AMH 5930

Milbauer Research Seminar in the South and the American Nation

CBD 224

Periods 7-9 (1:55-4:50)

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Office hours:  
Mondays, 11:00-12:00, or by appointment  
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Course description and objectives

This seminar seeks to provide an environment of exposure, support, and criticism for writing projects. Each student is expected to complete a substantial writing project that is based on work in original primary sources, and to present that work to the class for criticism and revision.

Our common topic concerns the American South and the American nation: our purview will not be confined to one region, and students in though we will look for ways to exact comparisons across regions. Students will enter the class at different stages of work; some will begin work in the sources toward a new project, others will use the class to complete a M.A. paper, others will prepare dissertation prospectuses, still others will be presenting dissertation chapters. But the common goal will be to provide a challenging atmosphere that encourages progress.

It is expected that those students who have not yet completed a significant piece of research and writing will learn how to work with identify and refine a topic, locate and use primary sources, and frame an argument and interpretation. Students with more experience in thinking, writing, and working with sources should see the class as opportunity for engagement and intellectual community.

Each student is expected to identify a project early in the semester, and then to prepare a schedule for its completion by the end of the semester. At the beginning of the semester, students will submit a proposal outlining the topic and purpose of the research project. The proposal will also specify the research questions that the project will attempt to answer, describe in as much detail as possible the research strategy that will be employed, and present the beginnings of a bibliography.

Another important part of the class is gain experience in constructively criticizing your peer’s work—as well as in receiving criticism. I will assign students to serve as critics on a rotational basis, and I will expect that useful criticism will emerge as a result. I will also ask all students to
think constructive strategies for revision that try to incorporate criticisms.

There will be only a few common readings. Students will also be expected to attend the Milbauer Seminar, which will meet three times in the semester and will require some advance preparation. For more information about the latter, see plaza.ufl.edu/linkwa/milbauer.htm.

Required readings:

All of the following are available for purchase at Goerings Bookstore (1717 NW 1st Ave Gainesville, (352) 377-3703):

William A. Blair, Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914 (UNC Press, 2003).

Catherine Clinton, Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom (Back Bay Books, 2005).

Stephanie McCurry, Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender Relations, and the Political Culture of the Antebellum South Carolina Low Country (Oxford, 1997).

Evaluation:

Course grades calculated on the following basis: discussion, 25 percent; peer review, 15 percent; paper preparation, 20 percent; final paper 40 percent.

NB: As a matter policy, I do not give out incompletes.

Attendance policy:

Students are expected to attend ALL classes. I will grant excused absences only in the most dire circumstances. Beyond one absence, there will be an automatic and significant grade penalty. I will not grant credit for the course under any circumstances for anyone who misses more than 2 classes.

Minimal expectations:

1. Attend all classes.
2. Complete the assigned weekly readings before each class.
3. Criticize your peers’ work constructively.
4. Participate regularly in class discussions.
5. Complete all papers by the deadline. Late papers will be penalized by a full grade for every 24 hours.

Writing assignments:

1. A brief (2-3 pp) paper proposal outlining your intended topic.

2. At various stages in the semester: a class presentation draft of approximately 8 pages and three 2-3 page analytical essays about readings from the visiting scholars.

3. A longer, article-length paper (approximately 20 pages) by the end of the semester. The writing project will go through at least one draft.
Course schedule:

*NB: this schedule is subject to revision by the instructor. Changes will be posted on the course website and students notified immediately.*

**WEEK 1** January 7: Class introduction

**WEEK 2** January 14: Paper topic presentations

Students should submit a 2-3 pp. proposal that includes the following: 1) the 3-5 most important works influencing the project; 2) the central questions governing the study; and 3) the sources and their availability. The paper proposal should be emailed to me by the time of class. Students should also come to class prepared to provide a 10-minute oral presentation.

**WEEK 3** January 21: NO CLASS, MLK DAY

During this week, student will meet individually in conferences with the instructor

**WEEK 4** January 28: William Blair

On January 31-February 1, we will participate in seminar with visiting scholar, Dr. William Blair. In advance of that seminar, we will read selections from his published work. I would like brief, 2 page reaction papers from everyone in advance of class.

The following people will serve as discussion facilitators: Miller, Blauvelt, Smith, Bredehoeft. I expect that these students will meet and confer among themselves well before class, consult with me ahead of time, and devise a strategy for discussion for our Monday class meeting—as well as provide some ideas for our seminar with the visiting scholar.

I ask that, at a minimum, discussion facilitators prepare for the class questions regarding the reading, a brief (no more than 1 pg.) bibliography of relevant works, and supply a contextualization of the visiting scholar’s work.

Reading: Blair, *Cities of the Dead*

*February 1-2: participate in seminar with visiting scholar, Dr. William Blair*
WEEK 5  
February 4:  Student presentations (Black, Bryson, Kasperski, Zombek)

Please provide your critic with a reading copy of a conference style paper, no longer than 8 pages, **no later than the Friday before class.** Please circulate no later than Monday @ 5)

WEEK 6  
February 11: Student presentations (Blauvelt, Bredehoeft, Broomall, Smith)

WEEK 7  
February 18: Catherine Clinton

Discussion facilitators: Black, Broomall, Diaz, Kasperski

Reading: Clinton, *Harriet Tubman: The Road to Freedom*

*February 22: participate in seminar with visiting scholar, Dr. Catherine Clinton*

WEEK 8  
February 25:  Student presentations (Diaz, Huffard, Flook, Miller)

WEEK 9  
March 3  
TBA

WEEK 10  
March 10:  Spring Break

WEEK 11  
March 17:  Stephanie McCurry

Discussion facilitators: Bryson, Flook, Huffard, Zombek

Reading: McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds*

*March 21:  participate in seminar with visiting scholar, Dr. Stephanie McCurry*

WEEK 12  
March 24:  1st drafts (Black, Bryson, Kasperski)

*Here and below: Please circulate your drafts to class by Friday of week before. Critic will be responsible for leading discussion.*

WEEK 13  
March 31:  1st drafts (Zombek, Blauvelt, Bredehoeft)

WEEK 14  
April 7:  1st drafts (Broomall, Smith, Diaz)
WEEK 15  April 14:  1st drafts (Huffard, Flook, Miller)

WEEK 16  April 21  Revisions

Meet in conferences with instructor