

HIST 4386: Civil War and Reconstruction

Spring 2024

TR: 11:00-12:20; RBN 4032 (Classroom)

Prof. Matt Stith; CAS 127 (Office); mstith@uttyler.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:30-5:30; Thursday, 12:30-1:30; Or by appointment.

Course Description:

This course explores the causes, course, and consequences of the American Civil War. We will use social, cultural, political, military, and environmental history to both understand and interpret the era.

Learning Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a strong understanding of the causes, course, and consequences of the American Civil War era.
2. Think critically and objectively about the Civil War and its place in American social, cultural, environmental, political, and military history.
3. Develop analytical skills through thinking, speaking, and writing about American history generally and the Civil War era specifically.

Important Note:

I encourage you to meet with me regularly to discuss or clarify lecture, discussion, or reading—or to talk about Civil War history in general. My job (and satisfaction) is as much to work with students on an individual basis as it is to lecture and facilitate discussion. Please keep this in mind throughout the semester.



“Sharpsburg Citizens Leaving for Fear of the Rebels,” September 1862, Sketch by Alfred R. Waud, Library of Congress (LOC)

Required Reading:

- Tony Horwitz, [*Midnight Rising: John Brown and the Raid that Sparked the Civil War*](#) (New York: Henry Holt, 2011)
- ["The Declaration of Causes of Seceding States"](#)
- [Alexander Stephens, "Corner Stone" Speech](#)
- Amy Murrell Taylor, [*Embattled Freedom: Journeys through the Civil War's Slave Refugee Camps*](#) (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2018)
- Drew Gilpin Faust, [*This Republic of Suffering: Death and the Civil War*](#) (New York: Vintage, 2008)
- John Q. Anderson, ed., [*Brokenburn: The Journal of Kate Stone, 1861-1868*](#) (1955; Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995)

Choose ONE of the following:

- Joanne B. Freeman, [*The Field of Blood: Violence in Congress and the Road to Civil War*](#) (New York: Picador, 2018)
- Allen C. Guelzo, [*Lincoln and Douglas: The Debates that Defined America*](#) (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2008)
- Michael Fellman, [*Inside War: The Guerrilla Conflict in Missouri during the American Civil War*](#) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989)

- Daniel E. Sutherland, *A Savage Conflict: The Decisive Role of Guerrillas in the American Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009)
- Lesley J. Gordon, *A Broken Regiment: The 16th Connecticut's Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 2014)
- George C. Rable, *Fredericksburg! Fredericksburg!* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002)
- James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997)
- Joan Waugh, *U.S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009)
- Gary W. Gallagher, *The Union War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011)
- Lorien Foote, *The Yankee Plague: Escaped Union Prisoners and the Collapse of the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016)
- Caroline E. Janney, *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013)
- Brian D. McKnight, *Confederate Outlaw: Champ Ferguson and the Civil War in Appalachia* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2011)
- Elizabeth R. Varon, *Longstreet: The Confederate General Who Defied the South* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2023)
- David W. Blight, *Frederick Douglass: Prophet of Freedom* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2018)
- Stephanie McCurry, *Women's War: Fighting and Surviving the American Civil War* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2019)
- Thavolia Glymph, *The Women's Fight: The Civil War's Battles for Home, Freedom, and Nation* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2020)
- Earl J. Hess, *Civil War Infantry Tactics: Training, Combat, and Small-Unit Effectiveness* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016)
- Mark Wahlgren Summers, *A Dangerous Stir: Fear, Paranoia, and the Making of Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009)
- Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2010)
- Chandra Manning, *What This Cruel War Was Over: Soldiers, Slavery, and the Civil War* (New York: Vintage, 2007)
- Ari Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling Over the Memory of Sand Creek* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013)
- Heather Cox Richardson, *West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America after the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008)



Enslaved Family, Hanover County, Virginia, 1862, LOC

Recommended Reading:

- Michael Fellman, Lesley Gordon, and Daniel E. Sutherland, *This Terrible War: The Civil War and Its Aftermath* [Any Edition]
- Gary W. Gallagher and Joan Waugh, *The American War: A History of the Civil War Era* [Any Edition]

Introduction Essays (2x10 pts):

Part I (500+ words) Your Civil War: Provide a first-person reflection (in essay form) of your own experience with learning about, discussing, etc., the Civil War. This can include academic work, battlefield/museum visits, conversations with friends/family, etc.

Part II (500+ words) Civil War Causation: Write a brief essay in which you consider and analyze "[The Declaration of Causes of Seceding States](#)" and [Alexander Stephens' "Corner Stone" Speech](#). The best essays will answer the following question: According to the seceding states and Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens, what caused the Civil War?

Book Outlines: (3x10pts):

Please create a detailed outline (in bullet point) for each assigned book. A passing outline will include: 1) Proper citation of the title, etc., at top; 2) A clear statement of the argument(s)/main points; 3) Four or more specific examples the author uses to prove their argument(s)/points; 4) *Your* analysis of the book's history and what parts you're most interested in exploring further.

Exams (2x100 pts):

There will be a total of two exams. Each is worth 100 points. We will have a brief study session during the class before each exam. Exams will consist of two essays worth equal amounts. The first essay will cover a topic from class lecture/discussion. The second essay will relate directly to one or more of the readings.



Cpl. James M. Dennis, 16th OH Inf., & Hannah C. Barnard, LOC



Unidentified Union Soldier, LOC

Book Review + Book Talk (50 + 50 pts):

Part I: Once you've chosen one of the books above (in the options list), please read it carefully and thoroughly and then write a 1,000-word review of it with the following questions in mind: 1) What is the author's thesis? 2) Are they persuasive? 3) How do they prove (or try to prove) their argument(s)? 4) What kind of sources do they employ? 5) What did you gain from the book? 6) Why, in your scholarly opinion, might this book matter to scholars and to interested readers?

Part II: Use the same questions above to inform a 10–15-minute book talk which you record via Zoom and upload onto our Canvas page for the class to see. Feel free to use visuals (PPT, etc.)

Stone Paper (50 pts):

Please write a 2,000+ word paper that explores and analyzes some aspect of Kate Stone's diary, *Brokenburn*. Detailed instructions will be distributed early in the semester.

Attendance and Participation (50 pts):

This is an upper-level university course. Attendance and participation are mandatory. Three unexcused absences = 40; Four unexcused absences = 20; Five unexcused absences = 0

Classroom Conduct:

Be nice.

Make-up Policy:

I'll work with you.



Unidentified Confederate Soldier, LOC



Sarah A. Dasher & Cpl. James A. Wisenbaker, 12th Georgia Inf., LOC

Grade Grubbing:

Except for legal university accommodations, there will be no special circumstances offered to any *individual* student with respect to increasing their grade (such as extra work, bonus opportunities, or similar requests) beyond what is offered to the *entire* class. This is especially important to remember at the end of the semester. The best way to make the grade you want to make is to do your very best on the work required throughout the semester and to ask for honest help on assignments—not bonus points or favors after all assignments are finished. It is bad practice and unethical to request that professors offer you something that isn't offered to the entire class.

Academic Honesty:

Cheating of any kind, including plagiarism and/or using any AI program for assignments, will result in immediate failure of the class and possibly further sanctions from the University of Texas at Tyler. Plagiarism, put simply, is using another's work as your own without proper citation or usage. This includes everything from copying and pasting from the Internet (including AI sites) to failing to cite an idea from another source that you put in your own words. I strongly recommend reviewing the university policy for cheating and academic dishonesty at the following website: <http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/>

Important Dates:

Tuesday, January 30: Intro. Essays
 Thursday, March 7: Exam I
 Wed., April 25: Exam II
 11:59pm, Thursday, May 2: Stone Paper (aka, Final Exam)

Point Breakdown:

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|-----------------------|---------------|
| Intro. Essay: | 20 pts |
| Book Outlines (3x10): | 30 pts |
| Exam I: | 100 pts |
| Exam II: | 100 pts |
| Review: | 50 pts |
| Book Talk: | 50 pts |
| Stone Essay: | 50 pts |
| <u>Attendance:</u> | <u>50 pts</u> |
| Total: | 450 pts |

Grade Scale

A = 450-405 pts (100-90%)
 B = 404-360 pts (89-80%)
 C = 359-315 pts (79-70%)
 D = 314-270 pts (69-60%)
 F = 269-000 pts (59-0%)

Course Schedule (subject to change)

- Part 1 (1/16-3/7)
 - o Introductions/Civil War Causation
 - o Political Collapse, 1848-1860
 - o Southerners Secede and Amateurs Go to War, 1860-1861
 - o Discovering the Scope of the War, 1861-1862
 - o Attack and Die, 1862-1863
 - o **Exam I (Thursday, March 7)**
- Spring Break! (3/11-3/15)**
- Part 2 (3/18-4/26)
 - o An Inconclusive Year, 1863
 - o The Other War
 - o A War of Exhaustion, 1864-1865
 - o Northern Politics and Southern Reconstruction, 1863-1868
 - o Destroying Reconstruction, 1868-1877
 - o Remembering and Forgetting the Civil War
 - o **Exam II (Thursday, April 25)**

Stone Paper Due on Canvas, 11:59pm, Thursday, May 2.



Kate Stone