

HIST 5304: Comparative World Slavery

PROFESSOR: DR. WILLIAMSON

EMAIL: SAVANNAH.WILLIAMSON@SULROSS.EDU

FALL 2023 OFFICE HOURS:

Mondays	9am-12pm	UC 212
Tuesdays	12:30-2pm	LH 211
Wednesdays	9am-12pm	UC 212
Thursdays	12:30-2pm	LH 211
Fridays	9am-12pm	UC 212

Course Description

This course is designed to familiarize you with some of the main themes in the history of world slavery, although focusing on the western hemisphere. We will begin with a brief look at classical slavery in Europe and Africa, and then proceed to a more in-depth examination of African slavery in the Americas between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries. Finally, we will look at emancipation and the transition to freedom in comparative perspective, including the related question of race relations after the end of slavery. Throughout the course we will discuss several common themes in the history of unfree people: legal status; demographics and work routines; treatment or “conditions of life;” community and culture; access to freedom; relationship to the culture and society of free people (whether of the same or another racial background); and life after emancipation. We will also be discussing contemporary slavery as we read and discuss Kevin Bales’s *Understanding Global Slavery*.

Our study will focus on the conditions and culture of slavery in the western hemisphere, detailing the interaction of three cultures: European, African, and Native American/First Nations. Of course, within those broad racial categories there were actually hundreds of different cultures, language groups, and ethnic divisions. In particular, we will consider the question of how the nature of slavery in various parts of the world affected race and class relations after emancipation. Thus, America’s especially miserable record of race relations in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries could be traced to the nature of slavery in the antebellum southern United States. More recently, we will consider the relationship between slavery and race from a comparative perspective.

Required Texts

- *Kevin Bales, Understanding Global Slavery: A Reader* (available free as pdf in course Blackboard)
- Orlando Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death: A Comparative Study* (1st or 2nd edition)

Recommended Texts

Mary Rampolla, *Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 9th Edition.

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ISBN-10: 1319113028

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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- This is an online course, which means that you **must** have regular, reliable access to a working computer with internet. Students are responsible for checking email and the Blackboard site on a regular basis to access course materials and information.
- Though this class will not meet face-to-face, we will still be covering an entire semester's worth of material. You must be both able and willing to put in the necessary time and effort to do well in the course.
- Think of this course like joining a gym—you get out what you put in. As your professor, it is my responsibility to make sure you know how to use the equipment and to assist you when you need a spotter. Meanwhile, it is your responsibility to engage with the course materials, put in the work, and complete the assignments by the designated due dates. The grade you earn is determined by the quality of your effort, not necessarily the time you spend.
- **This is a Writing-Intensive Course** intended to introduce you to the practice of history. History is an analytical discipline. While facts and dates are indeed important, alone they do not allow us to understand the past in a meaningful fashion. Among other things, history is the art of mustering evidence to make an argument or arguments about the past in as compelling a manner as possible. If you engage the course material in a meaningful way, this class will help you to read more carefully, think more critically, and write more eloquently.

GRADES

A 90-100%

B 80-89%

C 70-79%

D 60-69%

F 59% or lower

- **Discussion & Participation (35%)**—Students are expected to post at least one original comment on the weekly discussion boards AND post a minimum one comment in response to another student in the course, for each discussion board. Students who do not participate in the discussion boards will not receive credit for that week's assignments.
- **Scholarly Book Reviews (30%; 10% each x4, with the lowest grade dropped)**—Students will write and submit précis, or scholarly book reviews, over each of the two assigned texts AND two supplemental texts of the student's choosing that align with the scope and themes of the course.
 - Each review will be 2-3 pages in length, double-spaced, with 12-point font and 1" margins on all sides.
 - A précis should summarize a given book or article's argument, scope, and methodology as clearly and concisely as possible. Some reviews may require students to write a comparative analysis of multiple readings at the discretion of the professor. These reviews should evaluate the effectiveness of the monograph or article(s) as well as its limitations. Précis should be 2-3 full, double-spaced page, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins all around. For examples of a scholarly review (otherwise known as a précis), see: www.h-net.org/reviews/home/php
 - The purpose of a review is to both summarize the book's or article's contents and, more importantly, to critically evaluate its contribution to knowledge, both factual and historiographical. The reviewer's first priority is to critically appraise each book; to analyze it on its own terms, to discuss what it did and did not do, what sort of evidence the author used and how well, what its strengths and weaknesses were. *Be sure to point out the thesis of each*

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book and whether or not the author presented a supported a persuasive argument. Also ascertain what kind of historiographical context (if any) the author provided—in other words, how did the author’s work fit into a broader body of historical literature? If the author did not do this, hold them to task. For examples of scholarly book reviews, see: www.h-net.org/reviews

- *All reviews are due to Blackboard by 11:59pm Sunday, November 26th. Late submissions will not be accepted without documentation and/or prior conversation with the professor.*
- **Historiography Paper (35%)**—You will complete a 12-15-page historiographical research paper on the topic of your choice.
 - You will consult with the professor about possible paper topics prior to making your final decision. You may choose any subject relevant to the theme and chronology of this course.
 - This essay must have a strong, coherent thesis statement, which will be supported by a minimum 15 scholarly sources, such as peer-reviewed, scholarly books or journal articles. These may include works from the required, supplemental, and/or recommended reading lists.
 - Papers must be typed or word-processed in 12-point fonts (Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri), double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around. Not included in the page count are a cover/title page before the essay and a works cited/bibliography page that follows.
 - All papers will be evaluated on style and content and therefore should be well-written and free of grammatical errors. Papers that are not formatted according to guidelines and requirements will be dropped one letter grade.
 - It is expected that each of you will consult with the professor via email and/or scheduled appointments to discuss possible paper topics prior to making your final decisions. You may choose any subject relative to the theme of this seminar, and your papers must be based on both primary and secondary sources. You will be required to include at least ten scholarly sources in your final paper.

Papers will be evaluated on the following points:

- strength of your historical arguments and content
- how well you have used historical evidence to support your arguments?
- composition (i.e., spelling, grammar, sentence structure)
- form (i.e., correct citation)

THE 5 C’S OF HISTORICAL REASONING

1. **Change and Continuity:** Historians debate what has changed over time and what has remained the same. Change can be a dramatic pivot or a slow shift.
2. **Causation:** Historians debate the causes of historical events. Actually, it would be more accurate to say that we often discuss about causality, sometimes passionately. Few events have only one cause (monocausal), so we debate with one another about which cause should be considered the most important.
3. **Context:** Historians insist that the past must be understood on its own terms. Any historical event, person, idea must be placed in the context of its historical era to be interpreted. The historian’s goal is to discover how people in the past understood their own lives, which is often quite different from how we may react to their situation.

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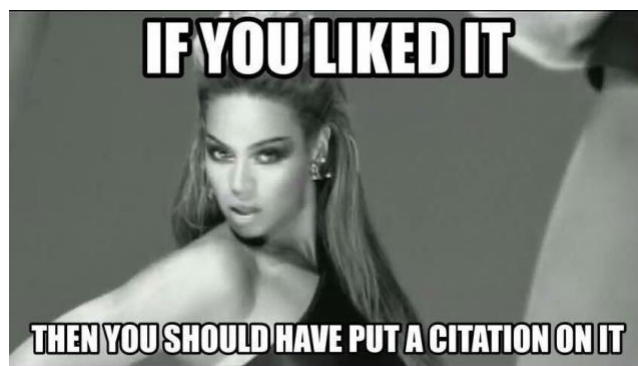
4. **Contingency and Connections:** Historians are aware that events happen for a variety of reasons, which are often interconnected. Change one factor, and the event might not have happened at all. This idea helps us to remember that historical events are not inevitable.
5. **Complexity:** Historical reasoning is not about memorizing dates and names. It is about making sense of the messiness of the past, in all its complexity. That often means recognizing that different historical groups experienced events in different ways.

****ALL FINAL PAPERS ARE DUE BY 11:59pm Sunday, December 10th****

Academic Honesty

The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. "Cheating" includes:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs, or allowing another student to copy from same.
2. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.
4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of a non-administered test.
5. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.
6. Bribing another person to obtain a non-administered test or information about a non-administered test.
7. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of a rough and/or final version of an assignment by a professional typist.
8. "Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or idea in one's own written work offered for credit.
9. "Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.
10. "Abuse of resource materials" means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.
11. "Academic work" means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.
12. "Falsification of Data" means the representation, claim, or use of research, data, statistics, records, files, results, or information that is falsified, fabricated, fraudulently altered, or otherwise misappropriated or misrepresented.



All academic dishonesty cases may be first considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she may assign a penalty but must notify the student of his/her right to appeal to the department chair, the dean and eventually, to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs before imposition of the penalty. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, an opportunity to respond, and an impartial disposition as to the merits of his/her case. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall be final.

Please read the complete policy at

http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student_conduct_discipline.pdf

Student Resources

ADA

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request.

Students seeking accessibility services must contact:

Counseling and Accessibility Services

Email: counseling@sulross.edu

Location: Ferguson Hall 112

Telephone: 432-837-8691

Mailing Address: P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832

Students should then contact the instructor as soon as possible to initiate the recommended accommodations.

Counseling and Psychological Services.

Provides counseling services and offers other services to students in need.

Location: Ferguson Hall 112. Hours: M-F 8am-12pm and 1pm-5pm. Phone: (432) 837-8203.

Web: <http://www.sulross.edu/section/2408/counseling-accessibility-services>

Please contact Counseling & Accessibility Services, Ferguson Hall (Suite 112) at 432.837.8203; mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas 79832.

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Commitment to Classroom Environment

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, etc.). I also understand that the recent crises of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

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TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTICE: You must complete and submit all reading assignments before the start of class on the scheduled day. Failure to complete all readings and participate will result in a lower grade for the semester. It is highly recommended that you take detailed notes over the readings in order to facilitate discussion and to prepare for examinations and additional assignments in the course.

Abbreviations: Blackboard=Bb

Week 1 (Monday, August 28-Sunday, September 03) *Introductions*

Take time to go over the syllabus, search for supplemental articles over weekly topics, and consider your final paper topic for the course. Post your introductions in “Who We Are” on the Bb discussion boards.

Week 2 (September 04-10) *Time to collect materials.*

Week 3 (September 11-17) *What is Slavery? Ancient Rome & Greece*

Required Readings: Bales, p.1-68; Patterson, p.1-104

- Discussion Entry Due to Bb before 11:59pm Sunday, September 17th
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Week 4 (September 18-24) *European Expansion, Africa, & the Americas*

Required Readings: Bales, p.126-171

- Discussion Entry due to Bb before 11:59pm Sunday, September 24th
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Week 5 (September 25-October 01) *Transatlantic Slave Trade*

Required Readings: Patterson, p. 105-147

- Discussion Entry due to Bb before 11:59pm Sunday, October 1st
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Week 6 (October 02-08) *Expansion & Changing Demographics*

Required Readings: Patterson, p. 148-208

- Discussion Entry due to Bb before 11:59pm Sunday, October 8th
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Week 7 (October 09-15) *Enslaved Communities*

Required Readings: TBA

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Week 8 (October 16-22) *Submission of Research Paper Topic Proposals*

Required: **Each student must contact the professor via email or meet via TEAMS with updates regarding their term research paper; **Research Paper proposal due to Blackboard before 11:59pm Sunday—must include a minimum of two historical monographs that you will also submit scholarly reviews/precis over and submit to Bb.**

Week 9 (October 23-29) *Emancipation, Abolition, & Freedom*

Required Readings: Patterson, p. 209-261; Bales, p. 24-39

- **Discussion Entry Due to Bb before 11:59pm Sunday, October 29th**

Week 10 (October 30-November 05) *Legacies of Slavery in the 20th & 21st Centuries*

Required Readings: Patterson, p. 299-344

- **Discussion due to Bb before 11:59pm Sunday, November 5th**

Week 11 (November 06-12) *RESEARCH & WRITING DAYS*

Week 12 (November 13-19) *RESEARCH & WRITING DAYS*

Week 13 (November 20-26) *RESEARCH & WRITING DAYS*

**** 2 additional scholarly book reviews due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, November 26th**

Week 14 (November 26-December 03): *RESERCH & WRITING DAYS*

Week 15 (December 04-10): *RESEARCH & WRITING DAYS*

****FINAL PAPERS DUE by 11:59pm Sunday, December 10th****