

Spring 2014

**PROFESSOR STEPHANIE MCCURRY**

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**HISTORY 204-302 ®**

Thursday 1:30-4:30

Office Hours: Wed. 12-1, Th. 4:30-6  
and by appointment

## **THE AMERICAN CIVIL WAR**

Few events in American history can match the significance of the Civil War and few left a better cache of records for scholars seeking to understand its signal events, contingencies, actors, and consequences. Starting with the secession of eleven southern states in 1860 and 1861, white southerners' attempts to establish a proslavery republic (the Confederate States of America) unleashed an increasingly radical, even revolutionary war, including the one waged by the Lincoln government to preserve the Union.

This is a research seminar. It allows students the opportunity to pursue independent research projects on any topic related to the history of the American Civil War. Pedagogically the course pursues a parallel process of reading in the secondary source literature and guided research on a topic of the student's choice. The course is designed to model the research and writing process professional historians use, beginning with a paper proposal and bibliography of primary documents and secondary sources. It proceeds through the various stages of the research process to produce drafts of the essay and finally the finished essay. Reading is comparatively light to allow for significant research and writing. All written work is for peer review. The final paper is 15 pages in length. The course fulfills the research requirement for the history major.

### **READINGS:**

Selection of primary sources

Drew Gilpin Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*

Mark Grimsley, *Hard Hand of War*

Primary Sources are all available on Blackboard

Books are available for purchase at Penn Book Center and are on reserve in the library

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Students are required to do the reading, attend all seminars, participate in discussions, and complete all assignments on time. Any absence must be approved in advance. Students are also expected to participate constructively in the process of peer review of proposals and essay drafts.

### **EVALUATION METHOD:**

Final grades for the course will be determined by participation in discussion (20%), paper proposal and bibliography (10%), written analysis of a primary source (10%), written

analysis of a secondary source (10%), draft of introduction (10%), draft of full-length paper (20%), and final revised paper (20%).

**PREREQUISITES:**

There are no formal prerequisites for this course but some prior U.S. history, African American Studies or American Studies course work is preferred.

**TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Week 1. Introduction

Jan. 16. Introduction to course

Week 2. Surveying the Terrain

Jan. 23

Readings:

Abraham Lincoln, "Speech on the Dred Scott Decision," June 26, 1857;  
Gettysburg Address, November 19, 1863; Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863.

South Carolina, "Declaration of the Immediate Causes Which Induce and Justify the Secession of South Carolina From the Federal Union," December 24, 1860

Alexander H. Stephens, "Cornerstone Address," March 21, 1861.

Confederate States of America, Conscription Act, April 16, 1862  
(An Act to Provide for the further defense.").

United States of America, Conscription Act, March 3, 1863 ("An Act for enrolling and calling out the national forces and for other purposes").

Major General Patrick R. Cleburne et al, to Commanding General, the Corps, Division Brigade and Regimental Commanders of the Army of Tennessee, January 2, 1864.

**ALL ON BLACKBOARD**

Week 3. Making War

Jan. 30

Readings: Grimsley, *Hard Hand of War*

**MEETING WITH NICHOLAS OKRENT, HISTORY BIBLIOGRAPHER**

Week 4. Making Sense of War

Feb. 6.

Readings: Faust, *This Republic of Suffering*

- Week 5. Topics and Proposals  
Feb. 13.  
Presentation of Student Proposals  
**Proposals Due in Class**
- Week 6. Research  
Feb. 20  
No Class  
Research in primary sources
- Week 7. Historical Analysis  
Feb. 27  
Presentation of primary sources  
**Written analysis of primary source due in class**
- Week 8. Research  
Mar. 6  
NO CLASS  
Research in secondary sources
- Week 9. Spring Break  
Mar. 13  
NO CLASS
- Week 10. Historical Interpretation  
Mar. 20  
Presentation of Secondary Sources  
**Written Analysis of secondary source due in class**
- Week 11. Writing  
Mar. 27  
No Class  
Begin writing drafts
- Week 12. Writing Introductions  
April 3.  
Drafts of introductions shared and discussed  
**Drafts must be posted on blackboard by April 2, 6pm**
- Week 13. Writing \*\*\*\* MIGHT NEED TO SCHEDULE FIRST SET OF PAPER PRESENTATIONS\*\*\*\*  
April 10  
No Class
- Week 14. Papers

April 17  
Presentation of drafts of student papers  
**Drafts must be posted on blackboard by April 13, 6pm**

Week 15. Papers  
April 24  
Presentation of drafts of student papers  
**Drafts must be posted by April 20, 6pm**

### **LIST OF DEADLINES**

Paper topic proposals due in class **FEBRUARY 13**  
Written analysis of primary source due in class **FEBRUARY 27**  
Written analysis of secondary source due in class **MARCH 20**  
Draft introductions posted to blackboard by 6pm **APRIL 2**  
First group of drafts posted to blackboard by 6pm **APRIL 13**  
Second group of drafts posted to blackboard by 6pm **APRIL 20**  
Final paper due in my mailbox by 4pm **MAY 5**