

HIST 4325: Junior-Senior Seminar Civil War Battlefields

Dr. Adam I. Arenson
Office: LART 325
Office Hrs: Mon and Tue 9:30-11:30am
Email (best): aiarenson@utep.edu Phone: 747-6277

Fall 2010
CRN 12327
Monday 6:00-8:50
Class Location: LART 322

Course Description

In this seminar, students will learn how to identify and handle evidence, consider and craft historical arguments, and organize, write, and edit a 15-to-20-page original research paper. Papers may address: How are the cause, course, and consequences of the Civil War reflected on Civil War battlefields and other locales around the United States? How were battlefields created, and when and why were they preserved? Which wider lessons of the war are best presented at which battlefields, and how could historians and preservations do more to tell the full story of the Civil War Era?

Students will be encouraged to choose a specific Civil War battlefield to orient their research—and to expand their understanding of Civil War battlefields to consider the places and issues within social, cultural, gender, and political history, rather than in mere military terms. In preparation for their papers, students will read and discuss several exemplary books and articles, a guide to research practices, and news coverage of preparations for the 150th anniversary of the Civil War (2011-2015).

Required Books:

Richard A. Marius & Melvin E. Page, *A Short Guide to Writing About History* 7th ed. (New York: Longman, 2006). [ISBN#0205673708]
Christopher J. Olsen, *The American Civil War: A Hands-on History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2007). [ISBN#0809016400]
Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Knopf; Vintage, 2008). [ISBN#0375703837]
The Civil War in West Texas & New Mexico: The Lost Letterbook of Brigadier General Henry Hopkins Sibley John P. Wilson and Jerry Thompson, eds. (El Paso: Texas Western Press, 2001). [ISBN# 0874042836] (can order directly from press, in basement of the Library or at <http://www.utep.edu/twp/civilwar.htm>)

Additional Required Essays, Video, and Book Chapters:

These items will be available through electronic reserves on the UTEP library website.

David W. Blight, “‘For Something beyond the Battlefield’: Frederick Douglass and the Struggle for the Memory of the Civil War,” *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 75, No. 4 (March 1989), pp. 1156-1178. (JSTOR) **(cont.)**

Ken Burns, *The Civil War* [video series], 1990, “The Better Angels of Our Nature” episode.
Kirk Savage, *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), Chapter 6.
Jim Weeks, *Gettysburg: Memory, Market, and an American Shrine* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), Introduction and Chapter 7.

A great guide for researching and writing, which we will refer to often, is
<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/index.htm>

Course Policies

- Come to class prepared, having done the readings and advanced your research.
- Please arrive on time. If you foresee chronic lateness, contact me immediately.
- Students with special needs should contact me within the first two weeks of class.
- Student athletes or others engaged in university-sanctioned activities should contact me immediately.
- Many of you have families and/or work 40 hours a week—please do not fall behind in your coursework. If you are dealing with family issues, please contact me.
- It is official UTEP policy that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation and appropriate disposition. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. You are responsible for abiding by the full policy, available at <http://academics.utep.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=23785>
- **Every assignment should be submitted via Blackboard in Word format** and, when required, printed for submission. Late assignments will be penalized 10% per day, with the weekends counting as two full days. **Computer and printer problems are not excuses—plan ahead.**
- Please treat all the opinions and views expressed here with respect.

Explanation of Participant Requirements

What do historians do? The craft of history is generally misunderstood. Historians are storytellers, but they do more than that. In the process of telling a story, historians try to make an argument about the causes, course, and consequences of specific events in the past. Historians investigate changes over time, analyze trends and patterns, and seek to make connections between the past and present. In order to convince the public, other historians, and themselves, historians must make arguments and use evidence, tell stories, and seek a deeper understanding of how the world and its people interact.

Research Paper – Process and Final Product

This class is structured around the process of writing an original piece of scholarship. There are no exams, no book reviews, and no regurgitating class material.

However, your grade is based on writing a successful piece of original research – and the completion of the steps required in the research process. Though this class will function as a workshop to support you in this process, writing a research paper demands discipline.

Instead of studying and reading on a weekly basis, you must be finding a research topic and formulating research questions, doing research in primary and secondary sources, taking notes, outlining and structuring arguments, providing self-evaluations of your progress, and writing and revising your paper.

These skills that will aid you in any future research you may do, whether in history or any other field.

Participation and Attendance, Peer Reviews and Presentation Responses

Historical research is not a solitary process: look at the introduction or acknowledgment page in any monograph and you will see numerous people thanked by the author. These people read and made comments, talked with the author, and generally helped to improve the research.

In that spirit, you will work as class and in small groups to review the work that you submit in the process of writing the paper. This is called the “Peer Review Process,” and it mirrors the same system of academic peer review when you submit an article to a journal, or a monograph to a publisher. The idea is that writing is a collaborative endeavor and that your peers can help you come up with research topics and questions, give you advice on methods and concepts, sharpen your writing, and clarify your thoughts. Your peers will be your best critics and supporters.

Participation in class discussions and in the Peer Review process is crucial for the success of this course, and by extension, your paper. Everyone needs to participate in the open discussions during class by asking questions, contributing comments, and sharing your experiences about the research you are conducting. In order to function as a whole, we need every student to attend every class. Since this class meets once a week, **you are allowed only ONE EXCUSED ABSENCE during the semester.** Any absences beyond that will bring your final course grade down.

Warm-Up Research Exercises

In order to hone your research skills, we will use the books in the course to practice the generation of research questions; the analysis of primary sources; and we will determine the research questions, sources, and structure of a historical argument in *This Republic of Suffering*.

Assignments by date due:**Percentage of Grade:**

Class Participation and Peer Group Comments (four times)	12.5%
Primary Source Questions	2.5%
Possible Research Topics	5%
Primary Source Analysis	10%
Research Question (twice)	10%
Proposed Outline	10%
Second Draft	10%
Bibliography (three times)	5%
Self-Evaluation (three times)	5%
Research Presentation	10%
Final Research Paper and Bibliography	20%

General Submission Guidelines

All graded assignments in this class should be turned into the Blackboard site by the announced deadline.

Please name all files: LastName AssignmentName.DOCX This will aid my keeping track of them. At the top of the first page, include a title, your name, the course number, professor's name, and date.

Comments will be returned through "Track Changes" in Word. Please ask if you have trouble seeing these comments.

Files should have one-inch margins, a standard (Times, Times New Roman, Book Antiqua, etc.) font, and double spacing. Please use endnotes (not in-line citations), which should be single-spaced using the Chicago Style. A quick guide is at: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html (use N for notes, B for bibliography) and in Marius and Page.

Course Schedule**Week One (Aug 24)****Introductions: Researching Civil War Battlefields**

- Personal Introductions
- Defining a Research Paper
- Overview of Syllabus
- Defining the Civil War and its Battlefields
- The Gettysburg Address
- Primary Source Exploration – Library Ambush

Week Two (Aug 30)

The American Civil War Overview

- Read: Olsen, all “Related Documents” at end of each chapter, read Chapters 6-16, skim the rest
- Due **Sun Aug 29**: Five Primary Source Questions
- Civil War History Discussion
- Questions and Topics Review
- Sources Orientation: The Scholarly Internet
- Primary Source Exploration and Individual Meetings

Week Three (Sept 8**)**

Special Class Time: Military History Collection and Special Collections

- No class Monday Sept 6 for Labor Day
- Short Class Session Wed Sept 8;
meet in Library on 6th Floor
- Researching Possible Topics
- Librarians Available

Week Four (Sept 13)

Identifying Topics and Forming Questions

- Read: Marius and Page, pp. 1-40, 56-93, and 150-170;
AND <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/questions.htm>
AND <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/searching.htm>
- Due **SUN Sept 12**: Possible Research Topics
- Judging Sources
- Recognizing and Preventing Plagiarism; Turnitin
- Citations – Practicing the Chicago Style
- Peer Groups: Topic Review
- Individual Meetings and Further Library Exploration

Week Five (Sept 20)

Using Questions to Drive Research

- Read: Marius and Page, pp. 94-104; AND Faust, Preface
AND <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/notetaking.htm>
- Due **SUN Sept 19**: Research Question
AND Draft Bibliography
- The Motivations for History
- Research and Note-Taking Methods

Week Six (Sept 27)

Practicing Primary Source Analysis

- Read: Marius and Page, pp. 41-55; AND
Sibley (Wilson-Thompson), all; AND
<http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/documents.htm>
- DUE **Sun Sept 26**: Primary Source Analysis
- Evaluating Sources and Claims
- Creating Context
- Peer Groups: Truth and Fiction in Sibley’s Letters

- Week Seven (Oct 4)** **Understanding the Structure of Historical Writing**
- Read: Faust, Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 4
 - Due **in class**: Key Idea for each Faust Chapter
 - Peer Groups: Topic, Question, and Sources in Faust
- Week Eight (Oct 11)** **From Research to Arguments**
- Read: Marius and Page, pp. 105-110; AND Faust, Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8
 - Due **in class**: Key Idea for each Faust Chapter
 - Peer Groups: Question, Sources, and Argument in Faust
 - Faust's Outline
 - Constructing Your Outline
 - Writing a Scholarly Introduction
- Week Nine (Oct 18)** **Reflecting on Research: Context and Memory**
- Read: Faust, Epilogue;
- AND <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/arguing.htm>
- AND <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/positioning.htm>
- Memory and Significance
 - Positioning Your Argument
 - Due **in class**: Revised Research Question
AND Proposed Outline (5 copies)
AND Self-Evaluation
 - Peer Groups: Proposed Outlines, Evaluated by Rubric
- Week Ten (Oct 25)** **Beyond the Battlefield: Memory and Meaning**
- Read: Blight (JSTOR); Marius and Page, pp. 119-149;
- AND <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/writing.htm>
- Habits of Successful Writers
 - Styles of Writing History: the analytical narrative
 - Significance -- Finding Wider Implications
 - Due **in class**: Section of Essay-in-Progress (5 copies)
 - Grammar and Technically Perfect Writing
 - Peer Groups: Writing Original History
 - Roundtable on Writing Challenges
- Week Eleven (Nov 1)** **Unusual Sources and Contemporary Questions**
- Read: Savage and Weeks (electronic reserves);
- AND <http://www.williamcronon.net/researching/images.htm>
- The Contemporary and the Historical
 - Individual Meetings
 - Library Exploration of Images and News
 - Due **THU Nov 4**: Second Draft (online to Blackboard
AND Turnitin AND peer group)
AND Bibliography
AND Self-Evaluation

- Week Twelve (Nov 8) Draft Workshop**
- Read: Second Drafts for Workshop
 - Due **in class**: Peer Group Comments
 - Peer Groups: Discussion of Rough Drafts
 - Historical Thinking and Refining Writing
 - Preparing for Further Revisions
- Week Thirteen (Nov 15) Crafting Conclusions**
- No readings; continue Revising
 - Watch in class: Ken Burns, *The Civil War* finale
 - Writing and the Cinematic Style
 - Crafting and Arguing Conclusions
- Week Fourteen (Nov 22) Research Presentations Part One**
- No readings
 - Group One presents
 - Group Two provides dinner and commentary
 - Continue Revising
 - Peer Discussion and Final Suggestions
- Week Fifteen (Nov 29) Research Presentations Part Two**
- No readings
 - Group Two presents
 - Group One provides dinner and commentary
 - Continue Revising
 - Peer Discussion and Final Suggestions
- Final Research Paper AND Bibliography AND Final Self-Evaluation due on Wed Dec 8.**

Junior-Senior Seminar: Final Paper Rubric

Scoring Options: 2: needs more work
 3: adequate
 4: good, solidly completed
 5: very strong, excellent

Criteria**Score and Additional Comments**

Title: Does the title give you a sense of what the paper is about?	
Introduction: Does the introduction clearly describe the topic, argument, parameters, significance, and plan?	
Thesis: Is the thesis clear? Is it a compelling question?	
Sources: Have appropriate sources been selected? Are there enough sources? Are primary and secondary sources treated differently?	
Evidence: Are claims backed up by enough primary-source evidence? How well is this evidence utilized?	
Secondary literature: Is the student clear on what these sources are, and how the argument paper fits within the existing scholarship?	
Analysis: Does the paper do more than describe the information gathered? How effective are the points made?	
Organization and flow: Does the organization of the paper add or detract from the argument? Are there gaps, mistakes, or other distractions?	
Conclusion: Does the conclusion pull things together and sum up the argument, without undue repetition?	
Language conventions: How would you rate the paper's clarity, grammar, and spelling?	
Footnotes: Do notes follow the correct format?	
Bibliography: Does the bibliography follow the correct format? Is it complete?	