History 4440-001, African-American History to 1877
Fall 2010
Tu/Th 9:30-10:50, Wooten Hall 219

Instructor: Dr. Jennifer Jensen Wallach
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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 2:00-4:00 or by appointment

Course Description/ Course Goals
This course will survey the major historical events in African American history from the origins of slavery in North America through the end of the Reconstruction period.

Themes addressed in the course will include: the creation of African American identity, African cultural continuity, the construction of race in the context of the U.S., the relationship of people of African descent to American political and social institutions, black resistance, white oppression, the “freedom continuum,” the impact of gender on the black historical experience, African American cultural expression, and black community life in both slave and free communities. We will also discuss the history of the field of African American history and endeavor to understand how a deep understanding of black history has altered and shaped broader narratives of American history.

By the end of the semester, students should possess not only a broad familiarity with the experiences of black Americans during the time period but should also possess a more sophisticated understanding of how to interpret both primary sources and historiographical texts.

Class Format
The ethos of the class will be participatory and collaborative. My role as an instructor is to guide you through the process of gathering and analyzing data, not merely to dispense historical data and ask you to memorize it. **Students are expected to come to class having read the material** and ready to listen actively and to participate in discussions. The class will consist of lectures, large group discussions, small group discussions, and film screenings.

Required Texts
Henry Louis Gates, Jr. editor, *The Classic Slave Narratives*
Harris, Leslie. *In the Shadow of Slavery: African-Americans in New York City, 1626-1863*

Grades
Final Grades:
- Quizzes/ short tests 50%
- Book review 25%
- Take home final exam/paper: 25%

Quizzes: There will be four scheduled quizzes (short tests) during the course of the semester. Each scheduled quiz is worth 20 points for 80 points total. Please see the schedule for specific dates. During the class period before each quiz, I will give you some clues about what you should review to prepare for the quiz. The quizzes will cover the lectures, the films we watch in class, and the reading assignments. The quizzes will consist of essay questions, short answer questions, and objective questions.

In addition to the scheduled quizzes, I will give four pop quizzes, which are worth 5 points each or 20 points total throughout the semester. The pop quizzes are designed to encourage class attendance and accountability for the reading assignments.
Collectively, the quizzes are worth 100 points. At the end of the term, you can add up your quizzes to get an idea of your final quiz/short test grade.

**Book Review:** You will write a 4-5 page book review. Additional guidelines will be distributed separately.

**Take home examination/paper:** The final examination will be analytical in nature and will ask you to synthesize the broad array of materials we will encounter in class. You will write a 5-7 page essay synthesizing what you have learned about African-American history around one of the following themes:

1) resistance and cooperation
2) economics and work
3) culture and community

More specific guidelines will be distributed later in the term.

**Missed Quizzes and Late Assignments**
I will allow make-ups for scheduled quizzes/short tests only if arrangements are made *in advance* and proper documentation explaining your absence is provided. Do not come to me *after* you missed a quiz and ask to make it up. Out of fairness to the other students, my answer at that point will be “no.”

You may make up a pop quiz only if you have an acceptable and documented reason for missing class (serious illness, death of a close family member, official UNT travel, etc.). Please note that excuses such as traffic, car trouble, vacation travel, or broken alarm clocks are *not* acceptable for the purposes of making up a quiz.

I will accept the book review up to one week late after the October 28 deadline with a one letter grade penalty. I will not accept it after November 4.

I will not accept the take home final exam after its due date of Tuesday, December 14 at 10:00am.

**How to Reach Me**
Please always feel free to come and see me during my office hours if you have any comments, questions, or concerns. E-mail is the best way to reach me. However, I generally only reply to emails once a day, so please allow 24 hours for a response (or more on the weekends).

**Academic Honesty**
Students are expected to strictly adhere to the UNT Student Code of Conduct, which prohibits lying, cheating, and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for an assignment on the first offense. The second offense will result in failure of the course.

Please be particularly careful to avoid plagiarism—taking credit for another person’s intellectual property without giving her proper credit.

The American Historical Association’s “Statement on Professional Conduct” defines plagiarism in the following way:

“The word *plagiarism* derives from Latin roots: *plagiarus*, an abductor, and *plagiare*, to steal. The *expropriation of another author’s work, and the presentation of it as one’s own, constitutes plagiarism and is a serious violation of the ethics of scholarship.* It seriously undermines the credibility of the plagiarist, and can do irreparable harm to a historian’s career.

In addition to the harm that plagiarism does to the pursuit of truth, it can also be an offense against the literary rights of the original author and the property rights of the copyright owner... *The real penalty for plagiarism is the abhorrence of the community of scholars.*
Plagiarism includes more subtle abuses than simply expropriating the exact wording of another author without attribution. Plagiarism can also include the limited borrowing, without sufficient attribution, of another person’s distinctive and significant research findings or interpretations. Of course, historical knowledge is cumulative, and thus in some contexts—such as textbooks, encyclopedia articles, broad syntheses, and certain forms of public presentation—the form of attribution, and the permissible extent of dependence on prior scholarship, citation, and other forms of attribution will differ from what is expected in more limited monographs. As knowledge is disseminated to a wide public, it loses some of its personal reference. What belongs to whom becomes less distinct. But even in textbooks a historian should acknowledge the sources of recent or distinctive findings and interpretations, those not yet a part of the common understanding of the profession. Similarly, while some forms of historical work do not lend themselves to explicit attribution (e.g., films and exhibitions), every effort should be made to give due credit to scholarship informing such work.

Plagiarism, then, takes many forms. The clearest abuse is the use of another’s language without quotation marks and citation. More subtle abuses include the appropriation of concepts, data, or notes all disguised in newly crafted sentences, or reference to a borrowed work in an early note and then extensive further use without subsequent attribution. Borrowing unexamined primary source references from a secondary work without citing that work is likewise inappropriate. All such tactics reflect an unworthy disregard for the contributions of others.

No matter what the context, the best professional practice for avoiding a charge of plagiarism is always to be explicit, thorough, and generous in acknowledging one’s intellectual debts.”

(See: http://www.historians.org/pubs/free/professionalstandards.cfm#Plagiarism)

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism while you are in the process of writing your book review or final exam, see me.

***Please note: Copying even a few sentences from the Internet and presenting them as your own work constitutes plagiarism.***

Special Needs
Any student requiring instructional modifications due to a documented disability should make an appointment to meet with the instructor as soon as possible. An official letter documenting the disability will be expected in order to receive accommodations.

Student Evaluations
The Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness (SETE) is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. This short survey will be made available to you at the end of the semester, providing you a chance to comment on how this class is taught. I am very interested in the feedback I get from students, as I work to continually improve my teaching. I consider the SETE to be an important part of your participation in this class.

Schedule

Please note: This schedule is subject to change. You are expected to attend class regularly and to be aware of any changes that may be made.

You should pace yourself with the reading. Some reading assignments are longer than others and should be begun well in advance of the day they are due. Longer reading assignments are marked with two stars (**) on the syllabus.
Week 1, Introduction:
August 26—Introduction to the course

Week 2, African Origins and the Transatlantic Slave Trade:
August 31—Lecture: The Transatlantic Slave Trade; Discussion: Major Problems, pp. 44-49
September 2—Discussion: Major Problems, pp. 52-60

Week 3, Origins of North American Slavery:
September 7— Lecture: Establishing Slavery; Discussion: Major Problems, pp. 92-98

Week 4, Ira Berlin’s “Generations” Model for Understanding Slavery Across Time:
September 14—Lecture: Ira Berlin’s Slave Generations; Discuss: Major Problems p.113
Book Review Assignment Distributed Today
September 16—Lecture: A Brief Intro to the Life of Equiano;
Discussion: The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African, pp. 15-98**

Week 5, The Case Study of Olaudah Equiano:
September 21—Lecture: The Question of Equiano’s Origins and the Art of Historical Interpretation;
Discussion: The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, pp. 137-166
September 23—Quiz/ Short Test #1

Week 6, Free Black Communities and Slavery in the North:
September 28—Lecture: Slavery and Abolition in the North; Case Study of Phyllis Wheatley
September 30—Discuss; In the Shadow of Slavery, pp.-1-133**

Week 7, Slavery During the Era of the Revolution:
October 5- Film: Africans in American, Part II “Revolution, 1750-1805”
October 7- Lecture: Sally Hemings & Thomas Jefferson

Week 8, The Historiography of Slavery; The Slave Community:
October 12—Lecture and Small Group Discussions: Historiography of Slavery
October 14: Lecture: African-American Religious Experiences in Free and Slave Communities
Discussion: Major Problems, pp. 140-156

Week 9: The Slave Community Continued
October 19: Lecture: Antebellum Slavery; Major Problems pp. 259-263; 277-293
October 21: Quiz/ Short Test #2
Week 10, Slave Resistance:

October 26— Lecture: Slave Resistance
Discussion: *Major Problems*, pp. 127, 163, 246-250


Book Review Assignment Due Today

Week 11: Slave Labor; The Case Study of Frederick Douglass:

November 9: Lecture: Slave Laborers on the Plantation and in the City
Discussion: *Major Problems*, pp. 234-244

November 11—Discussion: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, pp. 325-436**

Week 12: Slave Families


November 11—*Quiz/ Short Test #3*

Week 13, The Case Study of Harriet Jacobs:

November 16—Film: *Africans in America*, Part IV “Judgment Day, 1831-1865”

November 18—Discussion: *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, pp. 339-668**

Week 14, The Abolitionist Movement:

November 23—Lecture: The Abolitionist Movement

**Distribute final exam assignments today.**

November 25—*No Class Thanksgiving Holiday*

Week 15, The Road to Civil War:

November 30— Discussion: *In the Shadow of Slavery*, pp. 134-289**

December 2—Lecture: The Road to the Civil War; Discussion: *Major Problems*, pp. 339, 343-356

Week 16, Conclusion:

December 7— Lecture: Reconstruction
Discussion: *Major Problems*, pp. 370-387

December 9—*Quiz/ Short Test #4*

Final Exam:

Due by 10:00 on Tuesday, December 14. I will not accept late exams. I will not accept exams via email. Please place your exam in the container on my office door.