

St. Francis College
Freshman Honors Seminar
Dr. Athena Devlin
T/TH 1:20-2:45 Rm 3201

Contact Information

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Office Hours

Office hours will be held on Tuesdays, 12-1pm and Thursdays from 11am-1pm and by appointment.

Welcome back! Here are some things worth repeating from the fall semester:

Mission of the Core Curriculum

This year-long seminar is part of your core curriculum. The core curriculum is the academic cornerstone of St. Francis College and affirms its mission to graduate educated, well rounded students to enter and participate in a changing and culturally diverse world. As an integrated program of studies, it focuses on developing the skills expected of a liberally educated person. It provides students with a broadly based foundation outside their areas of specialization, an understanding of how various disciplines intersect and differ, and assistance in cultivating a disposition for lifelong learning.

Goals of the Core Curriculum

1. Students will write, speak, and listen more effectively.
2. Students will understand structures and possibilities of the human experience through the study of the social sciences, fine arts, and humanities.
3. Students will understand and apply the fundamental processes, methods, and reasoning of mathematics and science.
4. Students will collect and interpret information using appropriate research technology.
5. Students will become more engaged with the Franciscan traditions of service, social justice, stewardship for the environment and personal responsibility.

Course Objective

The Freshman Honors Seminar is a year-long course. The theme of this year's Freshman Honors Cohort is "Civil War: Past and Present", in recognition of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. Each freshman in the honors program has been assigned to a seminar that will explore this theme through different lenses.

Do historical novels harm historical study? This will be one of the major questions of the spring semester as we look at four of the most influential novels about the Civil War and

Reconstruction: *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Gone with the Wind*, *Freedom Road* and *Killer Angels*. In looking at the fictional work to take up the subjects of the Civil War and Reconstruction, we will discuss the process of creating the “meaning” of the war and its aftermath, and the influence these works have had on race relations in the United States.

We will not, however, only look to fiction. Side by side we will constantly be reading and exploring primary sources from the war and the years immediately following it. We will look, for example, at actual letters from Civil War soldiers at the Brooklyn Historical Society, we will continue with Mary Chesnut’s diary and read a memoir by Louisa May Alcott on her time as a nurse for the Union army.

Some of the questions which will be explored throughout the course:

- What role has fiction about the Civil War written in the late 19th and 20th centuries played in institutionalizing our understanding of its meaning?
- How do these novels compare to looking at primary source materials?
- How can we best get at the soldier’s experience?
- How did the Civil War change the meaning of death in America?
- What role did women play during the war?
- What is Reconstruction?
- Why did it fail?
- How were racist practices institutionalized in the 20th century?
- How does the Civil War continue to impact the meaning of American nationhood?

Student Learning Outcomes

I. Student Learning Outcomes

- A. To understand and apply basic literary and analytical concepts to evaluate Civil War literature and later literature on the Civil War (and the arguments made therein).
- B. To understand and analyze the impact of Civil War novels on American society.
- C. To analyze how and why societal viewpoints on race, gender and nation changed over the course of the years of the Civil War and Reconstruction.
- D. To develop and improve oral communication skills
- E. To develop and improve writing skills

Grade

This course is a seminar. As the semester progresses, students will be expected to take the lead in classroom discussions. Assignments will include directed readings, essay response papers on topics discussed in class and oral presentations.

The final course grade will be determined on the following components:

- Class Participation: 30%
- Formal Writing Assignments: 40%
- Oral Presentations: 30%

Academic Integrity

Students who plagiarize will immediately be given a grade of zero on the assignment. In addition, a student found plagiarizing will not be eligible to receive any form of recommendation from the professor. I also reserve the right to give the student an F as a final grade for the semester.

Attendance and Lateness

As per the academic policies of St. Francis College, “students are expected to attend every class session. Students absent more than 10% of the total meetings of a course are subject to a grade of F. Additionally, students who have accrued 5 hrs of consecutive absences are reported to the Dean of Students.” Therefore, no more than 3 absences are permitted for the semester. Any absences past the three (3) allowed will mean half a letter grade off your final grade. Absence due to extended periods of illness or death in the family will only be excused when accompanied by a doctor’s note or death certificate, respectively.

Readings

We will continue to use the Course Packet from last semester, Mary Chesnut’s *Diary* and the Walt Whitman reader.

From the SFC bookstore, please buy

- The Red Badge of Courage by Stephen Crane
- Freedom Road (With new Historical Documents) by Howard Fast. ISBN-10: 1563244403

On your new ipads, please buy and download:

- The Republic of Suffering
- Hospital Sketches

Reading Schedule: The below schedule is tentative and subject to change. It is your responsibility to check Angel or get in touch with me or a classmate to get homework assignments if you are absent from class. We will be using the Course Packet in almost every class –even when you have not been assigned readings from it for homework. Thus, you must bring the Course Packet to every class meeting

Schedule Fall Semester 2012

Thursday September 6th: **Introductions**

HW: *Narrative of the Life* Douglass

Antebellum Period

Tuesday 9/11: Class: *Narrative* and Course Packet (Ar'n't I A Woman?)

HW: *Narrative*

Last day to add/drop

Thursday 9/13: Class: *Narrative* and Whitman ("Song of Myself")

HW: Finish *Narrative*

Monday, 11/17: Activity Hour: Lecture on the Civil War by Micael Pierson. This is a mandatory event. You may not miss this!

Tuesday 9/18: Class: *Narrative* & Course Packet (Douglass' Fourth of July Speech)

HW: Fugitive Slave Act (Course Packet). Begin *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

Thursday 9/20: **First short paper due. Topic: Douglass and notions of Manhood.**

Class: *UTC* & Course Packet (Slave Act and Douglass speech)

HW: *UTC*

Tuesday 9/24 Class: *UTC*

HW: *UTC*

Thursday 9/27 Class: *UTC* and Whitman book

HW: *UTC*

Sunday, 9/29: Freshman Welcome at Governor's Island

Tuesday 10/2: Class: *UTC* and Course Packet: Pauper Slavery, etc. by Ruffin and "A Scriptural View of Slavery" by Stringfellow

HW: *UTC*

Thursday 10/4: *UTC* and "The Hireling and the Slave" (Course Packet)

HW: *UTC*

Tuesday 10/9: *UTC* and "A Georgia Plantation" (Thompson piece and excerpt from Kemble diary in Course Packet)

HW: Finish *UTC*

Thursday 10/11: Final discussion of *UTC*

HW: Review of Uncle Tom's Cabin in *Southern Literary Messenger* (Course Packet)

Tuesday 10/16: **First Long Paper Due: Gender and Anti-Slavery Narratives: Douglass vs. Stowe. You may use portions of your short paper on Douglass.**

Class: Course Packet: Discuss Review of *UTC* and bring *John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry*

HW: *John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry*

Thursday 10/18: Class: *John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry*

HW: *John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry*

Tuesday 10/ 23: Class: **Oral Presentations: John Brown and Terrorism: Violence as a Means to an End, Then and Now.**

HW: Douglass: "A War for Emancipation" (Course Packet)

Thursday 10/25: Class: **Finish Oral Presentations**; Discuss Douglass and bring Whitman (Drum Taps)

HW: Excerpts from *The Soldier's Pen* (Course Packet)

War

Tuesday 10/30: Discuss *Soldier's Pen*; bring Whitman (Drum Taps)

HW: Grand Army of Black Men (Course Packet)

Thursday 11/1: Film: *Glory*

HW: *Pen* and *Grand Army* excerpts (Course Packet)

Tuesday 11/6: Discuss Film/Readings

Thursday 11/8: Finish *Glory*

HW: *Mary Chesnut Diary*

Tuesday 11/13 Class: *Diary* & Course Packet ("My Paramount Struggle")

HW: *Diary*

Thursday 11/15: *Diary* & Course Packet (The Gettysburg's Address & Emancipation Proclamation)

HW: Finish *Diary*

Tuesday 11/20: Class: Discuss *Diary* and "The Longer you keep my child" (Course Packet)

Thursday, 11/22 No Class: Thanksgiving Break

Tuesday, 11/27: **Oral Presentations: "My War Story"**. You may pick your point of view: Black soldier; White soldier; waiting family member at home; witness to the war, slave or recently freed slave, etc.

Thursday 11/29: **Oral Presentations: "My War Story"**

Monday, 12/3: Activity Hour: Honors Event. Mandatory!

Tuesday 12/4: **Finish Oral Presentations**

Thursday 12/6 Last Day of Class/Wrap Up

Final Paper Due: 12/13. Paper Topic: Write your own Slave Narrative; Set of War Poems; Diary; Abolitionist Speech, Political Speech, etc. Your Choice!

Grading Rubric: This Rubric will be used for both written and oral work.

A Range

Originality: The student develops an authentic insight which challenges the reader's thinking. It is clear from the paper that a complex and curious mind is at work.

Clarity of purpose: The thesis is clear and precise and recognized as such by the reader.

Organization: The paper is organized so as to fully and imaginatively support the thesis.

Consideration has been given to the sequencing of materials and supplies the reader with a paper that is complex, surprising, and unusual.

Support: Evidence and reasoning are in clear use in the enough so as to eliminate the question of reader's confidence in the thesis and sub-theses. It is clear that the writer is very well informed, researched, and appropriated effective evidence for the arguments. The research and reasoning is always relevant to the point being made. Through the use of telling detail, the reader is brought to experience what the writer is saying.

Use of Sources (when applicable): The student has used sources to support, extend, and inform ideas but not to substitute for the student's own development of an idea. The student has effectively combined material from a variety of sources. *This is not to say the student must use a certain number or type of sources.* The student uses quotations to capture the source's key points or turns of phrase, but does not substitute for the student's own development of an idea. The quotations, paraphrases, and citations are handled according to appropriate form.

Ethos: The student creates a "self" or "ethos" that sounds genuine, is relevant to the student's purpose, and is developing or consistent throughout the paper.

Style: Language is used with control, elegance, and imagination to serve the student's purpose.

When read aloud, it pleases the eye and ear.

Edited Written Standard English (EWSE): Except for deliberate departures, the student uses EWSE forms of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and syntax.

Presentation: The paper looks neat, crisp, and professional.

B Range

Falls short of the **A** range in one or more ways.

C Range

Originality: The student develops an obvious or unimaginative idea.

Clarity of purpose: The thesis is clear to the reader.

Organization: The paper is organized so as to competently support the thesis. Consideration has been given to the sequencing of materials but the student is not always in control and some logic becomes circular and repetitions appear.

Support: The student doesn't always use solid evidence and reasoning to convince the reader. More, detailed evidence is required.

Use of Sources (when appropriate): The student has used sources to support, extend, and inform ideas. The quotations, paraphrases, and citations are handled according to appropriate form.

Ethos: The student creates a "self" or "ethos" that sounds genuine, is relevant to the student's purpose, and is developing or consistent throughout the paper.

Style: Language is used competently, though it may be awkward at times. There are some passages or sentences which confuse the reader but none are incomprehensible.

Edited Written Standard English (EWSE): Except for deliberate departures, the student uses EWSE forms of grammar, spelling, punctuation, and syntax.

Presentation: The paper looks neat, crisp, and professional.

D - F Range

Any *one* of the following will result in a **D**, any *two* in an **F**:

Originality: The idea is obvious, cut-and-dry, trite.

Clarity of purpose: The reader cannot determine the thesis.

Organization: The organization is not clear to the reader.

Support: The organizational plan is inappropriate; it does not offer effective support or explanation of the student's ideas.

Use of Sources (when appropriate)

1. The student offers little or no effective support for the ideas.
2. The student has neglected important sources that should have been used.

3. The student has overused quoted and paraphrased material to substitute for the student's own ideas.
4. The student has used source material without acknowledgment, in which case, it is plagiarism and the paper is given an immediate F. (Other consequences of plagiarism may follow.)

Style: the language is so muddy the reader is frequently at a loss to understand what the student is trying to say.

Edited Written Standard English: The use of EWSE falls below the standard established above for a **C**.