

HTS 2009 -- THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR

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Fall Semester 2005
M, W, F, 12:00 noon

This course will focus one of the most critical periods in the history of the United States that culminated in the devastating American Civil War from 1861 through 1865. That conflict cost more lives than all other wars in American history combined prior to Vietnam, and it has contributed to profound and continuing transformations in American life during nearly a century and a half since it ended.

The first third of the course will focus on the sectional conflicts that helped cause the Civil War. Most of the remaining two-thirds of the course will focus on the four years of the war itself, evaluating the war within both the narrative and analytical perspectives of recent scholarship. The last week of the course will briefly consider the crucial aftermath of the Civil War known as Reconstruction, as well as the issues that the Civil War continues to raise for us today.

Evaluation in the course will be based on three mid-term exams (indicated below in the "Reading Assignments and Exam Schedule"), on an analytical book review or similar project, and on a final comprehensive exam. The exams will be based on both the readings and on the lecture/discussions.

Please note that the first exam in the class will come very early--on Wednesday, September 7, in the middle of the third week of the course!

That first exam will be based on the students' reading of the Jeanette Keith's lively overview of the history of the American South from 1607 to 1877. Starting with such a two week "crash course" in Southern history will help insure that all students begin the class with a knowledge of some of the most important elements in the history of the American South, within which the events and issues of the Civil War period can best be understood.

The three required books, which will all be read in full, are:

Jeanette Keith, The South: A Concise History, Vol. 1
James M. McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era
Stephen B. Oates, Abraham Lincoln: The Man Behind the Myths

The class sessions will combine both lecture and discussion. Since the required readings provide only a taste of the truly staggering range of writing about the issues connected with the Civil War, each student will also be required, in consultation with the professor, to do an analytical book review or special project.

NOTE WELL: *Students are expected to attend class regularly, come on time at the scheduled beginning of each class (no later than 12:05 p.m.), and be ready to participate actively in discussions on the assigned readings.*

Class roll will be taken after the first week. Missing 6 or more unexcused class sessions (the equivalent of 2 full weeks of the course) may be grounds for a reduction in the student's overall course grade by as much as one full grade level (10 points).

Throughout the course, it is expected that all students will adhere to the Georgia Tech Honor Code.

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAM SCHEDULE:

NOTE: Students are expected, as a minimum, to begin reading the assignments by the start of the date indicated and to finish reading those assignments before the beginning of the next assignment. Students hoping to earn an "A" in the class should try to finish their reading in advance of the schedule below in order to allow sufficient time for proper review before the exams.

August 22--begin Jeanette Keith, The South, Introduction and Chapter 1,
(pp. 1-51)

August 24--begin Keith, Chapter 2 (pp. 53-97)

August 26--begin Keith, Chapter 3 (pp. 99-140)

August 29--begin Keith, Chapter 4 (pp. 142-182)

August 31--begin Keith, Chapter 5 (pp. 184-214)

September 2--Review for Exam #1

NO CLASS--Monday, September 5--Labor Day

EXAM #1--Wednesday, September 7

September 7--begin James McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, Prologue and
Chapter 1 (pp. 3-46)

September 9--begin McPherson, Chapter 2 (pp. 47-77)

September 12--begin McPherson, Chapter 3 (pp. 78-116)

September 14--begin McPherson, Chapter 4 (pp. 117-144)

September 16--begin McPherson, Chapter 5 (pp. 145-169)

September 19--begin McPherson, Chapter 6 (pp. 170-201)
 September 21--begin McPherson, Chapter 7 (pp. 202-233)
 September 23--begin McPherson, Chapter 8 (pp. 234-275)
 September 26--begin Stephen Oates, Abraham Lincoln, Prelude and Part 1
 (pp. xi-xiv, 3-30)
 September 28--begin Oates, Parts 2 and 3 (pp. 33-86), and McPherson,
 Chapter 9 (pp. 276-307)

September 30--Review for Exam #2

EXAM #2--Monday, October 3

October 3--begin McPherson, Chapter 10 (pp. 308-338)
 October 5--begin Oates, pp. 89-119
 October 7--begin Oates, pp. 120-147
 October 10--begin McPherson, Chapter 11 (pp. 339-368)
 October 12--begin McPherson, Chapter 12 (pp. 369-391)
 October 14--begin McPherson, Chapter 13 (pp. 392-427)

NO CLASS--Monday, October 17--Georgia Tech Holiday--WORK ON
 YOUR BOOK REVIEWS!

October 19--begin McPherson, Chapter 14 (pp. 428-453)
 October 21--begin McPherson, Chapter 15 (pp.454-489)
 October 24--begin McPherson, Chapter 16 (pp. 490-510)
 October 26--begin McPherson, Chapter 17 (pp. 511-545)
 October 28--begin McPherson, Chapter 18 (pp. 546-567)
 October 31--begin McPherson, Chapter 19 (pp. 568-590)
 November 2--begin McPherson, Chapter 20 (pp. 591-625)
 November 4--begin McPherson, Chapter 21 (pp. 626-665)

November 7--Review for Exam #3

EXAM #3--Wednesday, November 9

November 9--begin McPherson, Chapter 22 (pp. 666-688)
 November 11, 14--Work on your Book Reviews!

BOOK REVIEWS due--Wednesday, November 16

November 16--begin McPherson, Chapter 23 (pp. 689-717)
 November 18--begin McPherson, Chapter 24 (pp. 718-750)
 November 21--begin McPherson, Chapter 25 (pp. 751-773)
 November 23--begin McPherson, Chapter 26 (pp. 774-806)
 November 25--begin McPherson, Chapter 27 (pp. 807-830)

November 28--begin McPherson, Chapter 28 (pp. 831-852)

November 30--begin McPherson, Epilogue (pp. 853-862)

December 2--begin Oates, Part 5 (pp. 151-190)

December 5--re-read Keith, Chapter 5 (pp. 184-214)

December 7, 9--Review for the Final Exam

FINAL EXAM--Wednesday, December 14, 2:50 p.m.