of your paper.

This project is due in class on November 12. For every unexcused day it is late, you will lose a letter grade.