The University of Texas at Tyler
Department of History
Summer I 2009
HIST 5379: Readings on the Age of Jackson
M-TH, 6:00 to 8:40 p.m.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will examine the major themes and subjects in United States history between 1815 and 1848. Particular attention will be paid to economic, social, and political developments that took place during the presidential administrations of Andrew Jackson. The issues of slavery and states’ rights dominated the era. The course is arranged on a topical rather than a strictly chronological basis.

PROFESSOR’S EXPECTATIONS:

Graduate courses are not meant to be professorial lectures. The class will follow an inquisitorial style which will place the burden of learning and discussion on the student. How much you learn depends largely on how much you and your classmates read and discuss. It is not easy; the reading load is heavy. Few transgressions will be worse in this class than not having an answer; and you will be put to the test weekly. Therefore, attendance is mandatory. I recognize that life often presents unexpected challenges and time constraints. Yet, if you are serious about a graduate education, you must make sacrifices. One absence will disqualify any student from receiving an overall “A” grade; two absences will disqualify a “B” grade.

It is assumed that participants in the readings course have, at the very least, a good grasp of the major events and the larger historical developments related to the Age of Jackson. If you do not, teach yourself. There are excellent studies, including Charles Sellers’s, The Market Revolution: Jacksonian America, 1815-1846 (1990), David Reynolds’s Waking Giant: America in the Age of Jackson (2008), and Daniel Howe’s What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America (2008). Even Arthur Schlesinger’s now outdated The Age of Jackson (1946) can be useful.

GRADING:

The course grade will depend on four book reviews and a class participation component. The grade breakdown is as follows:

- Book Reviews 80% (20% each)
- Class Participation 20%

Generally speaking, a grade of 90.00% corresponds to a borderline A- and 89.99% to a B+; 80.00% is the line between a B- and a C+ and so on. Grades will not be curved in this course.
SUGGESTED SURVEY TEXTS:


It is extremely important to keep up with the reading. We will discuss four monographs during the summer session. Yet for background, it would be helpful to look at some of those broader surveys.

BOOK REVIEWS:

Students will be assigned four books to read for the session. Students will write book reviews on the four assigned studies and the average of which will count for eighty (80%) of your grade. All work must be typed in Times New Roman font, double-spaced with standard one-inch margins, and be at least four-full pages in length (meaning a four-page review must take up at least four pages, not three-and-a-half, three-and-three-quarters). All technicalities of the papers, from citations to proper usage of capitalization and numbers should be in accordance with Turabian’s *Manual for Writers*. Poor spelling, grammar, and typographical errors will deduct from your grade. And, of course, it is always your responsibility to do your own work. Plagiarism will result in “F” grade for the course and recommendation of immediate dismissal from the graduate program.

Students will turn in book reviews the following dates:

- Book Review 1 (due June 15)
- Book Review 2 (due June 22)
- Book Review 3 (due June 29)
- Book Review 4 (due July 7)

A review is not simply a book report; please do not simply summarize what the book is about. In addition to discussing the major themes found in a particular study, students should also read the assigned book and determine the place of the study in the literature of the field. That means you must think about the role of that particular book and where it resides in the historiography of your specific topic. The review should not only indicate the book’s subject, but its place in historiographical debates. It should be critically analytical of the book, seeing out the positive and negative aspects of the book. And, a portion of the review should attempt to place the work in a broader historical framework of American history during the antebellum era.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation for their disabilities. I will make every reasonable accommodation to assist students with disabilities. It is the responsibility of the student to let me know of the disability for accommodation to his/her needs. If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact Ida MacDonald in the Disability Support Services office so that the appropriate arrangements may be made. In accordance with Federal law, a student requesting accommodations must provide documentation for his/her disability to the Disability Support Services counselor.
CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Twenty percent of your grade will be based on class participation. Two of the main components used in determining that grade are attendance and presentation. In regard to the former, graduate students are expected to exhibit a professional attitude toward this and all courses by attending meetings.

As for presentation, each student will be expected to have read the week’s assignment and be prepared to identify the main thesis, summarize the argument, and comment on the strengths and weaknesses of their reading for their classmates in a brief presentation. Due to time constraints, this will be closely monitored by the professor. Questions and discussion related to recommended readings are also expected.

Although students will of course vary in their conversational styles, learning to participate in seminar discussions involves social and intellectual skills that are an essential part of graduate education. These include: listening to others and learning to absorb and synthesize their remarks; learning to respond constructively and analytically to others’ ideas; learning to develop and articulate positions of one’s own; responding to criticism and learning to modify or discard an argument as one comes to see another, more satisfactory one. Weekly discussions, then, should serve as course workshops, where we all come together to exchange ideas about the various topics under study, to sharpen our analytical tools, and to work toward new understandings and hypotheses, more satisfying and penetrating than those you might have had before.

As the professor, I will provide contexts for the topics under study and often offer interpretations of my own for you to consider (though not to swallow whole) and I will keep track of who shares in discussion, who attempts to dominate discussion, and who says next to nothing. There is no reward for getting by doing as little as possible, or in letting others do your work for you.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Finally, if you find yourself having difficulty during the summer session, do not wait until the last minute to discuss a problem with me. I can usually assist you with most problems, but only if given adequate time.

POLICY STATEMENT:

This syllabus is subject to change at the professor’s discretion. All changes will be provided verbally in class. It is understood that remaining in this course (not withdrawing) constitutes an agreement to abide by the professor’s terms as outlined in this syllabus and an acceptance of the requirements outlined in this document.
Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings:

Week 1  (June 8)  
**Introduction, Course Policies, and Selection of Assigned Readings**

Week 2  (June 15)  **Discussion Topic: Politics and its Culture**

**Themes:** Discussion of the origins and consistencies in party politics. Students will analyze the rise of the common man approach to the political system and the added intensity and staying power to national politics. The nation’s rapid development reinvigorated the debate over authority of the central government and gave rise the Second Party system which encompasses significant ideological shifts to political ideology.

**Assigned Reading(s):**

Week 3  (June 22)  **Discussion Topic: Slavery**

**Themes:** The Age of Jackson witnessed a renewed commitment to human bondage. As Americans pondered the fate of the institution, the subject of slavery was coupled with the concepts of capitalism and states’ rights.

**Assigned Reading(s):**

Week 4  (June 29)  **Discussion Topic: Society and Reform**

**Themes:** In the Age of Jackson, Americans sought to improve their lives in the face of an ever-changing technological and cultural world. Consequently, abolitionism, prison reform, and the women’s rights movement, to name a few, rose to promise during the antebellum period.

**Assigned Reading(s):**

Week 5  (July 7)  **Discussion Topic: Expansionism in the Age of Jackson**

**Themes:** During the Age of Jackson, the United States was home to many peoples in motion as Americans eagerly moved from one region to another. While the spirit of progress is traditionally celebrated, recent studies have pondered the question of motives and the impact of expansionism on the native populations displaced by the concept of Manifest Destiny.

**Assigned Reading(s):**
I. Politics & its Culture

A. Jackson and His Times
   - Donald Cole, *The Presidency of Andrew Jackson* [E382.C69]
   - Arthur Schlesinger, *The Age of Jackson* [E381.S38]
   - Charles Sellers, *The Market Revolution* [HC105.S38]

B. Politics
   - Donald Cole, *Martin Van Buren and the American Political System* [E387.C65]
   - John F. Marszalek, *The Petticoat Affair* [E381.M33]
   - Elizabeth Varon, *Disunion: The Coming of the American Civil War, 1789-1860* [E302.1.V37]
   - Major Wilson, *The Presidency of Martin Van Buren* [E387.W54]

C. Political Culture
   - Stephanie McCurry, *Masters of Small Worlds: Yeoman Households, Gender, and the Political Culture of the Carolina Low Countries* [Mendoza]
   - William G. Shade, *Banks or No Banks: The Money Issue in Western Politics, 1832-1865* [HG2609.S33]
   - Joel H. Silbey, *Political Ideology and Voting Behavior in the Age of Jackson* [JK2260.S49]
II. Slavery

A. Traditional Works & Historiography
   - Herbert Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom* [E185.86.G77]
   - Kenneth Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Antebellum South* [E441.S8]
   - David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* [HT871.D3]

B. Slavery and Racial Views
   - James Brooks, *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* [F790.A1B76]
   - Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* [E449.D525]
   - Elizabeth, Fox-Genovese, *The Mind of the Master Class: History and Faith in the Southern Slaveholders’ Worldview* [F213.F69]
   - James Horton, *Slavery and the Making of America* [E441.H73]
   - Charles Joyner, *Down by the Riverside: A South Carolina Slave Community* [F279.A43J69]
   - Peter Kolchin, *American Slavery, 1619-1877* [E441.K64]
   - Peter Kolchin, *Unfree Labor: American Slavery and Russian Serfdom* [HD4861.K65]
   - Julia Smith, *Slavery and the Rice Culture in Low Country in Georgia* [E445.G3S65]
   - Deborah White, *Ar’n’t I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South* [E443.W58]
   - Gavin Wright, *Slavery and American Economic Development* [E441.W83]

C. Resistance to Slavery
   - Michael Bennett, *Democratic Discourses: The Radical Abolition Movement and Antebellum American Literature* [PS217.S55 B46]
III. Society and Reform

A. Antislavery/Abolitionism
- Bernard A. Weisberger, *Abolitionism: Disrupter of the Democratic System or Agent of Progress?* [E449.W42]

B. Women
- Catherine Allgor, *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government* [HQ1236.5.U6A45]
- Ellen Carol DuBois, *Woman Suffrage and Women’s Rights* [Ebook]
- John Mack Faragher, *Women and Men on the Overland Trail* [HQ553.F37]
- Jean E. Friedman, *The Enclosed Garden: Women and Community in the Evangelical South, 1830-1900* [HQ1438.A135F75]
- Lori Ginzberg, *Women in Antebellum Reform* [HQ1418.G58]
- Sally Gregory McMillen, *Southern Women: Black and White in the Old South* [HQ1438.A13M36]
- Elizabeth Moss, *Domestic Novelists in the Old South: Defenders of Southern Culture* [Ebook]
- Martha S. Jones, *All Bound up Together: The Woman Question in African American Public Culture, 1830-1900* [E185.86.J663]

C. Religion
- Richard L. Bushman, *Joseph Smith and the Beginnings of Mormonism* [BX8695.S6B87]
- Dickson Bruce, *And They All Sang Hallelujah: Plain-Folk Camp Meeting Religion* [BV3798.B78]
- Donald Mathews, *Religion in the Old South* [BR535.M37]

D. Reform
- David J Rothman, *The Discovery of the Asylum* [Ebook]
IV. Expansionism and Conflict

A. Native Americans

- John Buchanan, *Jackson’s Way: Andrew Jackson and the People of the Western Waters* [E382.B89]
- Robert Remini, *Andrew Jackson and His Indian Wars* [E381.R413]
- Ronald N. Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* [E93.S27]

B. Manifest Destiny & Expansion

- Amy Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* [E179.5.G79]
- David Stephen Heidler, *Old Hickory’s War: Andrew Jackson and the Quest for Empire* [E83.817.H47]
- Reginald Horsemann, *Race and Manifest Destiny* [E179.5.H69]
- James McCaffrey, *Army of Manifest Destiny* [Mendoza]
- Andres Resendez, *Changing National Identities at the Frontier: Texas and New Mexico, 1800-1850* [F390.R46]

C. War

- Walter Boneman, *1812: The War that Forged a Nation* [Mendoza]
- Bruce Winders, *Mr. Polk’s Army* [E-Book]