History 100.211  
Fall Term, 2017  
American Slavery: A Freshman Seminar

Instructor: Philip Morgan                          Meeting Room: Char Cmn 308  
Office: Gilman 370                                 Meeting Time: W, 1:30-3:50 p.m.  
Office Hours: We 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. and by appt.     Email: pmorgan@jhu.edu

Course Requirements:

This seminar explores the history of American slavery, tracing developments over time and across space, probing the impact of this iniquitous and dynamic institution on societies and individuals, and examining a variety of sources that historians use to construct their narratives. Only freshmen may enroll. Students are required to attend all seminar meetings prepared to analyze and discuss the assigned reading and research, to write brief mini-essays (approximately 300 words each) weekly on the assigned reading, and to write two papers (approximately 2,000 words each). Final grades will be determined by the quality of performance in seminar meetings and short weekly essays (34%) and in the papers (33% each).

Academic Dishonesty:

Cheating hurts our community by undermining academic integrity, creating mistrust and fostering unfair competition. The university will punish cheaters with failure on an assignment, failure in a course, permanent transcript notation and/or expulsion. Violations can include cheating on exams, plagiarism, reuse of assignments without permission, improper use of the Internet and electronic devices, unauthorized collaboration, alteration of graded assignments, forgery, falsification and lying. For more information, see the guide on “Academic Ethics for Undergraduates” and the Ethics Board web site at http://ethics.jhu.edu.

Required Texts:


[You can read the autobiographies of Douglass, Equiano, and Jacobs—along with many more—on the "North American Slave Narratives, Documenting the American South” website: http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh]

Seminar Schedule

Week 1: Sept. 6 Introduction
Goals, aims, requirements

Week 2: Sept. 13 Origins and Consequences
Davis, Inhuman Bondage, 27-76

Week 3: Sept. 20 Africa
Davis, Inhuman Bondage, 77-102
Equiano, Interesting Narrative, 31-54

Week 4: Sept. 27 Slave Trade
Sparks, Two Princes of Calabar, 1-81
Equiano, Interesting Narrative, 55-61

Week 5: Oct. 4 Brazil, The Caribbean, North America
Davis, Inhuman Bondage, 103-140

Week 6: Oct. 11 Atlantic Diaspora I
Sparks, Two Princes of Calabar, 82-147

Week 7: Oct. 18 Atlantic Diaspora II
Equiano, The Interesting Narrative, 62-236

First Paper Due: Oct. 18 1:30 p.m.

Week 8: Oct. 25 American Revolution
Davis, Inhuman Bondage, 141-156

Week 9: Nov. 1 Haitian Revolution
Davis, Inhuman Bondage, 157-174

Week 10: Nov. 8 Nineteenth-Century Slavery I
Davis, Inhuman Bondage, 175-230, 268-296

Week 11: Nov. 15 Nineteenth-Century Slavery II
Douglass, Narrative . . (whole book)

Week 12: Nov. 22 Nineteenth-Century Slavery III
Jacobs, Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl (whole book)
Week 13: Nov. 29. Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 14: Dec. 6 Conclusion
What have we learned?