

HIST 4004

Index 95771

McB 322

TuTh 3:30–4:45

Fall 2006

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Sociocultural Topics: HISTORY OF AMERICAN HIGHER EDUCATION

What do you know about the history of your university, or how it might compare with other institutions of higher education? HIST 4004 will emphasize selected parts of the history of higher education, including the beginnings of (1) gender desegregation and (2) racial desegregation. Through work in primary and secondary sources, students will individually develop an expertise in some area and will collectively generate an amended view of the past. This course is designed in part to encourage the production of papers that might qualify for presentation at one or more conferences during spring (or fall) 2007.

Designed as a junior/senior capstone seminar, this version of HIST 4004 builds on your previous undergraduate work, particularly HIST 2004, Historical Methods. In content, it emphasizes matters of social history—class, race, ethnicity, and gender. In approach, it pursues further exploration of (1) sources for doing history, (2) methods for extracting the stories the sources can tell, and (3) approaches for presenting the results. Consider this course the Wallenstein Professional Development Institute, 4000 series.

Most of the assigned reading is scheduled for completion during the first half of the semester, before you focus on your most sustained writing project. I have ordered four books for this class. The best available survey is John R. Thelin, *A History of American Higher Education* (2004). We'll open with Frank Fitzpatrick, *And the Walls Came Tumbling Down: Kentucky, Texas Western, and the Game That Changed American Sports* (1999). The two other readings are Amilcar Shabazz, *Advancing Democracy: African Americans and the Struggle for Access and Equity in Higher Education in Texas* (2004), and Amy Thompson McCandless, *The Past in the Present: Women's Higher Education in the Twentieth-Century American South* (1999).

Tentative line-up of assignments.

Week 1, August 22, 24. Getting acquainted, getting organized. Primary sources, and secondary. Begin reading Fitzpatrick's book. Go carefully through the syllabus. And begin getting acquainted with the additional sources and resources listed under weeks 3–5.

Week 2, August 29, 31. Complete reading Fitzpatrick. 500-word written response, due to me early in the week—by 5 pm Monday, August 28. For each of the readings, this week and into October, consider (1) what are the main developments being traced, (2) what are the main ideas presented by the authors, and (3) what you find most arresting, and what you make of it all.

Week 3, September 5, 7. Read through chapter 4 in Thelin. The usual written response, due 5 pm Monday. No class Thursday; instead come to the reception that marks the inauguration of the CLAHS Undergraduate Research Institute. It is time to begin getting acquainted with at least **the**

following web and other resources: (1) *America: History and Life*, a guide to secondary sources—books and journal articles in U.S. history; (2) LexisNexis, which gives you access to appellate court cases and also law review articles; (3) the New York Times—the hard copy index, in Reference, as well as the on-line version of the paper itself; and (4) the Freeman File—an index to the Richmond Times-Dispatch and Richmond News Leader, from the 1920s to the 1980s—which is on fiche in Newman Library.

Week 4, September 12, 14. For this week, read Thelin, chapter 5, and complete both Shabazz and McCandless through the first chapter. 500-word written response. In addition, stop by **Special Collections**, first of all to get acquainted with the place, and most of all to see student yearbooks and student directories. You'll find that many of the yearbooks—the Bugle and, for four years beginning in 1925, the Tin Horn—are also available on-line.

Week 5, September 19, 21. Thelin, chapters 6-8; McCandless, chapters 2-5. In addition, select and read an article, something on high education, in the History of Education Quarterly. (or another such article, one that you encountered in **America: History and Life**). The usual 500-word written response. Have you identified a promising topic for your project? If not, be on the lookout—your proposal for the project is due in two weeks.

Week 6, September 26, 28. Shabazz, chapters 2-4. 500-word written response.

Week 7, October 3, 5. McCandless, chapters 6-7; Shabazz, chapter 6 and Coda. 500-word written response. Project proposal due in class Thursday, or by 4 pm Friday.

Week 8, October 10, 12. Oral reports in class on your on-going projects.

Week 9, October 17. No class Thursday (I'll be away at a conference).

Week 10, October 24, 26. A “chapter” of your project due in class Tuesday.

Week 11, October 31, November 2. Updates on the projects.

Week 12, November 7, 9. Preliminary complete version due in class Thursday.

Week 13, November 14. Pick up your preliminary version, with my comments, in class Tuesday. No class Thursday (I'll be away at a conference), and then we have Thanksgiving week.

Week 14, November 28, 30. Final version due in class Thursday.

Week 15, December 5. Final reports on the projects

What do you want to know? What do you want to say? How best to say it? And how best to present the whole thing? Superior papers reflect (a) a successful search for appropriate sources; (b) a critical and imaginative mind, including a sense of what is relevant, appropriate, significant (together with a knack for showing it to be so); and (c) a facility for clear writing—as well as (d) an appropriate narrative strategy and (e) an acceptable style sheet. You might make a checklist of these features for each of your assignments.

Your writing will be expected to display a command of such things as effective paragraphing, appropriate word choice, and proper punctuation. As for footnotes and bibliography, you must cite primary and secondary sources, as appropriate, and your work must display an historian's (Chicago-style) formatting.

The big project. The most ambitious piece of writing for this course, a mini-term paper, will involve a project that results in an excellent essay with the following specifications:

a narrative of **3,000-5,000 words**, or approximately 10 to 18 standard double-spaced pages (short for a journal article, but long for most conference papers); **plus**

- (1) properly formatted endnotes; and
- (2) properly formatted bibliography, together with annotation—that is, after each major item in the bibliography, you will briefly evaluate it (in a sentence, or fragment, or two) as to its value in general and its utility for your project; and
- (3) at least one apt visual, perhaps a map or a photograph.

The project must be substantial enough that you have time and space to explore a variety of appropriate sources, **primary and secondary**; develop some central idea or theme; and generate and incorporate information that aptly illustrates your generalizations. In presenting this essay, you will be expected to move back and forth between the concrete and the abstract, the particular and the general. Keep in mind (whether you find a particular source at the library or on the web, whether it is hard copy or electronic) that just because something is written down does not make it true, and just because it is true does not make it relevant or interesting. Your task is to sift for truth and relevance and make clear the significance you see in what you select for inclusion.

Process and chronology. The project will be accomplished in stages, each of them graded:

By the beginning of class **Thursday, October 5**, you will be turning in a **proposal**—an introduction to your project—a page that contains 1) a tentative title and 2) a statement, perhaps 200 words, of what you plan to do; and a second page that supplies 3) a formal bibliography of at least 8 to 10 promising sources, divided between primary and secondary (supply both; specify which are which), briefly annotated (how do you see using each of them?).

A draft of one “chapter” of the paper—together with the proposal—is due **Tuesday, October 24**.

A first version (not a first draft—it should be as complete and clean as you can get it—and it must be accompanied by the proposal, the copy that has my comments) is due no later than the beginning of class **Thursday, November 9**. Be sure you get it back before you head out for break.

A final version (this one to be accompanied, too—by the preliminary version and the proposal—the complete package) is due in class **Thursday, November 30** (the week after Thanksgiving).

Regarding all assignments for this course:

Each essay should carry a descriptive title—but not a separate title page.

I expect that each piece of work will be "perfect," the best you can do at that time; that it will be carefully proofread; and that it will reflect whatever comments I have made about the presentation of your previous papers. First drafts are rarely welcome—I want finished quality. Take pride in your work—do work that you can take pride in.

Essays must be readily legible. I strongly prefer that they be word-processed (dark printer or e-mail). Regardless, I do not want to be getting hairy pages torn from a notebook.

If you **e-mail** me a paper, be sure that the **subject line** identifies the course and the assignment (4004-response). And if you send an **attachment**, be sure to identify the **file** by course name, your name, the date, and the assignment (e.g., 4004-Smith-10/03-proposal).

Given all the short assignments for this class, it is imperative that you stay current. All out-of-class written assignments are due at the start of class. (If I find them under my door when I return from class, or if they arrive by e-mail after I leave for class, they are late.) Lateness will result in a reduction of as much as 10 points per day (or partial day). If you miss the due date for something, do not just wait until the next class to turn it in—get it to me as soon as possible.

My expectations. All assignments will be evaluated on language (including spelling and word use—it's/its, affect/effect, however/but) and grammar as well as content, **style as well as substance**. I encourage students to work together, in groups of two or three, on short assignments as well as on your larger projects (for example, three people might huddle along the way while each writes on a different aspect of some larger topic). Also, students will report back to the class on your discoveries and on the progress of your work on your research projects.

If I direct you to the Writing Center for assistance, your making use of that University resource becomes a class assignment for you, to be successfully attended to and completed.

Class attendance. Much of the work in this course will take place in class. Plan on few if any absences. If you cannot commit to attending class far more often than not, you might better enroll in some other course, any other course. You are graded on your attendance, your participation, and your performance on in-class assignments; and you are expected to know, and apply, what we cover in class. Do not skip class to complete any work—it's already late.

Retain all graded work through the term—and copies on disk of all electronically prepared items you turn in. Late in the term I will make available to each of you a list of items that I have received (and the grade on each). If my records seem in some way at odds with your understanding of your performance, you will have in your possession the original graded work so that you can help me correct the record.

Second attempts. Some work may cry out for a second attempt. Unsatisfactory work (D, F) must be satisfactorily redone (C or better). So humor me. Satisfy my expectations here, and keep in mind that mediocrity is not encouraged. Rewritten essays must abide by the following rules:

1) All reworked assignments must be turned in within a week of the class I hand things back; absence on turn-back day does not extend the deadline; the reduction of 10 points for each day, or partial day, that you turn in something late is a separate consideration, so, in that sense, you could do satisfactory work, either on the original pass at an assignment or the re-try, and end up with less than a C grade on it.

2) The original version (bearing my scrawled comments) must accompany the new version, and you must have addressed the concerns (stylistic and substantive) that I expressed on the original version. As for stylistic concerns, it does not remotely suffice that you fix the single instance I noted of a characteristic problem—all such must be identified and fixed; I am not your editor, and I do not pretend to note every example of a lapse. I want you to learn to recognize things that need fixing.

3) For each assignment, I will average the original and the re-try, if any. So consider the permanent grade on the assignment to be the average between the first attempt and the re-try; if the re-try is also unsatisfactory, the grade is a zero (think of each graded piece of work as starting out at zero and staying there until either the first try or a re-try earns a grade that crests 70).

4) Even if you do "satisfactory" work on an essay, you may re-do it to improve it. Just follow all the procedures indicated here.

5) Note that a re-try does not guarantee a higher grade—or even keeping the original grade—though a good-faith effort will likely lift the evaluation.

Along the way, you will likely find yourselves not only consumers of historical knowledge—but producers as well. Let's talk about the essays that really turn out well. I have tentative plans, at the end of the term (if you each approve of your essay's inclusion), to compile the stronger essays in a published collection, produced at the Copy Center. Your essay must have earned at least a straight B, and I'll need it in electronic format as a Word file. You can own a copy of that collection, at cost, if you wish.

As you develop your essays, short or long, you will be exemplifying what I mean when I speak of the strengths and promise of **undergraduate research at a research institution**. As part of that enterprise, you will be encouraged—pending production of a fine piece of work—to submit an essay in the annual statewide competition conducted by the Virginia Social Science Association (papers will be due at some point around New Year's—and the VSSA's annual conference is planned for the University of Richmond next spring). And you will be urged, too, to propose a paper for presentation at the Virginia Tech History Graduate Student Association's annual conference next spring, as well as for presentation at the Virginia Tech undergraduate research symposium, also next spring. Juniors, keep in mind next fall's Middle Atlantic Regional Conference of Undergraduate Scholarship (MARCUS), held each October at Sweet Briar College. Also, the History Department runs essay competitions each spring—one on Virginia and/or Civil War topics, the other on any historical theme or topic.

Honor Code. Faculty are urged to say something in each syllabus about the Honor Code. It should go without saying that the Honor Code applies to all the work you do in this course. You are encouraged to work together on assignments, unless otherwise directed, but you must turn in work that is in fact your own. For further guidance, you might consult your three assigned books. Theft of language and/or ideas constitutes a crime against the institution and the enterprise. **Write your own**, and cite if you borrow—that is what quotation marks and footnotes (or endnotes or internal notes) are for. Students—and faculty—are entitled to a cheat-free learning environment, and of course I expect integrity. If I encounter an abuse of this expectation, you can expect a zero on the assignment—which in itself can mean that you fail the class—and a close encounter with the Honor Court.

FINAL GRADES. Students will be evaluated on the basis of the effectiveness of the following:

- (1) the several **short essays**, plus your weekly responses to the readings; and
- (2) your participation in **class discussion** (thus also your class attendance)—the ideas you bring to class, the questions, your in-class contributions to everyone's cooperative learning, including oral presentations of your big project; and
- (3) the **big project** (the proposal, an early chapter, the preliminary version, and the final version—all of which, as it develops, I will see each time I see any of it).

Numeric grades will convert at 920 for a straight A, and 900-919 A-; 870 or more will convert to B+, 830 to B, 800 B-; 775 C+, 725 straight C, and 700 a C-; and so on.