

Southern Life Stories

AMH 4930 (Senior Seminar)

William A. Link

KF 117

Periods 7-9, TUESDAYS

(1:55-4:55)

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Office hours: T, 11-12 or by appointment

This course examines the particular history of the US South by examining, through various perspectives, how people have constructed and/or reconstructed the past. We will spend a portion of class engaged in readings for background and perspective. Then, early in the course, we will pivot in order to think about, conceptualize, and execute a topic that uses first-person accounts of remembering and constructing the past.

Required Readings

(for purchase)

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, (any edition)

John Inscoe, *Writing the South through the Self: Explorations in Southern Autobiography* (Georgia, 2011)

Kristen Green, *Something Must be Done about Prince Edward County*

Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*

Lillian Smith, *Killers of the Dream* (1949)

(in electronic format)

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Frederick Law Olmsted, *Journey to the Southern Seaboard States*

Various pdfs on canvas

Course Objectives

After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. read and analyze works of history, with particular attention to argument, methodology, and use of evidence;
2. improve their ability to communicate clearly and concisely, verbally and in writing;
3. understand how to locate and use primary sources in a library;
4. understand how to organize and assemble primary sources into a coherent research paper.

Grading/evaluation

Syllabus quiz, 1 percent; class participation, 21 percent; independent study contracts, 6 percent; in-class writing, 10 percent; discussion leaders, 5 percent; essay review, 10 percent; preliminary research exercises, 10 percent; first draft, 10 percent; final draft, 27 percent.

Grading Scale

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| 94-100% = A | 73.3-76.6% = C |
| 90-93.9% = A- | 70-73.2% = C- |
| 86.7-89.9% = B+ | 66.7-69.9% = D+ |
| 83.3-86.6% = B | 63.3-66.6% = D |
| 80-83.2% = B- | 60-63.2% = D- |
| 76.7-79.9% = C+ | Below 60 = E |

Course Assignments

For all papers, I require that students submit their writing assignments to me via elearning (<https://lss.at.ufl.edu>). Please note that this course is in Canvas, and so login under that option.) I will only accept papers that are submitted in Microsoft Word. All papers are due no later than the beginning of class.

1. **Syllabus quiz** (1 percent): due by class time January 12th.
2. **Class Participation** (21 percent). Since this is a seminar, it is very important that all students make an effort to participate.
3. **Contracts on independent study** (6 percent). During classes that we are not meeting, I want a contract by the Tuesday prior to class indicating what work you

will complete. By the following Tuesday, I want a brief report indicating how much you have accomplished.

4. **In-class writing** (10 percent): I will begin each class with a prompt based on the reading. You will spend 15-20 minutes writing, and this will (I hope) jumpstart discussion.
5. **Discussion leaders** (5 percent): Beginning January 26th, each student will participate as part of a discussion team of 4-5 people during the class session in which we are considering readings. I will make assignments early in the semester. Students should collaboratively prepare a list of questions, a bibliography of relevant secondary works, and survey the primary sources. All discussion leaders must meet with me in advance of the class discussion.
6. **An essay review** (10 percent): These papers will be written by the members of the discussion team, focusing on the readings that they lead discussion about. These are due one week after the discussion occurs. As part of this assignment, you need to identify and read 4 additional sources beyond the assigned readings. These papers should consider in 1300-1500 words how the assigned reading relates to additional materials and perspectives.
7. **Preliminary research exercises** (10 percent): As part of your research project, I expect you to complete the following research exercises:

- **Topic presentation:** this is your opportunity to pitch your topic, in no more than 10 minutes. Your presentation should include 1) a brief description of your topic, 2) what questions you are raising 3) what other historians have said about topic. **Due Feb 2nd.**

Possible topics: The instructor must approve all topics. Topics might come from the following general areas:

1. Fiction
2. Remembering slavery
3. Leaving Home
4. Coming of Age
5. Gender
6. Writing the Past

- **2 pp. prospectus:** a written version of your pitch. I will either approve the topic, or require that you reconsider and rewrite it. Due February 9th.
- **Preliminary bibliography,** that includes at least 10 primary sources and 10 secondary sources. Due February 16th.
- **3 pp. detailed outline of your paper:** due March 15th.
- **Draft of Introduction,** due March 22nd.
- **Ongoing reports to me on your progress research and writing.** On days when we are not in class, I will expect reports on your progress.

8. **First draft** (10 percent), due March 29th. Approximately 2,000 words.

9. **Final draft, research paper** (27 percent), due April 19th by 5:00 pm. Approximately 4,000 words.



Other Matters...

Attendance: Attendance at all classes is absolutely essential, and your attendance in class is mandatory. **You will lose one letter grade from your course participation grade for each unexcused absence.** I will accept no excuses except medical or family emergencies, and these must be well-documented.

Deadlines: You must submit your work on time. Any unexcused late work will be penalized by one letter grade a day.

Plagiarism: I will enforce a policy of **zero tolerance** toward plagiarism of any kind, and I will be especially severe with anyone guilty of it. That means that anyone discovered cheating in any fashion will be given a failing course grade. It is your responsibility to be familiar with what cheating and especially plagiarism are. The University's rules on Academic Honesty and the statement on Academic Honesty are in the Undergraduate Catalog and at <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx#honesty>.

The Department of History's own statement on Academic Honesty, contained in the Department's Manual on Policies and Procedures, covers plagiarism, attribution, citation, multiple submission of papers, etc. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please consult the University and Departmental guidelines, or ask me for clarification.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. For more information, consult the following website:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>. Ideally, I would like to have the DRC paperwork early in the semester.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 January 5: Course introduction

Distribute syllabus; review course requirements

WEEK 2 January 12: Southern Autobiography

Inscoe, *Writing the South through the Self*, pp. 1-97; Jacquelyn Hall, "You Must Remember This": Autobiography as Social Critique"; Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide*, chs. 1-2.

WEEK 3 January 19: Southern Autobiography/Fiction

Inscoe, *Writing the South through the Self*, pp. 98-201; Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide*, chs. 3-4; Ritterhouse, "Reading, Intimacy, and the Role of Uncle Remus in White Southern Social Memory"

WEEK 4 January 26: The Slave Experience

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*; Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide*, chs. 5-6

WEEK 5 February 2: Leaving Home

Frederick Law Olmsted, *Journey to the Southern Seaboard States*

Oral presentations: Pitching your topic to the class

WEEK 6 February 9: Thinking about PAPERS

2 pp. prospectus due: All students should email me a 2 page prospectus that addresses how you intend to frame your discussion, what questions you will ask, etc., whether necessary primary sources exist. Be prepared to defend your topic.

WEEK 7 February 16: Independent study

Preliminary bibliographies due

Independent study: send me contracts by the time of class

WEEK 8 February 23: Coming of Age

Zora Neale Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road*; Kathryn Nasstrom, "Between Memory and History: Autobiographies of the Civil Rights Movement and the Writing of Civil Rights History"

Independent study: Send me a report of your activities by the time of class

WEEK 9 March 1: Spring Break

WEEK 9 March 8: Gender

Lillian Smith, *Killers of the Dream* (1949); Hall, "'To Widen the Reach of Our Love': Autobiography, History, and Desire."

WEEK 10 March 15: Writing the Past

Kristen Green, *Something Must be Done about Prince Edward County*; Williamson, "Wounds Not Scars: Lynching, the National Conscience, and the American Historian"

2-3 pp. outline of your paper due.

WEEK 11 March 22:

Introductions due

WEEK 12 March 29: NO CLASS

1st drafts due

WEEK 13 April 5: Paper workshop

WEEK 14 April 12: REVISION STRATEGY DUE

WEEK 15: April 19: Independent study

Final drafts are due no later than 5:00 pm Tuesday, APRIL 19th.