

EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY
ONLINE
COURSE SYLLABUS
HIST 458: Civil War & Reconstruction
Winter 2010

Course Prefix and Course Number: HIST 458

Course Name: Civil War & Reconstruction

Instructor Last Name: Hartman

Delivery Mode: Web Course

Credits: 5

Instructor information:

Rebecca Hartman, Ph.D, Assistant Professor of History

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Office Hours: Email is the best form of contact; I also have on-campus hours MWTh from 2-3 or by appointment.

Prerequisites: None

Course Description: Historian James McPherson has claimed that the Civil War is the “central event in the American historical consciousness.” Less than a century after fighting for independence from Great Britain and establishing a republic, Americans experienced the bloodiest war in the nation’s history—what some historians deem the first “modern” war. After four years, over 600,000 soldiers lay dead while four million formerly enslaved Americans enjoyed legal freedom for the first time. Then, Americans struggled to reorganize their society and redefine the nation in response to the changes wrought by the war’s violence and to the conflicts that endured in peacetime.

In this course, we will examine the events and issues leading to the war, the dynamics of the war, and the period of Reconstruction. Our primary approach will reflect the emerging scholarship on the social history of the military experience. We will examine the social and cultural changes the war exacted from the American populace, while also exploring the political transformations wrought by the war and Reconstruction. **The course is reading intensive, appropriate for a 400-level course.**

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of the course, students should be able to demonstrate:

- Familiarity with the central issues leading to the U.S. Civil War
- Familiarity with the effect of Civil War on U.S., including society, political systems and racial systems
- Understanding of the processes and debates surrounding Reconstruction
- An ability to locate, summarize, and critically analyze both historical writing and primary sources

- The ability to present historical concepts clearly both orally and in writing
- An ability to analyze a specific issue with some depth, while also historically contextualizing the issue
- An understanding of and ability to apply key analytical concepts—such as gender, race and class—to the study of the past.
- An understanding of historiographic trends in the study of history
- An understanding of the process of interpreting historical evidence

Course delivery format:

This 5 credit, web-based course utilizes group discussion through Blackboard as well as individual student consultation by e-mail regarding student written assignments.

Required texts:

Michael Perman, ed. *Major Problems in the Civil War and Reconstruction*, 2nd ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998)

James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*

Eric Foner, *A Short History of Reconstruction*

In addition to these three main texts, I will be providing occasional lecture notes, websites and primary documents. These will be delivered through Blackboard, Course assignments and I will always notify you via email and/or Blackboard Discussion.

Course Requirements and Assessment:

Weekly reading abstracts/response papers. These are short (1-2 pp. 2 page maximum) papers that demonstrate your engagement with the reading material. They must include at least two direct citations from a minimum of two assigned readings, and indicate that you understand the main arguments or claims of the readings. **(30% of grade)**

Blackboard Discussion: This will be the main opportunity for us to discuss the readings and our ideas about them. Discussion board posting will be ongoing throughout the term. Students cannot ‘make-up’ a lack of posting through the term by submitting a flurry of posts at the end of the course. Your grade for posting will be given weekly. **(30% of grade)**

Research/Term Paper, including individual components: This assignment will include a brief prospectus, due the end of week two, an annotated bibliography due week five, a rough draft due week seven and a final draft due week ten. The final paper should be between 15-20 pages. **(40% of grade)**

**Schedule of reading assignments:
(Course weeks begin on Monday and end on Sunday)**

Week 1 (January 5-11) North, South, and Sectional Politics

McPherson, Chapters 1-6. Don't panic. This seems like a lot, but is only about 200 pages and McPherson is wonderful to read. You'll see there's a reason this book won a Pulitzer Prize. Most students read it straight through regardless of the assigned sections.

Perman, Primary documents in Chapters 1 & 2.

OPTIONAL: Essays in Perman, Chapters 1 & 2.

Week 2 (January 12-18) The Crisis of Secession

McPherson, Chapters 7-9

Perman, Chapter 3 (All documents and both short essays)

Prospectus due by Sunday 5pm. Late assignments will result in ½ letter grade deduction, per day, on final paper grade.

Week 3 (19-25th) Going to War

McPherson, chapters 10-13

Perman, Chapter 4

Week 4 Generals

McPherson, Chapters 14-17

Perman, Chapter 5

Week 5 Soldiers

McPherson, Chapters 18-21

Perman, Chapter 6

Annotated Bibliography due Sunday, 5pm. Late assignment will result in ½ letter grade deduction, per day, on final paper grade.

Week 6 The Home Fronts

McPherson, Chapters 22-27

Perman, Chapters 7, 8 plus primary documents in Chapter 9

Week 7 Emancipation, Reconstruction, Race

Perman, Chapter 10

Mcpherson, Chapter 28, epilogue

Rough draft due, Sunday, 5pm. No less than 10 pages or rough draft will receive an 'F' Late rough drafts will not receive comments and will result in one FULL letter grade deduction for each day late.

Week 8 Reconstruction

Perman, chapter 11

Foner, first half of book

Week 9 Reconstruction and the meaning of the Civil War

Foner, second half of book

Perman, chapters 12, 13

Week 10 Assessing the significance

Perman, chapters 14, 15

Final draft of research paper due! 15 page minimum.

Statement on Academic Misconduct: Eastern Oregon University places a high value upon the integrity of its student scholars. Any student found guilty of an act of academic misconduct (including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, or theft of an examination or supplies) may be subject to having his or her grade reduced in the course in question, being placed on probation or suspended from the university, or being expelled from the university—or a combination of these. (Please see Section II of the *2003-2004 Student Handbook and Planning Calendar: Campus Citizenship (Academic)*, p. 32ff. *Campus Citizenship (Behavior)*, p. 41ff.)

Statement on Americans with Disabilities: If you have a documented disability or suspect that you have a learning problem and would like accommodations, please contact the Disability Services Program in Loso Hall 234 (962-3081).

Syllabus Prepared By: Dr. Rebecca Hartman