COURSE INFORMATION

COURSE NO: HIS/AAF 359
HISTORY OF SLAVERY IN AMERICA
LOCATION: WASHBURN 132
TIME: MTWR 10:00-11:45AM

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

MARCUS P. NEVIEUS, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR
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OFFICE HOURS: T/W 12PM-2PM
AND BY APPOINTMENT

PREREQUISITES AND SPECIAL COMMENTS:

THIS COURSE REQUIRES THAT YOU HAVE REACHED SOPHOMORE STANDING, OR THAT YOU HAVE CONFIRMED MY PRIOR PERMISSION TO ENROLL.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This intermediate lecture course surveys the major historical contexts, themes, and peoples that comprise the History of Slavery in America. Historian Edmund Morgan once concluded that slavery and freedom formed a great paradox, uniquely American. In short, this meant that prior to 1865, African enslavement predominated American social, political, and economic institutions precisely because such institutions depended heavily upon maintaining slavery. More recently, historians have investigated at great depth the regional and local variations in American slavery. These investigations center our discussions this semester.

To learn about and become conversant in scholarly discussion, we will discuss widely recognized personalities including Thomas Jefferson, Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln using selected monographs, articles, and primary source readings. We will also bring emphasis to lesser discussed, but highly important, characters including David Walker and John Brown; and discuss developing historiographical contexts including the long durée of military emancipation for African Americans – among other themes.

Several key questions form the core of this course: 1.) How is the history of the slaveholding republic created, narrated, and represented; and, how are these narrations changing in the latest historical publications? 2.) What are the major themes that characterize this history, and how do they relate to traditional contexts of American history? 3.) How does exploring these issues illustrate the implications of these histories for us in the present day? 4.) And perhaps most importantly, how do we identify and explain the “changes” that characterize each context? These inquiries will continuously shape our course of study throughout the semester, culminating in new perspectives for each student individually, and in the collective.

REQUIRED MONOGRAPHS:


These texts are available at the URI Kingston book store, and are available for loan at the university libraries.
Grading:

I will assess each assignment with a letter grade. The grading scale for this course is:

A = 93 – 100
A- = 90 – 92
B+ = 87 – 89
B = 83 – 86
B- = 80 – 82
C+ = 77 – 79
C = 73 – 76
C- = 70 – 72
D+ = 67 – 69
D = 60 – 66
F = 60 and Below

Attendance, Class Discussions: 40%

No more than four unexcused absences are permitted throughout the entire Summer I session. Absences without excuse during class discussions, book review submissions (defined as the lack of a submission by the due date), or any other graded material constitutes a missed opportunity for graded participation. Furthermore, more than four unexcused absences will result in an attendance and participation grade of 0%, factored into the overall attendance and class participation average. Make up materials for any missed assignment will be scheduled only in cases of illness or absence properly documented according to university standards.

You are expected to attend every class session, and complete the expected traditional assignments scheduled below. In addition, you are each expected to participate actively in class discussions, listed in the course schedule below. These class discussions will be comprised of small groups; these topics will be grounded in selected primary sources assigned for you to read in advance of the discussions.

Analytical Book Reviews: 60%

In order of understanding the discipline of history, it is important to learn the art of the analytical book review. During this Summer session, you will submit two such reviews as scheduled below. Each review will be comprised of no more than 750 words. Further instructions and guidelines will be provided.

Cultural Competency Learning Outcome:

The 21st century is characterized by a rapidly expanding demographic profile of our nation replete with cross cultural opportunities, communication, and exchanges. Issues pertaining to understanding, respect, inclusion, and equity are critical to creating vibrant and inclusive learning communities at URI, as well as to promoting a viable and functional global society. Such cross cultural responsibilities refer to the set of knowledge and skills for which we hold students accountable with regard to privilege, bias, multiculturalism, and diversity as experienced in U.S. society. Thus, a central objective of this course is to engage you in understanding the value and importance of your cross cultural responsibilities, as a collective body of students at URI, and as global citizens.

In meeting these goals, you will: 1.) develop an understanding that diversity in the United States in historical context includes, but is not limited to issues of race, sex, religion, age, color, creed, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and socio-economic class; 2.) develop keen knowledge of the processes of social power and its consequences as it relates to forms of cultural difference in historical context; 3.) and, develop analyses of power structures, privilege, and explicit and implicit prejudice in historical context, particularly as they pertain to the History of Slavery in America.

Plagiarism Caution and Student Misconduct Policy:

Plagiarism is the submission, either orally or in writing, of another person’s words, ideas, drawings, or other works as one’s own without providing the appropriate citation, or otherwise referencing the sources of such words, ideas, drawings or other works, for the purpose of receiving credit for having completed an academic assignment. This is a form of academic dishonesty that is unacceptable and intolerable at the University of Rhode Island. Submission of plagiarized work will result in an immediate grade of ‘F’ and forfeiture of ANY credit for the given assignment. Please see the URI Manual (Chapter 8: Academic Regulations, Sections 8.27. 10-8.27.20) and the Student Handbook (Pages 8-10: Community Standards of Behavior: University Policies and Regulations).
COURSE CALENDAR:

Week One  May 22 – May 26
Monday, May 22: Course Begins
Course Orientation
Lecture: Launching the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: Establishing Slave Ports in West and Central Africa, 1485-1619
Lecture: Expanding the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: The Rise of Sugar and Tobacco in the New World, 1520-1672
Lecture: Final Passages: The Intercolonial Slave Trade and the English Atlantic World, 1672-1754

Week Two  May 29 – June 2
Monday, May 29: Memorial Day
Tuesday, May 30, Class Discussion: Olaudah Equiano and the Middle Passage
Lecture: Slavery in the Early Old South: Tobacco in the Chesapeake, 1619-1754
Video: Slavery and the Making of America, Vol. 1

Week Three  June 5 – June 9
Lecture: The Black Majority: Rice Slavery in the Early Lowcountry, 1670-1739
Lecture: The Revolution that Wasn’t: Slavery Retrenched, 1763-1803
Lecture: Ending the Transatlantic Trade: Free Black Communities and the Early Abolitionist Movement in the New Nation: 1787-1821
Wednesday, June 7: Nellis review due by 10AM. Submit as Word .doc on Sakai
Video: Slavery and the Making of America, Vol. 2

Week Four  June 12 – June 16
Monday, June 12, Class Discussion: David Walker’s Appeal and American Slavery at 1830
Lecture: Antislavery’s Moral Cordon: Weakening the Slaveholding Republic, 1829-1859
Lecture: Escape Run Afoul of the Law: the Fugitive Slave Law, the Dred Scott Decision, and the Sectional Divide of the 1850s
Video: Slavery and the Making of America, Vol. 3

Week Five  June 19 – June 23
Lecture: The Slaveholding Republic’s Last Crescendo: Secession, Emancipation, and the First Years of the Civil War 1858-1863
Lecture: Promises and Failures: The Many Meanings of Emancipation, 1863-1876
Video: Slavery and the Making of America, Vol. 4
Thursday, June 22: Clark-Pujara review due by 10AM. Submit as Word .doc on Sakai