

Comparative Slavery

History 310
Spring 2020

Web Course
Dr. Selena Sanderfer Doss

Course Description:

This course will examine slavery among people of African descent during the modern era. Through readings and discussion students will discover the origins, politics, economics, and legacies of African slavery in the Americas, Asia, the Caribbean, and Africa. This course will also address topics such as resistance, occupations, religion, free blacks, cultural innovation, emancipation and cultural memory.

This course is both reading and writing intensive. Each week students will be required to read either a monograph and/or several articles/book chapters on a given subject. In addition, students will participate in weekly online discussion forums and share their assessments. Written assignments including a book review, guided research papers, reading responses and classwork assignments will also be used for evaluation. While it may not be practical to read every word of an assigned monograph or series of articles, *students must read with a purpose* and are expected to spend time with each reading in order to comprehend the main arguments, participate meaningfully in discussion, and write thoughtful analyses.

The expectation is that students will become better researchers and writers after completing this course. Read comments on papers carefully and apply recommendations to future assignments. Please use the history research guide located at <https://libguides.wku.edu/history> and the black history research guide located at <https://libguides.wku.edu/c.php?g=542905&p=3720434> for help locating primary sources and academic secondary sources. Other suggestions for writing, including a reference guide for Chicago Manual of Style footnote citation format, can be found in the information section of Blackboard. Do not hesitate to ask for an extension well in advance of an assignment's due date if needed or to contact me should any issues arise.

Course Objectives:

After completing this course students will be able to -

- Identify with the main theoretical arguments in the study of modern systems of African slavery
- Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources
- Think critically to construct informed arguments based on evidence
- Compare similarities and differences in various slave systems
- Describe how system level policies of enslavement manifest themselves in the lives of individuals
- Communicate ideas effectively in written formats

Course Goals:

History courses aim to prepare students for life by emphasizing the following goals of the course:

- Critical thinking: prepare students to make informed decisions and ethical choices by examining historical examples
- Informed citizenship: develop knowledge of and concern for a multicultural world
- Historical perspective: increase awareness of how personal bias and opinion shape historical analysis
- Social engagement: encourage students to become actively engaged in issues affecting their lives and those others around the world

Required Texts:

- Omar Ali, *Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery Across the Indian Ocean* (Oxford University Press, 2016) ISBN: 0190269784
- David Geggus, *Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History* (Hackett Publishing Company, 2014) ISBN: 0872208656
- Angela F. Murphy, *The Jerry Rescue: The Fugitive Slave Law, Northern Rights, and the American Sectional Crisis* (Oxford University Press, 2014) ISBN: 9780199913602
- Randy J. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth Century Odyssey* (Harvard University Press, 2004) ISBN: 9780674013124

[Other readings and articles as announced]

Grading and Requirements:

Midterm Paper	10%
Book Review	10%
Reading Responses (3)	15%
Participation and Discussion	30%
Research Paper	
Topic and Bibliography	5%
Annotated Bibliography	5%
Outline and Thesis	10%
Research Paper	15%

90-100 (A); 80-89 (B); 70-79 (C); 60-69 (D), 0-59 (F)

Online Etiquette:

I fully expect each student to demonstrate a degree of online etiquette that reflects being a respectful adult in our society. Remember that discussion boards are a free space, where students should feel comfortable sharing ideas and asking questions without judgment. Students and faculty have personal beliefs, but should be cognizant of others' beliefs as well. Please respectfully disagree and do not resort to any personal criticisms. Also, please use proper written communication in all correspondence.

Email communication is not a text message and should use proper greetings, closings, and titles when addressing each other and faculty. This type of etiquette is beneficial when learning how to respectfully communicate with your peers, colleagues and superiors in the other settings.

Time Management: This course is both reading and writing intensive. Although it is an online course, students should expect to spend 8-10 hours per week reading, writing, and researching assignments. Student who do not have a disciplined study regiment or who cannot manage time efficiently will have a difficult time successfully completing this course.

Technological Requirements:

This course requires students to have regular access to the internet. The course site and email should be checked multiple times per week. A word processing program that allows users to create complex formatting such as footnotes and italic style for documents is also necessary.

Academic Honesty:

In all aspects of this course, students are required to demonstrate academic honesty and integrity as outlined in the University Statement on Student Rights and Responsibilities (WKU Catalog, 333-5). Violations of this include:

- Cheating by giving, sharing, or receiving unauthorized information before, during, or after an exam or assignment, whether verbal, written, code, or via electronic device used to read notes or search for information on the internet
- Dishonesty, including misrepresentation or lying
- Plagiarism, including memorizing and recanting work or answers from online sources

Penalties for academic dishonesty as noted in the WKU Catalog and in Hilltopics: Handbook for University Life: “Students who commit any act of academic dishonesty may receive from the instructor a failing grade in that portion of the course work in which the act is detected or a failing grade in the course without possibility of withdrawal. The faculty member may also present the case to the Office of the Dean of Student Life for disciplinary sanctions.” See also <https://www.wku.edu/studentconduct/>. Cases of academic dishonesty may be referred to The Office of Judicial Affairs for review, where the sanctions for academic dishonesty outlined in the WKU Student Handbook and available online at <http://www.wku.edu/judicialaffairs/sanctions.php> may be applied.

Citation format must conform to Chicago Manual of Style. Information detailing this format can be found the History Department’s Style Sheet for Citations available online at <http://www.wku.edu/history/documents/wku-history-citation-guide.pdf>.

Assignments:

All assignments are due by 11:59 pm Sunday at the end of the week that they are assigned.

Reading Responses:

Three reading responses must be submitted during the semester on assigned monographs or articles. Reading responses will either discuss the research problem, thesis, or methodology of an assigned reading. If more than one reading is assigned for that week, responses should compare and contrast the readings. The reading response must be turned in by the end of week, 11:59 pm Sunday that the readings are assigned for class. Responses should between 300 and 600 words, double spaced, use 12 pt. font size and a standard font style. They should use quotations and footnotes with Chicago Manual of Style citation format. Late entries will be accepted with a 10

pt. deduction per day it is overdue. A fuller explanation of this assignment can be found on Blackboard.

Book Review

A book review is required for the semester and can be chosen from one of the three monographs that students will read. **A book review CANNOT be submitted for the document reader David Geggus, *Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History*.** Reviews should provide a brief summary of the reading. If you choose to submit a review for a particular book, it must be turned in by the end of week, 11:59 pm Sunday that the book is assigned for class. Book reviews and reading responses cannot be submitted during the same week. Book reviews should be 600-900 words in length, double spaced, use 12 pt. font size and a standard font style such as Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc. Reviews should use quotations and footnotes with Chicago Manual of Style citation format. A book review should provide all of the of a reading response with additional analysis. It should provide a brief overview of the research problem, author's main arguments, a critical critique of the author's use of sources, its merits as well as shortcomings, its organization and the validity of the author's argument. Late entries will be accepted with a 10 pt. deduction per day it is overdue. A fuller explanation of this assignment can be found on Blackboard.

Midterm Paper:

The first paper will analyze primary documents from David Geggus, *The Haitian Revolution: A Documentary History*. Papers must be 3-4 pages or 900-1200 words in length, double spaced, use 12pt. font size and a standard font style such as Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc. Outside research other than the assigned documents for papers is NOT ALLOWED. Footnotes and citation format must conform to Chicago Manual of Style. A fuller explanation of reading responses can be found in the Information section of blackboard.

Research Paper:

Research papers will require students to examine at least one slave narratives in depth and present a historical argument. Fugitive slave narratives should be autobiographical narratives former slaves and can be chosen from the list of North American Slave Narratives on the Documenting the American South website <http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/texts.html#D>. Possible topics may include:

- Childhood experiences
- Women's experiences
- Experiences in Africa
- The Middle Passage
- The role of Christian conversion in the slave narratives
- How the intended audience affects the slave narratives
- The role of co-authors in the slave narratives
- Brutality in the slave narratives
- Relationships with whites
- Literacy in the slave narratives

Topic and Bibliography:

Choose sources and topic carefully. The topic must not be too general, but should be focused enough to allow for meaningful analysis. Identify a research problem that you want to investigate as well as questions that you seek to answer. A written paragraph between 150 and 300 words should be double spaced, use 12 pt. font size and a standard font style. Students must examine at least 7 different sources on a historical topic. They must analyze both secondary (at least 5) and primary sources (at least 2) including the slave narrative. In this assignment students must examine articles in addition to historical monographs as secondary sources. Do not use encyclopedia articles or summaries from websites. All articles must come from peer reviewed academic journals and books published by academic or university presses. Citation format must conform to Chicago Manual of Style.

Annotated Bibliography:

Students must examine the 7 sources they intend to use for the paper in depth and write an annotation describing each. Annotated bibliographies provide an overview of each of the major sources, books or articles that you are using for your project. The following questions may be asked, but you do not necessarily need to answer directly each question. Each annotation should be about 100 words and use CMS bibliography citation format. The following questions may be asked, but you do not necessarily need to answer each question directly.

- What is the central argument of the text in question? Try to summarize that argument in a sentence or two.
- What do you consider problematic, and point out other authors whose works might better explain or clarify that problem?
- Did you notice any connections between this text and other texts on your list? Were there related ideas? Did one text attempt to comment on or correct another?
- How will you use this source in your research?

Outline and Thesis:

Develop a working outline for your paper that reflects your organizational strategy at this point in your writing process. Please put your thesis statement in bold type in the introduction so that it is easy to discern. The thesis statement should briefly detail the major points of the argument. Divide the outline into introduction, main body paragraphs, and conclusion sections in order to help organize your thoughts. Your outline should include several quotes with accompanying CMS footnote citations. Entries should be at 1-2 pages or 300-600 words in length. They should be double spaced, use 12 pt. font size and a standard font style such as Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc. It is unnecessary to include all quotations that you intend to use in the paper rather seven or eight will suffice. Outline instructions and samples can be found on Blackboard. Late entries will be accepted with a 10 pt. deduction per day it is overdue.

Research Paper:

Research papers should present an argument that is supported by ample evidence. It should also include a short review of the literature that has already been written on the

subject. Papers must be 2400-3000 words in length, double spaced, use 12pt. font size and a standard font style such as Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc. Sources should be listed in a bibliography. A grading rubric can be found on Blackboard.

Discussion:

Each week there will be a class discussion on Blackboard. In total there will be 12 graded discussions. Students are expected to present meaningful comments on the discussion board. Comments should use quotations from the readings and/or directly reference the readings. This course is reading and writing intensive. While you may not be able to read every word of an assigned monograph or series of articles, you are expected to spend time with each reading in order to familiarize yourself with the main arguments and participate meaningfully in discussion. Bad language or inappropriate content will not be tolerated. It will be expected that *your* comments reflect *your* work. Students should regularly quote from the book or readings for that week. This does not need to be a footnote reference – just use quotation marks around the author's words followed by the author's name and page number of the source in parentheses. It will be expected that assigned text will be read and every effort made to make statements that reflect one's understanding of the topic. However, do not be afraid to ask questions on the discussion board. Questions can be for clarification, but should also stimulate further discussion. Students should attempt to answer the questions of other students. The instructor will be involved in most discussion boards to give direction and input. **Grading of discussion participation will be done by assessing a student's presence including at least two visits to the blackboard site per week separated by at least 24 hours and three total comments (25%), the depth/length of comments including quotations (25%), the number of questions answered (25%), and how well questions, links, references, and direct responses to other students or comments stimulate further discussion (25%).** Discussion boards will be open from 12:01 am Monday to 11:59 pm the following Sunday each week. Questions that you may ask (and you are encouraged to do so!) are not considered to be "comments" unless preceded by discussion. The more you interact, the better your grade.

Examples of comments are below:

Poor comment – I agree with J. Doe.

Fair comment – I agree with J. Doe because American slaves did practice Christianity.

Good comment – Although J. Doe is correct that many slaves were Christian, J. Doe is incorrect in assuming that all American slaves accepted the religion.

Great comment - Although J. Doe is correct that many slaves were Christian, J. Doe is incorrect in assuming that all American slaves accepted the religion. According to our article, "Citation." (Author, page number). Therefore, Christianity was not always accepted by slaves. Wouldn't you agree, J. Doe?

Participation:

Video responses and classwork will count toward your total discussion and participation grade. Students can receive a 15, 10, or 5 points on these assignments depending on its correct

completion. Various classwork assignments will be given throughout the semester usually analyzing primary sources. Video responses should be between ½ a page to 1 page in length. Responses should contain some content information, but should primarily be comprised of student reflections on the film. What did you learn? What information seemed misleading or bias? Should this film helpful to you? I may also ask you to address a specific issue your response. Include specific details and not a general summary.

Technical Support:

WKU Students can call 270-745-7000 for technical support with Blackboard or computer problems. Other information can be found at <http://www.wku.edu/it/> or by following the IT Helpdesk link in the left menu bar.

Student Support of Special Interest for Online Students

The Distance Learning website located at <http://www.wku.edu/online> provides a Distance Learning Support Directory listing offices on campus that provide support to distance students, including technical support. Other resources provided include:

- The Orientation for Online Learners located at <http://www.wku.edu/online/orientation> provides a complete overview of technology required in online classes, and features tutorials on Blackboard, setting up a WKU email account, accessing TopNet (WKU's student information and registration system), course registration, study skills, time management, writing and other academic skills, and even directions to campus and how to get a parking permit should you need to visit.
- Join an Online Blackboard Community for Distance Learners at WKU. The community provides a download library of free plug-ins and discounted software, a link to technical support, and a university support directory. To join, email learn.online@wku.edu with the subject line Online Community. There are also Facebook, Flickr and YouTube communities found by going to the Distance Learning orientation (above) and selecting Social Networking from the Resources.
- WKUReal: Reaching Each Adult Learner <http://www.wku.edu/real/> is a program to assist adult students (also known as Nontraditional students) at WKU.

Student Disability Services:

In compliance with university policy, students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments, and /or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Student Accessibility Resource Center. The phone number is 745-5004; TTY is 745-3030. More information can be found at [WKU Student Disability Services](#). Per university policy, please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from SARC.

WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy:

Western Kentucky University (WKU) is committed to supporting faculty, staff and students by upholding WKU's Title IX Sexual Misconduct/Assault Policy (#0.2070) at [Title IX Sexual Misconduct Assault Policy](#) and Discrimination and Harassment Policy (#0.2040) at [Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).

Under these policies, discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct based on sex/gender are prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex/gender-based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator, Andrea Anderson, 270-745-5398 or Title IX Investigators, Michael Crowe, 270-745-5429 or Joshua Hayes, 270-745-5121.

Please note that while you may report an incident of sex/gender based discrimination, harassment and/or sexual misconduct to a faculty member, WKU faculty are “Responsible Employees” of the University and MUST report what you share to WKU’s Title IX Coordinator or Title IX Investigator. If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you confidentiality, you may contact WKU’s Counseling and Testing Center at 270-745-3159.

Contact Information:

Email: selena.sanderfer@wku.edu

Schedule

Week One: 1/27-2/2	<p>Theories on Slavery Readings: Winthrop Jordan, <i>White Over Black</i>; Eric Williams, <i>Capitalism and Slavery</i>; David Eltis, <i>The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas</i>; David Brion Davis, <i>Ideas and Institutions from the Old World</i>, Linda Heywood and John K. Thornton, <i>European and African Cultural Differences</i> in David Northrop, <i>The Atlantic Slave Trade</i></p> <p>Due: Classwork #1: Slavery - Myths vs. Facts Blackboard Discussion #1: Why African Slavery</p>
Week Two: 2/3-2/9	<p>Theories on Slavery Readings: Eugene Genovese, <i>From Rebellion to Revolution</i>, 1-50</p> <p>Due: Reading Response #1 Genovese – Research Problem/Question Blackboard Discussion #2: The Effects of Enslavement</p>
Week Three: 2/10-2/16	<p>Slave Narratives Readings: Harriet Jacobs, <i>Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl</i>; Thomas R. Gray, <i>Confessions of Nat Turner</i>; Frederick Douglass, <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i>; WPA <i>Slave Narratives</i></p> <p>Due: Classwork #2 Gender in Slave Narratives Blackboard Discussion #3: Learning from Fugitive Narratives Video Response #1: Describe the range of opinions expressed by former slaves interviewed in the 1930s. What factors account for their differing evaluations of "slavery times? What statements surprise you, if any? Why? https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2oqbab4VzQ</p>

Week Four:
2/17-2/23

Slavery in Africa

Readings: Hideaki Suzuki, "Tracing Their "Middle" Passages: Slave Accounts from the Nineteenth-Century Western Indian Ocean," 307-318 and Felicitas Becker, "Common Themes, Individual Voices: Memories of Slavery around a Former Slave Plantation in Mingoyo, Tanzania," 71-87 in Alice Bellagamba, Sandra E. Greene, Martin A. Klein eds. *African Voices on Slavery and the Slave Trade: Volume 1, The Sources*;

Due: Reading Response #2 Suzuki and Becker - Sources/Methodology
Blackboard Discussion #4: Slavery in Africa

Week Five:
2/24-3/1

Slavery in Africa

Readings: Suzanne Miers and Igor Kopytoff, *Slavery in Africa: Historical and Anthropological Perspectives*, 3-28; Joseph C. Miller, "West Central Africa;" Joseph Inikori, "Guns for Slaves;" John Thornton, "Warfare and Slavery" in David Northrop, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*

Due: Classwork #3: Source Chart – Mungo Park, West Africa in the 1790s; P. E. H. Hair, African Narratives of Enslavement in David Northrop, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*
Blackboard Discussion #5: Slavery in Africa

Week Six:
3/2-3/8

Slavery in Colonial America

Think about research paper topics

Readings: Ira Berlin, "From Creole to African: Atlantic Creoles and the Origins of African-American Society in Mainland North America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser. 53 (1996), 251-88; John Thornton, "African Dimensions to the Stono Slave Rebellion," *American Historical Review*, Vol. 96, No. 4 (Oct., 1991), pp. 1101-1113

Due: Reading Response #3 Thesis

Video Response #2: *Goodbye Uncle Tom*, 1971; *Roots*, 1977; *Amistad*, 1997; *Book of Negroes*, 2015 - How has the portrayal of the Middle Passage evolved in cinema in the last half of the 20th century? Which portrayal of the Middle Passage is most accurate? Which one is most flawed?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=220UF-M6Kc0>

<http://www.criticalcommons.org/Members/mattdelmont/clips/roots-middle-passage/view>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fCHvD2DyWeY>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZilJFp2_m9I

Blackboard Discussion #6: Characteristics of Early North American Slavery

Week Seven: Spring Break
3/9-3/15

Due: Topic and Bibliography

Weeks Eight:
3/16-3/22

Transatlantic Slave Trade and the British Atlantic

Readings: Randy J. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth Century Odyssey*

Due: Optional Book Review #1

Blackboard Discussion #7: Slavery in the British Atlantic

Week Nine:
3/23-3/29

The Haitian Revolution

Readings: David Geggus, *The Haitian Revolution*

Due: Classwork #4: Documents from the Haitian Revolution

Midterm Paper

Blackboard Discussion #8: The Haitian Revolution

Week Ten:
3/30-4/5

Abolition

Readings: Adrian Hastings, "Black Abolitionists;" Michael Craton, "Slave Revolts and the End of Slavery;" Eric Williams, "Slavery, Industrialization, and Abolition;" and David Brion Davis, "Morality, Economics, and Abolition" in David Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade*

Due: Annotated Bibliography

Due: Classwork #5: Document Analysis – John Guthrie, Frances Sadler, and Captain Cudjoe, Leeward Treaty, Jamaica, March 1, 1739

Blackboard Discussion #9: Abolition

Week Eleven:
4/6-4/12

Slavery in the Indian Ocean/Islamic Worlds

Readings: Omar H. Ali, *Malik Ambar: Power and Slavery across the Indian Ocean*

Due: Optional Book Review #2

Classwork #6: Malik Ambar Documents

Blackboard Discussion #10: Islam and Slavery

Week Twelve:
4/13-4/19

Antebellum Slavery

Readings: Angela F. Murphy, *The Jerry Rescue: The Fugitive Slave Law, Northern Rights, and the American Sectional Crisis*

Optional Book Review #3

Classwork: #7 Document Analysis - Gerrit Smith, Letter on the 1859 Celebration of the Rescue of Jerry

Blackboard Discussion #11: Antebellum Slavery and Fugitive Slaves

Week Thirteen:

Reparations

4/20-4/26

Readings: Rodney Coates, “If a Tree Falls in the Wilderness: Reparations, Academic Silences, and Social Justice,” 1-25; Mary Frances Berry, “When Education Was Seen as Proper Reparations for Slavery, 1-2; Robert Fullinwider, 1-8

Due: Outline and Thesis

Blackboard Discussion #12: Reparations

Week Fourteen:
4/27-5/3

Research Paper
Work on Research Paper

Week Fifteen:
5/4-5/10

Research Paper
Work on Research Paper

Week Sixteen:
5/11-5/15

Research Paper
Due: Research Paper on Tuesday, 5/12