

HIS 3942: History Practicum: The Southern Past

Spring 2026

MWF Period 5 (11:45-12:35)

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 9– 11:30 (KF 231)

Office Hours: Fridays 10 – 11:30 (Location TBA)

Course Description

This course explores how the South has reckoned (or failed to reckon) with its complicated, often tragic past. In museums, historic sites, monuments, classrooms, novels, music, and movies, Southerners have wrestled with this past. This course uses the study of historical memory as a vehicle to explore the techniques and methods of historical research and writing.

Required Books

Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (Boston: St. Martins, 2021). – Any recent edition would suffice.

Course Objectives

- engage with the historical memory in and of the American South
- identify and evaluate primary and secondary sources
- understand history as an ongoing conversation
- explore the University of Florida's extensive resources for historical research
- engage with others in discussion, debate, and other aspects of the historical profession
- design a viable research paper
- communicate and write more effectively

Assignments

Primary Source Analysis	5%
Colfax Massacre Essay	5%
Secondary Source Analysis	5%
Silent Sam Essay	10%
Public History Evaluation	5%
Topic Proposal	5%
Secondary Source Bibliography	5%
Historiography	5%
Primary Source Bibliography	5%
Sources and Methods	5%
Research Presentation	5%
Prospectus	25%
Participation	20%

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#).

PART I: STREAMS OF SOUTHERN MEMORY

WEEK 1: Memory and History in the South

Note that the schedule may change to reflect the needs of the students and the professor, and to reflect the cancellation of classes due to weather and other unforeseen circumstances.

January 12

- Complete Southern Culture questionnaire
- Watch *Monumental Crossroads: The Fight for Southern Heritage* (dir. Tim van den Hoff, 2018). Available via UF Libraries website.

January 14

- W. Fitzhugh Brundage, “History and Memory in the American South,” in *History, Memory, and Public Life*, ed. Anna Maerker, Simon Sleight and Adam Sutcliffe (New York: Routledge, 2018), 251-273
- Caroline Janney, “The Lost Cause,” <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/entries/lost-cause-the/>
- Malinda Maynor Lowery, “The Original Southerners: American Indians, the Civil War, and Confederate Memory,” *Southern Cultures* 25 (2019): 16-35.

January 16

- Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, chapter 1
- Samuel Wineburg, “Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts,” *Kappanmagazine.org* 92, no. 4 (Dec 2010/Dec 2011): 81-94.
- *UDC Catechism for Children* (1904): <https://encyclopediavirginia.org/primary-documents/u-d-c-catechism-for-children-1904/>
- Nikki Haley Speech on Confederate Flag (2015)
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/06/22/us/Transcript-Gov-Nikki-R-Haley-of-South-Carolina-Addresses-Removing-the-Confederate-Battle-Flag.html>

WEEK 2: Historians Toolkit

January 19 – NO CLASS -- MLK Day

January 21

- **Primary Source Analysis**
- Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, chapter 2
- Patrick Rael, How To Read a Secondary Source <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/how-to-read-a-secondary-source/>
- Patrick Rael, Predatory Reading <https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/predatory-reading/>

January 23

- Meet outside Library West at the Alligator statue

PART 2: SITES OF SOUTHERN MEMORY

WEEK 3: Monuments

January 26

- Karen L. Cox, *No Common Ground: Confederate Monuments and the Ongoing Fight for Racial Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 1-89.

January 28

- Karen L. Cox, *No Common Ground: Confederate Monuments and the Ongoing Fight for Racial Justice* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2021), 90-174.

January 30

- Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, chapters 3 & 7
- “From the Editor’s Desk: The Perils of Peer Review,” *American Historical Review* 123 (2018): xiv-xvii.
- *Chicago Manual of Style*, chapter 14 <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org.eu1.proxy.openathens.net/book/ed18/frontmatter/toc.html>

WEEK 4: Plantations

February 2

- **Colfax Massacre Essay**
- A.B. Wilkinson, “Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello,” *American Quarterly* 71 (2019): 247-264.
- Tiya Miles, “‘Showplace of the Cherokee Nation?’ Race and the Making of the Making of a Southern House Museum,” *Public Historian* 33 (2011): 11-34.

February 4

- “Our Job is to Show Them Why: Environmental Justice and Energy History at Whitney Plantation,” *Parks Stewardship Forum* 41 (2025): 494-501.
- Whitney Nell Stewart, “Why Descendants are Returning to the Plantations Where Their Ancestors Were Enslaved,” *Smithsonian* <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/why-descendants-are-returning-to-the-plantations-where-their-ancestors-were-enslaved-180984671/?no-cache>
- Joseph McGill, “Doing History,” *History News* 74 (2019): 42-46.
- Michael T. Luongo, “Despite Everything, People Still Have Weddings at ‘Plantation’ Sites,” *New York Times* 17 October 2020 <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/10/17/style/despite-everything-people-still-have-weddings-at-plantation-sites.html>

February 6

- **Secondary Source analysis**

WEEK 5: Museums

February 9

- Paul Gardullo and Lonnie Bunch, “Making a Way Out of No Way: The National Museum of African American History and Culture,” *History Workshop Journal* 84 (2017): 249-256.
- Andrew Davenport, “A New Civil War Museum Speaks Truths in the Former Capital of the Confederacy,” *Smithsonian* (2019): <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/civil-war-museum-speaks-truths-former-capital-of-confederacy-180972085/>
- Tiya Miles, “Review of the National Museum of African American History and Culture,” *Public Historian* 39 (2017): 82-86.

February 11

- Bernard J. Armada, “Memorial Agon: An Interpretative Tour of the National Civil Rights Museum,” *Southern Communication Journal* 63 (1998): 235-243.
- Blair L.M. Kelley, “Review of the International Civil Rights Center and Museum,” *Journal of American History* 97 (2010): 752-756.
- Noelle Trent, “The National Memorial for Peace and Justice,” *Public Historian* 41 (2019): 133-137.

February 13

- James Oliver Horton, “Presenting Slavery: The Perils of Telling American’s Racial Story,” *Public Historian* 21 (1999): 19-39.
- Christy Coleman Matthews, “Twenty Years Interpreting African American History: A Colonial Williamsburg Revolution,” *History News* 54 (1999): 6-11.

WEEK 6: Tourism

February 16

- Blain Roberts and Ethan J. Kytle, “Looking the Thing in the Face: Slavery, Race, and the Commemorative Landscape of Charleston, South Carolina, 1865-2010,” *Journal of Southern History* 78 (2012): 639-687.
- Stephanie E. Yuhl, “Hidden in Plain: Centering the Domestic Slave Trade in American Public History,” *Journal of Southern History* 79 (2013): 593-624.

February 18

- **Public History Review**
- Visit to Special Collections

February 20

- J. Mark Souther, “The Disneyfication of New Orleans: The French Quarter as Façade in a Divided City,” *Journal of American History* 94 (2007): 804-811.
- Andrew Denson, “Remembering Cherokee Removal in Civil Rights Era Georgia,” *Southern Cultures* 14 (2008): 85-101.
- Stephen A. King and Roger Davis Gatchet, “Marking the Past: Civil Rights Tourism and the Mississippi Freedom Trail,” *Southern Communication Journal* 83 (2018): 103-118.

WEEK 7: Universities

February 23

- James T. Campbell, Leslie Harris, and Alfred L. Brophy, *Slavery and the University: History and Legacies* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2019), 10-30 (“Introduction”)
- Jennifer Oast, “Forgotten No Longer: Universities and Slavery in Twenty-First-Century Scholarship and Memory,” *Journal of the Civil War Era* 13 (2023): 369-391.
- Kelley Fanto Deetz, “Finding Dignity in a Landscape of Fear: Enslaved Women and Girls at the University of Virginia,” *Slavery & Abolition* 39 (2018): 251-266.

February 25

- Hilary Green, “The Burden of the University of Alabama’s Hallowed Grounds,” *Public Historian* 42 (2020): 28-40.
- Jessica Blake, “UVA Students Resume Campus History Tours Without Officials’ Approval,” *Inside Higher Ed*, 10 December 2024: <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/students/free-speech/2024/12/10/uva-students-resume-history-tours-without-officials-approval>
- Women’s History and Gender Equality, A UF Campus Walking Tour. March 26, 2025.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=liguoe13Vfo>

February 27

- Adam H. Domby, *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrication, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020), 1-60.
- David Silkenat, “‘A Company of Gentlemen’: Confederate Veterans and Southern Universities,” *American Nineteenth Century History* 21 (2020): 237-253.

WEEK 8 Working with Primary Sources

This week we will be working in our Writing Groups to assess the Silent Sam documents in preparation for the Silent Sam essay.

March 2: Working with WG

March 4: Working with WG

March 6: Working with WG

PART III – Researching and Writing Southern Memory

WEEK 9

March 9

- **Silent Sam Essay**
- Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, chapters 4 & 5

March 11

- Oral History visit

March 13

- Email your draft Topic Proposal to WG.

SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10

March 23

- **Topic Proposal**
- Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, chapter 6
- Bill Wasik, “A.I. Is Poised to Rewrite History. Literally,” *New York Times*, 16 June 2025.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/06/16/magazine/ai-history-historians-scholarship.html>

March 25

- Send draft Annotated Secondary Source Bibliography to WG
- Nina Silber, “Reunion and Reconciliation, Reviewed and Reconsidered,” *Journal of American History* (2016): 59-83.

March 27

- **Annotated Secondary Source Bibliography**
- Send draft Historiography to WG

WEEK 11

March 30

- **Historiography**

April 1

- Draft Annotated Primary Source Bibliography to WG

April 3

- **Annotated Primary Source Bibliography**
- Draft Sources and Methods to WG

WEEK 12: Student Conferences

This week, in lieu of regular class meetings, we will hold individual student conferences to discuss the Prospectus.

April 6 Student Conferences. Submit **Sources and Methods**.

April 8 Student Conferences

April 10 Student Conferences

Week 13: Student Presentations

April 13 Student Presentations

April 15 Student Presentations

April 17 Student Presentations

Week 14

April 20 Draft Prospectus to WG; Student Presentations

April 22 Skills Exam; Student Presentations. Last Day of Classes

Prospectus due at 11am on April 27.

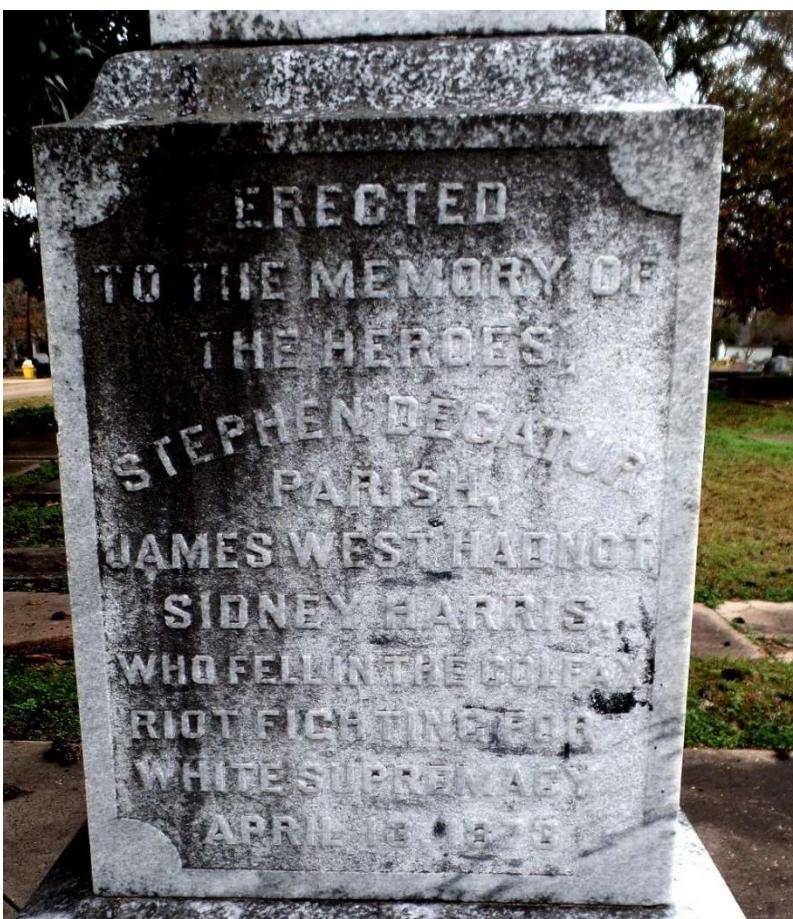
Southern Past Assignments

Primary Source Analysis

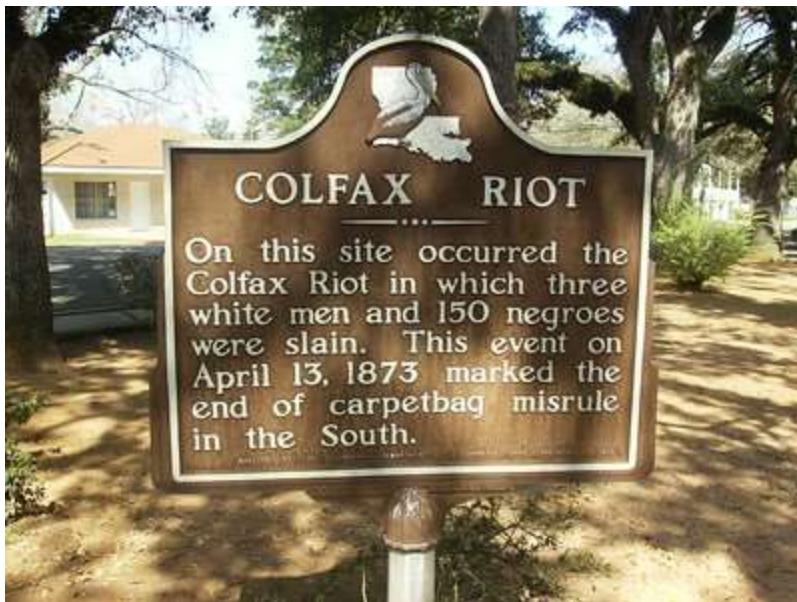
- Read Strom Thurmond, “Address of Senator Strom Thurmond (D-SC) at the Confederate Museum at Front Royal, Virginia, June 28, 1959,” Strom Thurmond Collection, Clemson University Library <https://open.clemson.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2884&context=strom>
- Write a 500-word analysis of Thurmond’s speech, assessing the speech’s context, content, and subtext. Please cite any second sources.

Colfax Massacre Essay

- Read LeeAnn Keith, “The Colfax Massacre,” <https://64parishes.org/entry/colfax-massacre-adaptation>
- Three monuments have been erected to the events in Colfax in 1873:
 - An obelisk (1921): with an inscription: “ERECTED TO THE MEMORY OF THE HEROES, STEPHEN DECATUR PARISH, JAMES WEST HADNOT, SIDNEY HARRIS, WHO FELL IN THE COLFAX RIOT FIGHTING FOR WHITE SUPREMACY, APRIL 13, 1873”



- A historical marker (1950, removed 2021): “COLFAX RIOT: On this site occurred the Colfax Riot in which three white men and 150 negroes were slain. This event on April 13, 1873 marked the end of carpetbag misrule in the South.”



- A monument (2023): described here: <https://www.colfaxmemorial.org/>
- In 500 words, assess each of the three monuments, providing context about their erection (and removal) and a close reading of the text of the monuments. What do these monuments reveal about the changing public sentiment about the events at Colfax?

Secondary Source Analysis

- Read Steven E. Sodergren, “The Great Weight of Responsibility”: The Struggle over History and Memory in *Confederate Veteran Magazine*,” *Southern Cultures* 19 (2013): 25-45.
- In 500 words, assess Sodergren’s argument. Your assessment should include:
 - A brief summary of Sodergren’s thesis.
 - An assessment of how Sodergren relates to the earlier scholarship.
 - An assessment of Sodergren’s use of primary sources.
 - An assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of Sodergren’s argument.
 - Like all historical writing, your assessment should have an argument.

Public History Review

In approximately 500 words, assess the interpretation at one of the following sites:

- Historic Haile Homestead <https://www.hailehomestead.org/>
- Olustee Battlefield State Historic Park <https://www.floridastateparks.org/parks-and-trails/olustee-battlefield-historic-state-park>
- Micanopy Historical Society Museum <https://www.micanopyhistoricalsociety.com/>
- Matheson History Museum <https://mathesonmuseum.org/>

The review should briefly summarize the context of the exhibit and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the interpretation. Like all historical writing, it should have an argument.

NOTE: Some of these sites have a nominal entry fee. Please let me know if transportation or costs are an issue. Carpooling is encouraged.

Silent Sam Essay

This week we will examining the documents connected with the Confederate Monument at the University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill, commonly called Silent Sam:

<https://exhibits.lib.unc.edu/exhibits/show/silent-sam/archives>

Using these documents, we will address three questions:

- Who was responsible for the Silent Sam memorial?
- What happened at the dedication?
- How have attitudes towards the monument changed over time?

You will work with your Writing Group to go through the documents.

Based on the close reading of the sources, you will write a 1000-word essay that addresses the three questions. The essay should include citations to the primary sources.

Prospectus

The capstone for this course is a Prospectus – a research proposal for an article length (roughly 10,000 words) essay. Writing Prospectuses are an important part of academic history; historians write similar proposals at the start of their doctoral dissertation research, or when they apply for research grants, or when they make book proposals to a publisher.

The Prospectus is made up of six components. You will draft each of these separately before compiling and revising them:

- topic proposal
- historiography
- sources and methods
- annotated primary source bibliography
- annotated secondary source bibliography

(Note that the final prospectus will have the structure above, but you will not write them in that order.)

The Prospectus should persuasively argue for the significance, originality, and viability of the research project.

Topic Proposal

In no more than 1,000 words, the Topic Proposal will introduce the topic, explain its significance, and provide a preliminary argument. Topic Proposals often (but not always) begin with a hook.

Historiography

In no more than 500 words, the Historiography should make an argument about the existing scholarship on the topic and how your project builds on that foundation.

Sources and Methods

In no more than 500 words, the Sources and Methods section should explain which primary sources will serve as the essay's foundation and how you intend to use them.

Annotated Primary Source Bibliography

In the Annotated Primary Source Bibliography, you will list (at least) three primary sources, using *Chicago Manual of Style* formatting and provide a two or three sentence summary of their contents and their utility to your project. Manuscript and oral history sources are encouraged, as appropriate.

Annotated Secondary Source Bibliography

In the Annotated Secondary Source Bibliography, you will list (at least) five secondary sources, using *Chicago Manual of Style* formatting and provide a two or three sentence summary of their argument and their utility to your project. At least one secondary source should be from a scholarly journal.

Presentation

All students will make a five-minute presentation on their research project, followed by 5 minutes of Q&A. No PowerPoint is required.

Participation

Students are expected to come to class having done the assigned reading and prepared to engage in a vigorous discussion on their contents. Quality of your contributions is as important as their quantity. Please visit office hours if you feel that your contributions in class do not reflect your engagement with the course materials.

Further Reading

Blair, William A. *Cities of the Dead: Contesting the Memory of the Civil War in the South, 1865-1914*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004.

Blight, David W. *Race and Reunion: The Civil War in American Memory*. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2001.

Bodnar, John E. *Remaking America: Public Memory, Commemoration, and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Brown, Thomas J. *The Public Art of Civil War Commemoration: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004.

Brown, Thomas J. *Civil War Canon: Sites of Confederate Memory in South Carolina*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015.

Brundage, W. Fitzhugh, ed., *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000.

Brundage, W. Fitzhugh. *The Southern Past: A Clash of Race and Memory*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2005.

Clinton, Catherine et al. *Confederate Statues and Memorialization*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2019.

Cook, Robert J. *Troubled Commemoration: The American Civil War Centennial, 1961-1965*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007.

Cox, Karen L. *Dixie's Daughters: The United Daughters of the Confederacy and the Preservation of Confederate Culture*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2003.

Cox, Karen L. *Dreaming of Dixie: How the South Was Created in American Popular Culture*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011.

Domby, Adam H. *The False Cause: Fraud, Fabrications, and White Supremacy in Confederate Memory*. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2020.

Foster, Gaines M. *Ghosts of the Confederacy: Defeat, the Lost Cause, and the Emergence of the New South, 1865 to 1913*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Horwitz, Tony. *Confederates in the Attic: Dispatches from the Unfinished Civil War*. New York: Vintage Books, 1999.

Janney, Caroline E. *Burying the Dead but Not the Past: Ladies' Memorial Associations and the Lost Cause*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008.

Janney, Caroline E. *Remembering the Civil War: Reunion and the Limits of Reconciliation*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016.

Kytle, Ethan J. and Blain Roberts. *Denmark Vesey's Garden: Slavery and Memory in the Cradle of the Confederacy*. New York: New Press, 2018.

Levin, Kevin. *Searching for Black Confederates: The Civil War's Most Persistent Myth*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2019.

Mills, Cynthia J. and Pamela H. Simpson. *Monuments to the Lost Cause: Women, Art, and the Landscapes of Southern Memory*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2003.

Savage, Kirk. *Standing Soldiers, Kneeling Slaves: Race, War, and Monument in Nineteenth-Century America*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997.

Wilson, Charles Reagan. *Baptized in Blood: The Religion of the Lost Cause, 1865-1920*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1980.