

H 453: Civil War Era (Fall 2011) [version 1.2]

15-week session: August 22 – December 17

Instructor: Mr. William R. Feeney

Email: wfeeney@mix.wvu.edu (Since this is an online class I prefer you to email me through ecampus once the semester course begins).

*I *typically* respond to all emails within a 48-hour period. I welcome questions anytime.

Course Description:

The Civil War has remained front and center in Americans' historical consciousness since its occurrence and historians have fed that abiding interest with thousands of books and articles on the subject. Yet we are still in some respects haunted by Walt Whitman's insistence that "the real war will never get in the books"—our efforts to understand the true nature and meaning of the conflict are incomplete. Vital questions about the causes, development, and consequences of the war are still open for debate and assessment. In this class, we will study this period from a variety of perspectives—political, military, economic, social, and cultural—to trace important transformations and continuities in American life and capture the varied meanings of the Civil War for the people who lived through it.

Objectives

1) We will examine the economies and societies of the North and South and analyze the similarities and differences in the experiences of enslaved and waged laborers. We will also explore the organization of households in both regions and the ethos of democratic individualism becoming prevalent in the North. We will also assess the origins, development, and consequences of "free labor" ideology for workers' social and economic advancement as the sections came into conflict over Western territories.

2) We will study the significant battles of the Civil War and the political stewardship of northern and southern leaders in order to understand the conflict as "total war," encompassing the military strategies and tactics of the commanders, the motives and actions of the soldiers who fought the conflict, and the ordinary people who encounters the political economic and social ramifications of battlefield combat on the home front.

The purpose of this course is to cultivate your reading, writing, and discussion skills, develop your ability to assess the strengths and weaknesses of varying historical interpretations, and assist you in understanding the historical significance of documents that chronicle important events, people and transformations in the past. To accomplish this goal, we will read primary and secondary sources about the period and interpret the meanings of these texts to illuminate the worldviews of their authors and the times in which they lived.

Expectations

Your success in this course will depend on your out of class work ethic and your critical thinking/writing skills. Such tools are integral to a successful online course. If you ever have any questions please feel free to contact me. Our class will take place almost exclusively on the ecampus system, any emails and work assignments should be handed in there.

Social Justice Statement

West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700)

Academic Integrity and Dishonesty

The academic development of students and the overall integrity of the institution are primary responsibilities of WVU. Academic dishonesty is condemned at all levels of life, indicating an inability to meet and face issues and creating an atmosphere of mistrust, disrespect, and insecurity. In addition, it is essential in an academic community that grades accurately reflect the attainment of the individual student. Faculty, students, and administrators have shared responsibilities in maintaining the academic integrity essential for the University to accomplish its mission.

For the detailed policy of West Virginia University regarding the definitions of acts considered to fall under academic dishonesty and possible ensuing sanctions, please see Board of Governors Policy 31 at <http://bog.wvu.edu/policies> and the Student Conduct Code at <http://www.arc.wvu.edu/rightsa.html>. Note: The University is evaluating the process of academic dishonesty prosecution and appeal and students should contact the Office of Student Life/Student Judicial Affairs for current procedures at <http://www.studentlife.wvu.edu/judicial.html>. Policies and guidelines can be found at http://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/current_students/policies_and_guidelines

Required Texts

Michael Perman and Amy Murrell Taylor – *Major Problems in the Civil War and Reconstruction*, 3rd edition, ISBN – 978-0-618-87520-7 **You must have the 3rd edition of this book.**

Aaron Sheehan-Dean – *Struggle for a Vast Future*, ISBN – 978-1-84603-213-4

Drew Gilpin Faust – *James Henry Hammond and the Old South: A Design for Mastery*, ISBN – 978-0-8071-1248-9

Charles Dew - *Apostles of Disunion: Southern Secession Commissioners and the Causes of the Civil War*, ISBN – 978-0-8139-2104-4

Louisa May Alcott , edited by Alice Fahs– *Hospital Sketches* – ISBN – 978-0-312-26028-6

Earl Schenck Miers (editor) – *The Diary of Emma LeConte: When the World Ended* ISBN – 0-8032-8151-X

*supplementary readings may also be assigned for any given week

Course Work

Readings

As you've already noticed, the reading and writing workload is rather intense. The online format of this course forces me to assign more reading and writing work than I normally would for an in-class course. Since we are unable to hash out many of the ideas and debates surrounding the Civil War in the classroom it falls on you to think through the complexities of this time period both in your written assignments and the student-driven discussion boards. Many of the readings I've assigned can be challenging at times, therefore it is important that you do not simply gloss over the reading and writing material. An effective way to cover the readings is to *actively think* about what the words are saying as you read them...What does the author mean in any given paragraph? Who is his audience? How does the piece challenge traditional ideas on the Civil War? How does the piece build upon your previous knowledge? Etc etc. All of these questions, and more, should be considered as you go through the material. Due to the amount of readings I **strongly** recommend you take notes.

Just to reiterate, active thinking is essential to the readings. It will be near impossible to understand the material if you allow yourself to constantly be distracted by texts, facebook, email, etc while reading or writing. This is true for any class or job you'll ever have.

Worksheets (10pts/week – 10 weeks):

In addition to the reading load there are also semi-weekly worksheets that you will need to fill out and hand in to me via the ecampus dropbox. These worksheets will pose questions asking you to reflect on the material you read. There is no word length for these assignments, use as much or as little space you feel is necessary to make an intelligent, well thought-out answer. That said, two or three sentences

probably is not enough to make your point. There will be 11 total weeks for the worksheets, you only need to do 10 of them. However, if you choose to do 11 then I will take the top 10 scores. This means that if you miss a week or get a low grade you have the option to “make up” that grade. The 11th worksheet is the only way to make up a grade in this class. Worksheets for each Unit are due by Friday at 11:59PM. No late worksheets will be accepted regardless of excuse.

Discussion Board (25pts/wk (6 weeks) - 150pts total):

You are to respond to Discussion Board questions by participating knowledgeably with a thorough familiarity and understanding of the readings. Due to the online format, the purpose of the Discussion Board is to aid in understanding the Unit topics and to share ideas. Feel free to use the Discussion Board to enlist the help of fellow students. I will monitor all submissions and add to the discussion when necessary. In other words, this is a student-driven Discussion Board.

When you engage with discussion board it is important that you do not simply write “I really like what you said...” then reiterate what someone else already posted. Obviously there are some posts you will “like” and others that you will not, however you should strive to push the conversation forward by offering engaging ideas and comments. Do not feel afraid to respectfully disagree with what a student or I write, or to allow the conversation to stray a bit from the original question. As the discussion board evolves some students begin to find interesting similarities between the Civil War period and our own time. You may also bring in any outside readings or information you find pertinent.

You are **ONLY** responsible for participating in Discussion Board for 6 of the 10 possible weeks. Under this system you have the ability to cater the workload for this course to your own personal schedule. There are no “make ups” or “do overs” for Discussion Board. If you are unsatisfied with the grade you received for any particular week you may not participate in an additional Discussion Board for more improved points.

Students are expected to participate on discussion board in **two** ways:

1) *Make an original post* – Each week there will be a variety of questions that connect with the assigned readings. You will choose one of the questions and write an original comment that demonstrates that you’ve thought deeply about the readings as well as their meaning. Each original post must be 3-4 paragraphs long. (Do not feel limited to just one original post, you may make as many as you would like)

- You **MUST** make the original response by Friday 11:59PM

2) *Respond to two students’ posts/comments* – Each week you must make two responses to another student(s)’ posts. It is my hope that this will allow students to engage in a dialogue (and hopefully a respectful debate) with one another about

their impression of the materials we've covered. Each response must be 1 -2 paragraphs long. (Don't feel limited to just two responses, you may make as many as you would like)

- You **MUST** make the two responses by Sunday 11:59PM

Papers – (6 papers total):

In this class you will write 6 papers of various lengths. All papers **MUST** be in submitted twice (once in the dropbox and once in an e-campus email.) All emailed papers **MUST** be in WORD format (.doc or .docx). I will not accept papers in any other format. The papers are due during weeks 4, 6, 10, 11, 13, and Finals Week. Each paper is due by Saturday 11:59PM. It is your responsibility to send the papers on time and in the correct format to the dropbox and my e-campus email. Any issues relating to submission/technological failures or incorrect format will result in a late paper with points deducted. Please do not feel constrained by the word minimum on these assignments you may always write more.

Week 4 – James Henry Hammond - Analytical Review (1000 words, 50 pts)

Week 6 – Analysis of Dew and its meaning for the “Five Myths about Why the South Seceded,” op-ed article. (800 words, 25 pts)

Week 10 – *Hospital Sketches* and the social/cultural impact of injury (500 words, 25 pts)

Week 11 – A re-evaluation of “Should African Americans Care about the Civil War?” op-ed article (400 words, 25 pts)

Week 13 – Emma LeConte and the Confederacy (800 words, 50pts)

Finals Week – Final paper (20 – 25 pages, 150pts). Your final paper will be the product of your previous assignments for the class. When I send you the guidelines for your final paper I will offer a number of broad questions for you to choose from and answer. You will use all of your papers, worksheets, and discussion boards to help you make a cogent and deeply analytical response to the question. If your work is strong all semester long then the final paper will be relatively easy since you will be incorporating all your individual work into one final paper. Final Paper is due Wednesday, December 14th, by 11:59 P.M.

Deadlines:

Readings - Worksheets for each Unit are due by *Friday* at 11:59PM.

Discussion Board - Original response by Friday 11:59PM; two responses to students' post by Sunday 11:59PM

Small Papers - (Weeks 4, 6, 10, 11, 13) by Saturday 11:59PM.

Final Paper - Wednesday, December 14th, by 11:59 P.M.

Academic dishonesty:

There are two primary methods of cheating. The first is to copy answers from a classmate. The second method is plagiarism. This entails the appropriation of ideas

already available in print or on the Internet, which are not your own and that are not properly cited. Cheating in any form will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted according to established university procedures as stated in *The Mountie*. For further information, please refer to www.arc.wvu.edu/rights.html

**Note: Since this is a 400-level class there is no bonus points, extra credit, or make up work (with the exception of the 11th worksheet)

** Note: No late worksheets will be accepted. Late papers will incur a penalty of minus one letter grade each day the assignment is late.

Grading: Total of 600 Points

Personal Bio – 10 pts

Week 1 – Op-ed assignment – 15 pts

Worksheets – 10 points each (total = 100 pts)

Discussion Board – 25 pts each (total = 150 points)

Week 4 Paper – 50 pts

Week 6 Paper – 25 pts

Week 10 Paper – 25 pts

Week 11 Paper – 25 pts

Week 13 Paper – 50 pts

Final Paper – 150 pts

Grading Scale

A = 100-93, A- = 92-90, B+ = 89-87, B = 86-83, B- = 82-80, C+ = 79-77, C = 76-73, C- = 72-70, D+ = 69-67, D = 66-63, D- = 62-60, F = 59 or below

Course Schedule Summary

Week 1 – (Aug 22 – 28) – Thinking about the Civil War

Readings

- * 2 op-ed articles “Five Myths about Why the South Seceded,”
“Should African Americans Care about the Civil War,” watch
video clip “Atlanta Civil War Marker Sparks Controversy”

* Faust, *James Henry Hammond*, 1 - 104

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet – 300 word response to either “Five Myths...” **OR** a 300 word cumulative response to “Should African Americans” and the video clip “Atlanta Civil War Marker...”,
- *2-3 paragraphs answering these questions:

- What is your major?
- What are your goals for this class and how do you plan to achieve those goals?
- What are your career goals and how do you believe this class can help you (or not help you) achieve those goals?
- What are some things about you that others find interesting?

Week 2 – (Aug 29 – Sept 4) – Understanding the Old South

Readings

- * Faust, *James Henry Hammond*, 105 – 223
- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap. 2 (Doc. 1, 3, 4)
- * Uploaded Documents

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board

Week 3 – (Sept. 6 – Sept 11) – Understanding Freedom and Slavery in the North

Readings

- * Faust, *James Henry Hammond*, 224 – 282
- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap. 2 (Doc. 6, 7, Essay McPherson)
- * Uploaded Documents

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board

Week 4 – (Sept 12th – 18th) – The Politics of Slavery

Readings

- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 3 (Doc 1-2, Gienapp Essay, Fehrenbacher Essay)

Assignment(s)

- * **Paper** - Analytical Review (1000 words)

Week 5 – (Sept 19th – Sept 25th) – A House Divided

Readings

- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (Bill Blair – “Extremists at the gate: Origins of the American Civil War”
- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 3 (Doc 3-5), Chap 4 (Doc 1)
- * Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*, 1- 50. Appendix, Document 1. 83-89

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board

Week 6 – (Sept 26th – Oct 2nd) 1860 Election and the Secession Crisis

Readings

- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (McPherson – Foreword, Carwardine – “I would not be master: Governing the War”
- * Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*, 51-82. Appendix, Document 2, 90-103

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board
- * **Paper** – Analysis of Dew and its meaning for the “Five Myths about Why the South Seceded,” op-ed article. (800 words)

Week 7 – (Oct 3rd – Oct 9th) – Learning Your Enemy: Military Mobilization, 1861

Readings

- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 6 (Doc 1, 4, Essay: pp.187-199 by Sheehan Dean), Chap 7 (Doc 1, 6), Chap 9 (Doc 1)
- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (Robert Krick - “The power of the land: Leadership on the Battlefield”)

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet

Week 8 – (Oct 10th – Oct 16th) – Seeing the Elephant: The Realities of Warfare, 1862 (Part I)

Readings

- * Uploaded Documents
- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (Gerald Prokopowicz – “Our

- hearts were touched by fire: The Men Who Fought the War,” Mark Grimsley “Remorseless, revolutionary, struggle: A People’s War)
- * Perman, Chap 5 (Doc 1-2, and Essay pp. 150-161 by Gary Gallagher). Chap 6 (Doc 2-3), Chap 8 (Doc 1-2)

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board

Week 9 – (Oct 17th – Oct 23rd) – Seeing the Elephant: The Realities of Warfare, 1862 (Part II)

Readings

- * Uploaded Documents
- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (Jeffery S. Prushankin – “They came to butcher our people: The Civil War in the West”)
- * Louisa May Alcott – *Hospital Sketches*, Introduction – 1-2, 10-29, 34-44.

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board

Week 10 – (Oct 24th – Oct 30th) – “Real War Will Never Get in the Books”

Readings

- * Louisa May Alcott – *Hospital Sketches*, Introduction – 51-119
- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 14 (Doc 7)
- * Uploaded Documents on ecampus

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board
- * **Paper** – *Hospital Sketches* (500 words)

Week 11 – (Oct 31st – Nov 6th) – 1863, Turning Point of the War?: Emancipation and Conflict

Readings

- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (Michael Vorenberg – “The world will forever applaud: Emancipation”)
- * Perman, *Major Problems* – Chap 9 (Doc 3,4, Essay 308-321 by Joseph

- Glatthaar).
* Uploaded Readings
* Perman, *Major Problems* – Chap 6 (Doc 5, 6)

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board
- * **Paper** - “Should African Americans Care about the Civil War?” op-ed article (400 words)

Week 12 – (Nov 7th – Nov 13th) – 1864-1865: A Marriage between War Front and Home Front

Readings

- * Uploaded Readings
- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 5 (Essay 162 – 175 by Mark Grimsley, Document 4)
- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (Victoria Bynum – “We never yielded the struggle: The Home Front”)
- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 7 (Doc 2-5)
- * Earl Schenck Miers Ed. – *When the World Ended: The Diary of Emma LeConte*, Foreword, Introduction, and pp 1 – 38.

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board

Week 13 – (Nov 14th – Nov 18th) – The Collapsing Confederacy

Readings

- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 5 (Doc 6)
- * Earl Schenck Miers Ed. – *When the World Ended: The Diary of Emma LeConte*, pp 39 – 120.
- * Perman, *Major Problems*, Chap 8 (Doc 1-7 [some of these you’ve already read once but I’d like you to reread them within the context of this week’s overall theme], Essay 275 – 282 by Paul Escott)

Assignment(s)

- * **Paper** – Emma LeConte (800 words)

Week 14 – (Nov 28th – Dec 4th) – Remembering the War as a “Lost Cause”

Readings

- * Perman, Major Problems, Chap 14 (Read Entire Chapter)
- * Sheehan-Dean, *Struggle for a Vast* (Aaron Sheehan-Dean – “A fearful lesson: The Legacy of the American Civil War”

Assignment(s)

- * Worksheet
- * Discussion Board

Week 15 – (Dec 5th - Dec 10th) – Paper Writing and Freedom Week

Readings

- * NONE!!!!

Assignment(s)

- * Work on your final paper at your leisure

Finals Week – Final paper due Wednesday, December 14th by 11:59 P.M

NOTE: While attempting to adhere to the outlines within this syllabus, the instructor reserves the right to adjust components with due notice to the class.