History 207
The History of the Americas: African Slavery in the Americas
(Brazil and the United States, 1500-1888)
The University of Calgary
Winter 2009

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Course Grading:
Mid-Term Examination (February 25) ................................................................. 25%
Essay (Due March 30) .......................................................................................... 40%
Final Examination (To Be Scheduled by the Registrar) ........................................ 35%
Total .................................................................................................................... 100%

You must complete all assignments in order to pass this course.

Texts Available for Purchase (at the University Bookstore):

Free Texts:
The History Student’s Handbook: A Short Guide to Writing History Essays, available at

A number of articles, book chapters, and primary sources are assigned reading for this course. They are available under “Course Documents” at the course Blackboard site and are indicated with an asterisk in this syllabus.

Course Description:
This course is a thematic treatment of the history of the American continents with special attention to multicultural encounters, immigration and migration, economic and labor systems, social structures, and the frontiers of European settlement. This semester, these themes will be addressed through the lens of African slavery in the Americas, a topic which integrally connects all of these themes. The course will focus primarily on Brazil and the United States, two of the largest and longest-lived slave regimes in the Western Hemisphere. The course will begin with the rise of the African slave trade, looking both at the experiences of enslaved Africans and the expansion of African slavery as an important institution in the Atlantic world, especially in the Americas. The course will examine the many systems of slave labor in the Americas and the experience of work for slaves. It will explore the nature of slave life and culture apart from the work regime and examine efforts to resist enslavement, and will conclude with a comparative discussion of the destruction of slavery.

Course Requirements: Students will write one mid-term examination and an essay for this course and take a comprehensive final examination.

Mid-Term Examination: The midterm will be a fifty-minute in-class examination that focuses on the readings and lectures for unit one. The exam will consist of several questions to be answered in full
paragraphs. Students should come to the exam on time and those who finish in the final five minutes of the exam should wait until the end of the midterm to turn in their work and leave the classroom (so as not to disturb others).

**Essay:** The essay for this course should be approximately 1750-2000 words in length. The essay must address one of the two assigned questions (see page 4 below), using all of the assigned readings.

The essay should be written in acceptable university style. It must include footnotes in conformity with *The History Student’s Handbook: A Short Guide to Writing History Essays* (available on the Department of History webpage at [http://hist.ucalgary.ca/sites/hist.ucalgary.ca/files/EssayHandbook.pdf](http://hist.ucalgary.ca/sites/hist.ucalgary.ca/files/EssayHandbook.pdf)). The essay should have a clear thesis statement that establishes the main argument of the paper and should be organized to demonstrate it with specific evidence taken from the assigned readings for Unit Two. Essays should be presented in twelve point font with approximately 1.25 inch margins, and should have a title page. The essays should be printed on plain paper and stapled together—they should not be presented in folders. Late essays will be penalized at a rate of 1/3 of a mark per day (so a “C+” essay that is one day late would earn a “C” and so on).

**Final Examination:** A comprehensive two-hour final examination will be scheduled by the registrar during the examination period (20-30 April). It will include material from the readings and the lectures and will consist of both short-answer questions and one essay question.

**Department of History Plagiarism Policy:**

Plagiarism is defined as submitting or presenting one’s work in a course, or ideas and/or passages in a written piece of work, as if it were one’s own work done expressly for that course, when, in fact, it is not. Plagiarism may take several forms:

a) Failure to cite sources properly may be considered plagiarism. This could include quotations, ideas, and wording used from another source but not acknowledged.

b) Borrowed, purchased, and/or ghost-written papers are considered plagiarism, as is submitting one’s own work for more than one course without the permission of the instructor(s) involved.

c) Extensive paraphrasing of one or a few sources is also considered plagiarism, even when notes are used, unless the essay is a critical analysis of those works. The use of notes does not justify the sustained presentation of another author’s language and ideas as one’s own.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. A plagiarized paper will automatically be failed. Plagiarism may also result in a failing grade for the course and other penalties as noted in *The University of Calgary Calendar*.

**Office Hours:**

Please come to see us during our scheduled office hours, especially if you are having difficulty with this course. If you cannot meet one of us during scheduled office hours, we can consult before or after class or schedule and appointment for another time. Feel free to telephone during office hours or to send e-mail messages at any time. Please send e-mail questions to only one of us, include History 207 in the subject line, and include your full name in the message.

**Blackboard:**

The Blackboard site for this course will deliver many of the assigned readings (all of which are listed below and indicated with an asterisk). The instructors will also be posting the powerpoints used in class (under Course Information), course handouts, and most of the announcements made in class. Students are encouraged to check Blackboard on a regular basis. The login page for Blackboard can be found at [http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca](http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca). Please note that to access Blackboard you must have a University of Calgary IT account.
Lecture Topics and Assignment Schedule

Unit I: The Rise of Slave Labor Regimes

Background:

Readings for Trade and Origins:

Readings for Work:

January 12  Introduction
January 14  What Is Slavery?
January 16  Slavery in Africa
January 19  Atlantic World Overview
January 21  Toward Slavery in the Americas
January 23  Sugar Plantations
January 26  The Rise of Slavery in North America
January 28  The Rise of Slavery in North America II
January 30  The Course of the Slave Trade
February 2  Rice and the Slaves’ Economy
February 4  Mining and Coffee
February 6  Cotton
February 9  House and Small-Scale Slavery
February 11  Urban Slavery
February 13  The Impact of the Slave Trade on Africa

February 16-20: Reading Week: No Class Meetings

February 23  The Slave Trade in Perspective
February 25  Mid-Term Examination
Unit II: Slave Society and Culture

Readings:

Essay Readings:


Essay Questions (Answer only One):
1. Most Brazilian and U.S. slave runaways neither sought nor gained freedom as a result of their flight. In this light, assess the motives of the slave runaways in both Brazil and the United States, using all of the readings assigned for this essay question.

2. Most fugitive slaves were embedded in a variety of social relationships. In this light, assess the nature and significance of social relationships for those who engaged (or chose not to engage) in flight, in both Brazil and United States, using all of the readings assigned for this essay question.

February 27  The Demography of Slavery
March 2  Food and Disease
March 4  U.S. Slave Families
March 6  Slave Families in Brazil
March 9  Culture and Religion in Brazil I
March 11  Culture and Religion in Brazil II
March 13  Culture and Religion in the U.S. I
March 16  Culture and Religion in the U.S. II
March 18  Resistance and Rebellion I
March 20  Resistance and Rebellion II
March 23  Free Blacks
Unit III: Emancipation and Abolition: The End of Slavery

Readings:

March 25 Questioning Slavery
March 27 The American Revolution and First Emancipation

March 30 The Haitian Revolution
**Essay Due Today**
April 1 Brazil, Britain and the Slave Trade
April 3 Expanding and Defending Slavery in the United States
April 6 The Civil War and U.S. Emancipation
April 8 Brazilian Abolition
April 10 Good Friday: No Class Meeting

April 13 After Abolition in the United States
April 15 After Abolition in Brazil
April 17 Review

April 20-30 Final Examination to be Scheduled by Registrar
Ten Steps to a FIRST DRAFT of an Essay

There are many different ways to write a university essay. If you have not found a system that works well for you, the following ten steps can guide your progress.

1. Make a LIST of ideas, subjects, and reminders of facts.
2. Organize the list by GROUPS of ideas until you can identify six to ten groups that are most important and that you might be able to relate to one another.
3. On separate sheets of paper (or screen), write one sentence about each of these groups; call each one a TOPIC SENTENCE (you may find it helpful to do step #4 before #3).
4. Choose EXAMPLES that illustrate the point of the topic sentences and write complete sentences to state them. Refer to specific examples drawn from the reading. Still keep each potential paragraph on a separate sheet of paper. Indicate in parentheses the pages from which you drew quoted statements or cited material.
5. Shape PARAGRAPHS: Place the topic sentence first; order the other sentences logically (make an outline of the paragraph); see if any sentence does not relate to the topic sentence; if so, either eliminate it or rewrite the topic sentence; shorten if necessary by choosing only the best examples. Each paragraph should be rewritten several times.
6. Decide on the order of your paragraphs; then, on still another piece of paper, rephrase each topic sentence and write them in that chosen order. This is a SUMMARY.
7. On that same sheet, write one sentence that expresses one overall point about all the sentences in #6. This will be a THESIS statement. Place it last after the summary. You have now written your CONCLUSION with its two parts in the following order: a summary and the thesis. Is there part of the essay that does not fit with your thesis? If so, change either the thesis or the essay.
8. On still another sheet of paper, rephrase your thesis statement and then rephrase (again) all of your topic sentences. You have now written a draft of the INTRODUCTION. Above these sentences, write a sentence or two that establish the place, time and general topic of the essay to prepare your reader for your argument and evidence (thesis statement and summary of topic sentences) to follow.
9. Choose a TITLE.
10. REWRITE and polish; choose the right words; choose strong words; insert adverbs; avoid the passive voice; check on agreement of subject and verb; check on antecedents of pronouns; check spelling. Next, free yourself from the mechanical quality of the formula thus far; allow your creativity to take hold now that you have a solid piece of work. Did you write too long a paper? Perhaps eliminate one of the substantive paragraphs or shorten them all. Polishing requires several drafts. Finally, check your paper against the checklist that follows.
Checklist for Revising and Proofreading an Essay

Content:
___ Does the paper address the question?
___ Are the main points relevant to the question?
___ Do the main points support the argument of the paper?
___ Is the essential historical context (dates, names, places) indicated?
___ Are the examples from the readings relevant?
___ Are quotations (if any) short and appropriate? (Quote no more than 20 words in a short essay.)
___ Are you convinced by your argument?

Organization:
___ Does the essay have a clear structure with the following:
   ___ An introduction?
   ___ Distinct paragraphs developing supporting evidence?
   ___ A conclusion?
___ Does the introduction clearly state the essay’s thesis?
___ Does each of the middle paragraphs address a distinct topic?
___ Does each paragraph have a topic sentence, one that states the thesis of the paragraph? Highlight it. Add a topic sentence if the paragraph lacks one.
___ Does the conclusion restate the thesis (in different words from the introduction)?

Writing, Spelling, and Format:
___ Is spelling, including proper names and foreign words, correct?
___ Are all sentences complete? Turn all sentence fragments into complete sentences.
___ Is the sentence structure varied? Avoid too many long or too many short sentences.
___ Are words or phrases repeated? Use synonyms.
___ Are there unnecessary words or phrases? Omit needless words.
___ Are all the passive voice verbs changed to active ones?
___ Are all the weak verbs (such as to be and to seem) replaced with strong ones?
___ Are grammar and punctuation correct?
___ Are all references to events that took place in the past written in past tense? Change improper usage of present tense to past tense.
___ Is the essay written in third person? Rewrite to eliminate “I,” “we,” and “you.”
___ Is the essay too long? Edit to make it more concise.
___ Is the essay double-spaced and in a 12 point or 10 characters-per-inch font?
___ Are all of the direct quotations and references to facts and authors’ arguments cited with footnotes according to The History Student’s Handbook?

Tip:
Reading your paper aloud is a good way to detect grammar mistakes, unnecessary and repetitious words or phrases, and rough writing style.

Notes:
(1) A FINAL PAPER requires careful typing and proofreading; every mistake is a mistake and you are the one responsible.
(2) This is not a grading checklist. Grading of these papers includes assessments of knowledge (Do you demonstrate knowledge of the material?), thought (Have you considered the question?), and organization (Are your ideas well-organized and well-presented?), in addition to an assessment of your writing.