



Turning Points in American History – One Credit Course
Saint Michael's Graduate Education College

Details:

Course Title: Seminars on Turning Points in American History

Instructor's Name: Elise A. Guyette and visiting scholars

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Time and place: 8:30am –3:30pm ~ Rokeby Museum and the University of Vermont

Course Description and Rationale:

This seminar course covers major turning points in US history from the Revolutionary era through the making of modern America. For each seminar, we read something written by the lecturer and we hold Socratic Seminars to analyze and interpret enduring issues across eras and how they impact lives today. The discussions build concepts such freedom & justice; changes and continuities; perspectives & controversies; and the multiple causes & effects of turning points in American history. The course models how to use focus questions to build concepts, challenge misconceptions, and evaluate official versions of history. Participants reflect on and challenge their assumptions about our history to discover how to help their students do the same. The methodology used is an exemplar transferrable to grades 3–16 classrooms.

Course Objectives: Vermont State Competencies in the Social Studies

- Performance Standard: Students will understand and be able to model how historians and other social scientists view, analyze, and interpret the world.
- Knowledge Standard: Understands the methods of historical analysis, including using varied perspectives to interpret historical events.
- Knowledge Standard: Uses multiple perspectives to interpret significant eras, developments, and turning points in history.

Required Readings

Carr, Jacqueline. (2005). *After the Siege: A Social History of Boston 1780–1800*. Chapter 4, "Bostonians at Work," pp. 147–190.

Carson, Clayborne. (2006). "African American Freedom Struggle," in *Revolutionary Movements in World History*, Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO.

Oxford Companion to US Military History: Revolutionary War (1775 – 83): Changing Interpretations. Online <http://www.answers.com/topic/revolutionary-war-1775-83-changing-interpretations#ixzz26BvQ6ECE>

Joseph, Peniel. (2006). "Introduction: Toward a Historiography of the Black Power Movement," in *The Black Power Movement: Rethinking the Civil Rights-Black Power Era*. New York: Routledge, 1-26.

Morsman, Amy. (2010). *The Big House After Slavery: Virginia Plantation Families and their Postbellum Domestic Experiment*. Excerpts.

Ralph, James. (2006). "Assessing the Chicago Freedom Movement," *Poverty & Race*, May/June, 1-2, 7.

Ransby, Barbara. (1994). "Ella Josephine Baker" in Mari Jo Buhle et al., ed, *The American Radical*, New York: Routledge, 287-296.

Course Schedule:

CLASS ONE: NOVEMBER 2, 2012 ~ Rokeby Museum, Ferrisburgh

Topic: "Historiography: How Our Views of the Revolution Have Changed Over Time" by Jacqueline B. Carr, PhD, University of Vermont

Reading due day of class: Carr and Oxford Companion

Assignment – due November 16th: A 6-8 page paper using the readings, lecture, and discussion: How did people and significant events from the eras under study create our democratic principles of freedom, justice, and equality? How have those concepts changed over time? What has stayed the same over time? How are we still grappling with those same issues today?

CLASS TWO: FEBRUARY 8, 2013 ~ Memorial Lounge, UVM, Burlington

Topic: "The Effects of Reconstruction on American Life"

by Amy F. Morsman, PhD, Middlebury College

Reading due day of class: Morsman

Assignment – due Feb 22nd: A 6-8 page paper using the readings, lecture, and discussion: How did people and significant events from this era affect perceptions of our democratic principles of freedom, justice, and equality? How have those concepts changed over time? What has stayed the same over time? How are we still grappling with those same issues today?

CLASS THREE: MAY 28, 2013 ~ Rokeby Museum, Ferrisburgh

Topic: "The Civil Rights Revolution"

by Jim Ralph, PhD, Middlebury College

Reading day of class: Carson, Joseph, Ralph, and Ransby

Assignment – due May 30th: 6–8 page paper using the readings, lecture, and discussion: Assignment due Feb 22nd: A 6–8 page paper using the readings, lecture, and discussion: How did people and significant events from this era affect perceptions of our democratic principles of freedom, justice, and equality? How have those concepts changed over time? What has stayed the same over time? How are we still grappling with those same issues today?

Course Requirements:

Active participation All Seminars
40%

We expect grad students to be leaders in each seminar, asking questions / clarifying issues.

Review of readings Uses goodreads.com to review & discuss with colleagues
20%

This must be done before each seminar, and you must comment on each participant’s review prior to the seminar.

Papers Always on time; meets criteria in the SMC rubric (below)
40%

ST MICHAEL’S ADAPTED RUBRIC FOR ACADEMIC WRITING

	Task Compliance	Topic Development	Organization	Vocabulary	Discourse Control	Sentence structure	Mechanics
12 – 10.8	Clearly shows ability to: 1. model how historians and other social scientists view, analyze, and interpret the world. 2. use varied points of view to interpret historical events. 3. use multiple perspectives to interpret turning	full and rich development (focus, relevance, explanations, support); shows sophistication in fluency of expression.	organization fully appropriate and effective for topic (point of view, unity, paragraphing); very strong introduction & conclusion, thesis statement, topic	broad and fluent range of vocabulary; elaboration and detail achieved through appropriate word choices; correct use	full control (logical coherence) and excellent use of cohesive devices (key words, pronouns, references, transitions, etc.); presentation of ideas	full range of sentence patterns (simple, compound, complex), effectively used; error-free sentence-	Correct form for text type (e.g. Memo)-- headings, indentation; correct citations; spelling, capitalization, and

Ch. Bauer-Ramazani; adapted from MELAB (L. Hamp-Lyons, 199

9.5 – 8.4	May address a part of the writing assignment, but generally writes about the topic and does not address the assignment directly. Obviously digresses throughout the writing.	development of content adequate, but lacks clearly stated positions or supporting information; fluency of expression may be halting or awkward.	organization controlled but limited; some paragraphing problems; adequate introduction & conclusion; limited thesis statement & use of topic sentences.	adequate range (word choice); no precise use of subtle meanings displayed; vocabulary sometimes used inappropriately; often incorrect use of word forms.	generally adequately connected; presentation of ideas generally clear and coherent; cohesive devices could be used more often and more effectively.	sentence patterns most often successfully used; several grammatical errors on the sentence level.	occasional errors in spelling, form, indentations, capitalization, punctuation, and citation; sometimes distracting.
8.3 – 7.2	May write within the topic, but no evidence of addressing the writing assignment itself.	development of content restricted; may be incomplete or unclear; lack of fluency in expression.	some organization apparent, but poorly controlled; introduction & conclusion, thesis statement, topic sentences may be missing or incomplete.	narrow range (word choice); many word form errors; vocabulary often used inappropriately; only basic and elementary meanings are conveyed.	connections awkward; may be missing; lack of logical sequencing of ideas.	simple and complex sentences attempted but often unsuccessful; grammatical errors distract from meaning.	Spelling, form, indentations, capitalization, punctuation, and citation errors are frequent and distracting.
7.1 – 6	Does not address the writing assignment. Off-topic throughout the writing.	simplistic statement of content; often copied from sources or lists of information.	minimal attempt at paragraphing, often unsuccessful; strings of sentences; no introduction or conclusion, thesis statement, topic sentences.	simple vocabulary, often inappropriately used; no control of word forms; sometimes indecipherable.	connections not present or unsuccessful; presentation of ideas unclear and confusing.	attempts at simple sentences often not successful; many grammatical errors.	Spelling, form, indentations, capitalization, punctuation, and citation errors throughout.

NAME: _____

Calculation of score (in %): Total points / 84

ASSIGNMENT: _____

SCORE: _____

DRAFT #: _____

GRADE: _____

Michael's College Policies & Code of Conduct: [http://www.smcvt.edu/
sharedmedia/Documents/ResLife/
2010-2011StudentHandbookandCodeofConductrev.pdf](http://www.smcvt.edu/sharedmedia/Documents/ResLife/2010-2011StudentHandbookandCodeofConductrev.pdf)