

## HIS3942 History Practicum: Slavery in the British Atlantic World

Professor Matthew Blake Strickland  
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### **Class Time & Location**

MWF Period 4 (10:40 – 11:30)  
FLI 115

### **Office Hours**

MW 8:30 – 9:30 (or by  
appointment)  
FLI 020

### **Course Description**

This practicum serves a few purposes. First, this will be your introduction to the field of history and to the department at UF. Second, you will explore the craft of history and understand how and why historians approach historical sources and topics. Third, this course will use the topic of slavery in the British Atlantic as a basis for understanding the study of the field. You will better understand the main themes of the topic as well as how to analyze historical trends.



What is history? What do historians do? How do we understand the past? Generally, historians use primary sources to reconstruct an understanding of the past. While grasping some aspects of history can be simple or straightforward, the practice of researching, analyzing, and writing about historical concepts is more complex. This course will provide an introduction to these advanced skills in the discipline. These are skills that will help you as you complete your major studies at UF and beyond after graduation.

Atlantic slavery holds a unique place in world history. Historians have distinguished the chattel slavery of this region with other forms of forced labor found around the globe. This class will focus on the enslavement, transport, and labor of African people in the Anglo-speaking Atlantic region. In particular, we will examine the Middle Passage, the rise of plantation systems, and the culture and daily lives of enslaved people. Comparisons will be made between the British Atlantic and other Atlantic Empires. Additionally, we will compare the forced labor found in the Atlantic region to other forms of forced labor as it existed in particular times and places in world history.

### **Course Objectives**

With this course, students will:

1. Understand how and why Britain turned toward African slavery.
2. Understand the way African people were enslaved and transported to the Americas.
3. Examine the lived experiences of enslaved people in Anglo-American colonies.
4. Analyze the pro- and anti-slavery arguments of people in the British Empire.
5. Practice the skills of a historian in analyzing and discussing primary and secondary sources.
6. Make concise arguments in both written and oral form.
7. Think critically and analytically regarding historical people, events, themes, and documents.

**Required Texts**

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (10<sup>th</sup> Edition)

James Walvin, *Black Ivory: Slavery in the British Empire* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)

Rafe Blaufarb, *Inhuman Traffick: The International Struggle Against the International Slave Trade: A Graphic History*

Other required readings are available on Canvas. They are also noted in the course schedule attached to this syllabus.

**Grading Scale and Assignment Summary**

Participation	10%
Midterm Exam	10%
(8) Short Assignments	40%
Research Prospectus	25%
Final Exam	15%

Grade Proportion	Grade Scale	Grade Value
Participation: 100 points (10%)	940-1,000 = A	A = 4.0
Midterm Exam: 100 points (10%)	900-939 = A-	A- = 3.67
Short Assignments: 400 points (40%)	870-899 = B+	B+ = 3.33
Research Prospectus: 200 points (20%)	840-869 = B	B = 3.00
Final Exam: 150 points (15%)	800-839 = B-	B- = 2.67
	770-799 = C+	C+ = 2.33
	740-769 = C	C = 2.00
<b>Total: 1,000 points (100%)</b>	700-739 = C-	C- = 1.67
	670-699 = D+	D+ = 1.33
	640-669 = D	D = 1.00
	600-639 = D-	D- = 0.67
	0-599 = E	E = 0.00

Only course grades of C or better will satisfy Gordon Rule, general education, and college basic distribution credit.

**Mandatory Meetings:** You are required to meet with me during office hours twice during the semester. The first meeting must take place within the first four weeks of the semester while the second meeting must take place within the last four weeks. These meetings serve two purposes: 1) they allow me to get to know you and you to get to know me, and 2) these are opportunities for students to get help or insight before major assignments are due. Both should be short check-ins (5-10 minutes). While attending these meetings will not be graded, a failure to complete this requirement will result in a grade deduction.

**Short Responses:** You will have eight short assignments due periodically during the semester. Altogether these assignments will be worth 45% of your grade. It is expected that they follow standard formatting. I will provide specific instructions for submitting and formatting these assignments. You will also find the due date in the course schedule attached to this syllabus.

**Research Prospectus:** You will complete a prospectus outlining a potential research project. Basically, a prospectus is an academic plan for carrying out a longer, in-depth research project. This prospectus will be 5-6 pages, must follow standard formatting, and will contain an annotated bibliography with twenty to thirty entries. A research prospectus must lay out the research questions to be addressed, how the research fits into existing historiography, and the types of sources and methodologies to be used in addressing the topic. This assignment will be worth 20% of your total grade.

**Midterm/Final Exams:** You will have a Midterm and a Final. You must bring a bluebook to sit for the exams. The purpose of these exams in this course is to help you understand how most—though not all—history exams may be structured. While you will be graded, consider these exams to be low stakes practice for what you may encounter in other courses. The exams will be a combination of identifying key terms, analyzing short quotes/excerpts, and essay questions.

\*Standard Formatting: Times New Roman; 1-inch margins on all sides; 12-point font; double-spaced; no extra indentions or line spacings beyond what is appropriate in writing mechanics.

Most assignments will be submitted as a hard copy for grading and on Canvas to be checked through Turnitin. Specific requirements will be addressed for each assignment.

### **Course Policies**

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

#### **Attendance:**

In order to ensure success in this course, it is imperative that you attend all class meetings. Attendance will be recorded at the beginning of each class. Without showing up to class, you cannot fully participate.

#### **Tardiness:**

Come to class on time. Tardiness causes unnecessary distractions for the teacher and for students attempting to engage with the course. While it may be unavoidable sometimes, no student should be late a majority of the class. I understand this is a large campus. However, you must develop a schedule that is logistically possible (i.e. that which allows you to move quickly from one place to another).

#### **Participation:**

For the purposes of this class, participation means you are **actively** contributing to the discussion. This could include probing questions, insights regarding readings, or making connections across multiple weeks in the course. All of these involve communicating to me and the rest of the class that you are prepared and engaged with the lectures and/or material.

#### **Late Work:**

All assignments should be turned in by the due date. The instructor may accept late work for a ten-point deduction for every day the assignment is late. However, it is not guaranteed that the instructor will accept late work. It is the student's responsibility to communicate problems or concerns with the instructor.

#### Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism constitutes intellectual theft and academic dishonesty. It is the failure to properly cite and give credit when you use the ideas, words, phrases, or arguments of other people in your writing assignments. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." For more information regarding the Honor Code, see: <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honorcode/>

#### Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

#### Course Evaluation:

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open.

#### Objectivity and Classroom Respect:

People learn best when they are encouraged to ask questions and express their diverse opinions on course content which may include images, texts, data, or theories from many fields. This is especially true in courses that deal with provocative or contemporary issues. UF offers many such courses, in which students encounter concepts of race, color, sex, and/or national origin. We teach these important issues because understanding them is essential for anyone who seeks to make economic, cultural, and societal contributions to today's complex world. With this in mind, we do not limit access to, or classroom discussion of, ideas and opinions-including those that some may find uncomfortable, unwelcome, disagreeable, or even offensive. In response to challenging material, students and instructors are encouraged to ask honest questions and thoughtfully engage one another's ideas. But hostility, disruptive and disrespectful behavior, and provocation for provocation's sake have no place in a classroom; reasonable people disagree reasonably. These guidelines can help instructors and students as they work together to fulfill the mission of the University of Florida, which includes the exploration of intellectual boundaries, the creation of new knowledge and the pursuit of new ideas.

## **HIS 3942 Short Assignments**

### **“Why History Is Important” short paper (due 8/29)**

Imagine you are traveling by plane. You enter a conversation with the person sitting next to you, who is very curious to know why you want to study history. This person cannot understand why you study history when so many other disciplines are faster tracks to money-making professions. In a two-page essay (standard formatting), develop an argument that history is worth the effort and can lead to a life-fulfilling profession. You need to explain to this person: 1) why history is important as a subject of study in and for itself; and 2) why teaching history is in fact a key component of any profession. A hard copy will be due in class. Come to class prepared to discuss.

### **Secondary Source Analysis I (due 9/9)**

Historiography is the history of the historical writings of an event, person, or idea. Read the four articles about the turn to African slavery. In a short paper (2-3 pages; standard formatting), compare the main arguments of these historians. How are they similar? How are they different? Why have historians come to different conclusions about why Europeans turned toward African slavery? Which historian(s) do you most agree with? You must bring a hard copy to class to be graded, and you must submit a digital copy on Canvas to be checked through Turnitin. Come to class prepared to discuss these articles and the idea of historiography.

### **Plagiarism assignment (due 9/16)**

Complete the quiz at: <https://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/exercises.cfm>

Look at the assignment at: <https://usm.maine.edu/sites/default/files/library/PlagiarismExercise.pdf>

You will write a short response (2-3 pages; standard formatting) about one of the group topics. You will find your assigned topic below based on the first letter of your last name. We will disregard the activity rules and the group aspect; this will be an individual assignment.

Group 1 – last name A – F

Group 2 – last name G – L

Group 3 – last name M – R

Group 4 – last name S – Z

### **Primary Source Analysis (due 9/26)**

You will read five primary sources about the Middle Passage. Write a short paper (2-3 pages; standard formatting) that analyzes the documents. You must put the documents into conversation with each other. By using all of these documents together, what do you learn about the slave trade? How do these documents complement each other? How do these documents contradict each other? What impact does “time period” have on understanding the content of a document? Which document(s) do you find most “reliable,” and why? You must bring a hard copy to class to be graded, and you must submit a digital copy on Canvas to be checked through Turnitin. Come to class prepared to discuss these documents and your understanding of historical evidence.

### **Secondary Source Analysis II (due 10/17)**

Read the three articles about the “Black Rice” thesis. In a short paper (2-3 pages; standard formatting), compare the main arguments of these historians. How are they similar? How are they different? Why have historians come to different conclusions about the contributions of African people to rice cultivation in the Americas? Which historian(s) do you most agree with? You must bring a hard copy to class to be graded, and you must

submit a digital copy on Canvas to be checked through Turnitin. Come to class prepared to discuss these articles and ideas of slave labor.

**Book Review (due 10/31)**

Using library resources, you must find a book about slavery in the British Atlantic. It can be broadly about this topic or it can contend with a subtopic (i.e. a specific British colony; religion; gender; biography; etc.). Your chosen book does not necessarily need to be vetted by the instructor. However, if you are unsure that your book fits the requirements, reach out and your instructor will happily provide feedback. After a book has been selected, you will write a book review that 1) examines the author's main arguments, 2) analyzes the sources used, and 3) shows how the author structures their narrative. This paper must be 4-6 pages and follow standard formatting. For help with writing book reviews, see Rampolla, ch. 3d. You must bring a hard copy to class to be graded, and you must submit a digital copy on Canvas to be checked through Turnitin.

**In-Class Quiz (on 11/14)**

After reading *Inhuman Traffick*, you will have an in-class quiz based on any combination of the discussion questions found in Part IV (183-188) of the book. I will select five questions, and you must provide a short response that addresses all aspects of each question. You may use the book, so it is expected that you will provide specific examples from the reading.

**Annotated Bibliography (due 11/30)**

You will create an annotated bibliography on slavery in the British Atlantic. Your bibliography must include twenty-five books, articles, or chapters. You should have a balanced mixture of all of these types of sources (i.e. do not give me twenty-five chapter entries from one edited volume). Each entry needs a paragraph-length annotation. You must follow proper formatting for bibliographic entries (review Rampolla ch. 3b and ch. 7). You must bring a hard copy to class to be graded, and you must submit a digital copy on Canvas to be checked through Turnitin.

## Course Schedule

\*This schedule may change.

<p>W 8/24 Course Introduction</p>	<p>- Access the syllabus on Canvas</p>
<p>F 8/26 Slavery and the British Empire: An Overview</p>	<p>- Walvin, <i>Black Ivory</i>, chs. 1-2</p>
<p>M 8/29 Why Study History?</p>	<p>- Sam Wineburg, “Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts” [Canvas] - Rampolla, ch. 1 <b>- DUE: “Why History Is Important” short paper</b></p>
<p>W 8/31 History as Academic Discipline</p>	<p>- Pojmann, “The Development of the Discipline of History” - Watch the History Department video (<a href="https://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/Mediasite/Play/0282dba0d6e44570878743e3af47def11d">https://mediasite.video.ufl.edu/Mediasite/Play/0282dba0d6e44570878743e3af47def11d</a>) - Explore the department website (<a href="https://history.ufl.edu/">https://history.ufl.edu/</a>)</p>
<p>F 9/2 Slavery, Sources, and “Reliability”</p>	<p>- Rampolla, ch. 2</p>
<p>M 9/5 Labor Day</p>	<p>No Class</p>
<p>W 9/7 Reading and Writing Strategies</p>	<p>- Rampolla, ch. 3 - Review Rampolla, ch. 2b - Patrick Rael, “How to Read a Secondary Source” (<a href="https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-secondary-source/">https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-secondary-source/</a>) - Rael, “Predatory Reading” (<a href="https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/predatory-reading/">https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/predatory-reading/</a>)</p>
<p>F 9/9 Historiography and the Turn to African Slavery</p>	<p>- Eric Williams, “Economics, Not Racism, as the Root of Slavery” [Canvas] - David Eltis, “The Cultural Roots of African Slavery” [Canvas] - David Brion Davis, “Ideas and Institutions from the Old World” [Canvas] - Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, “European and African Cultural Differences” [Canvas] <b>- DUE: Secondary Source Analysis I</b></p>
<p>M 9/12 What is Atlantic History?</p>	<p>- David Armitage, “Three Concepts of Atlantic History” [Canvas]</p>

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W 9/14 Analyzing Historical Methodologies	- Richard B. Allen, "Satisfying the 'Want for Labouring People': European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500-1850" [Canvas] - Peter A. Coclanis, "Beyond Atlantic History" [Canvas]
F 9/16 Plagiarism	- Rampolla, ch. 6 - <b>DUE: Plagiarism assignment</b>
M 9/19 Analyzing Primary Sources	- Rampolla, ch. 3c - Review Rampolla, ch. 2b - Rael, "How to Read a Primary Source" [ <a href="https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-primary-source/">https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/reading/how-to-read-a-primary-source/</a> ]
W 9/21 Writing Conventions	- Rampolla, ch. 4
F 9/23 The Middle Passage	- Walvin, chs. 3-5
M 9/26 Diverse Experiences of the Slave Trade	- "John Atkins details the British slave trade in Guinea, 1735" [Canvas] - "James Penny describes the Middle Passage to Parliament, 1789" [Canvas] - "Olaudah Equiano provides an African view of enslavement, 1789" [Canvas] - "William Snelgrave on slave mutinies, 1734" [Canvas] - "The <i>Zong</i> insurance case, 1783" [Canvas] - Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, "An African's Ordeal" [Canvas] - <b>DUE: Primary Source Analysis I</b>
W 9/28 Slave Trade Database, Digital History, and Statistics	- You may bring a computer/tablet to access the Transatlantic Slave Trade Database [ <a href="http://www.slavevoyages.org">www.slavevoyages.org</a> ] - You may also explore the website before coming to class.
F 9/30 Early Slave Laws	- Justine Collins, "English Societal Laws as the Origins of the Comprehensive Slave Laws of the British West Indies" [Canvas]
M 10/3 Early Slave Laws	- Barbados Slave Law [Canvas] - Various Virginia Slave laws [Canvas] - South Carolina [Canvas]
W 10/5 The Rise of the Plantation System	- Walvin, ch. 6
F 10/7 Homecoming	No Class
M 10/10 Exam Prep	- Rampolla, ch. 3f

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W 10/12 Midterm Exam	- You will complete your Midterm Exam <b>*Bring a bluebook*</b>
F 10/14 Slave Labor	- Walvin, chs. 7-8
M 10/17 Historians Debate the Black Rice Thesis	- Peter H. Wood, "Black Labor – White Rice" [Canvas] - Judith Carney, "The African Roots of American Rice [Canvas] - David Eltis, Philip Morgan, and David Richardson, "Problems with the 'Black Rice' Thesis" [Canvas] <b>- DUE: Secondary Source Analysis II</b>
W 10/19 Using Library Databases	- Rampolla, ch. 5
F 10/21 Women	- Walvin, chs. 9-10
M 10/24 Slave Life: Religion	- Walvin, chs. 11-12 - Sylvia R. Frey and Betty Wood, "The Americas: The Survival of African Religions" [Canvas]
W 10/26 Slave Life: Community	- Walvin, chs. 13-14
F 10/28 Racial Distinctions	- Gad Heuman, "The Free Coloreds in Jamaican Slave Society" [Canvas]
M 10/31 Everyday Resistance	- Walvin, chs. 15-17 <b>- DUE: Book Review</b>
W 11/2 Slave Rebellion	
F 11/4 Maroon Societies	- Gad Heuman, "Runaway Slaves in Nineteenth-Century Barbados" [Canvas] - Richard Price, "Maroons and Their Communities" [Canvas]
M 11/7 Abolition	- Rafe Blaufarb, <i>Inhuman Traffick</i> , Preface and Part I
W 11/9 Africans and Abolition	- Alonso de Sandoval, "Questioning Slavery's Morality" [Canvas] - Adrian Hastings, "Black Abolitionists" [Canvas] - Osei Bonsu and Eyo Honesty II, "African Opponents of Abolition" [Canvas] - Michael Craton, "Slave Revolts and the End of Slavery" [Canvas]

F 11/11 Veterans Day	No Class
M 11/14 In-Class Quiz: <i>Inhuman Traffick</i>	- Blaufarb, Part II-IV <b>You will complete an in-class quiz.</b>
W 11/16 In-Class Discussion: <i>Inhuman Traffick</i>	We will have a discussion about <i>Inhuman Traffick</i> .
F 11/18 Emancipation	- Walvin, ch. 18
M 11/21	
W 11/23 Thanksgiving Break	No Class
F 11/25 Thanksgiving Break	No Class
M 11/28 Library Day	Use today to complete your annotated bibliography in the library.
W 11/30	- DUE: Annotated Bibliography
F 12/2 Course Conclusion	- Walvin, chs. 19-20 - Bring a computer, tablet, phone, etc. to class to complete the course evaluation.
M 12/5 Work Day	No Class Use this day to complete your research prospectus.
W 12/7 Prospectus Due	No class - Your final research prospectus is due in my office by noon.
W 12/14 Final Exam 3:00 – 5:00 pm	- You will complete your Final Exam. <b>*Bring a bluebook*</b>