

**Montgomery College  
Department of Humanities  
Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus**

**History of African Americans to 1865 – HIST 235**

**TEMPLATE**

**Course Description:**

This course is an examination of the African American experience from its beginnings through emancipation. We will study African Americans' struggle to achieve freedom, focusing on their journey from Africa, through the Middle Passage to America. Throughout the course we will discuss slavery during the colonial era, in the North and antebellum South, throughout the American Revolution, and the Civil War. In the course of this discussion, we will discover and analyze the development of a slave community, slave resistance, and an abolitionist movement. This course will show the vibrant social, intellectual, and cultural milieu African Americans created even under the worst circumstances.

Upon completion of the course, you will be able to:

- Assess the influence of African Americans in the American sectional crisis, from 1850 to 1876, and the significance of the Civil War and Reconstruction on the national questions of race and citizenship.
- Assess the role of African Americans in the emergence of the American nation and the significance of race and citizenship in the new nation.
- Compare and contrast the development of slave societies in the Americas, with special focus on British North America.
- Demonstrate understanding of development of a slave society in the South and the development of African American culture.
- Demonstrate understanding of the nature of slavery in traditional African society and the significance of the Transatlantic Slave Trade.
- Describe the life of African Americans in the North and West and their role in the abolitionist movement.
- Trace the development of human beings in Africa and the rise of civilizations in the Ancient and Medieval periods.

**Reading List**

**Required**

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

Emily West, *Enslaved Women in America: From Colonial Times to Emancipation*

Gabor Boritt and Scott Hancock, ed. *Slavery, Resistance, and Freedom*

**Recommended**

Robert Frakes, *Writing for College History*

**Course Requirements:**

Participation	(15%)
Response Papers	(10%)
Midterm Exam	(25%)
Final Exam	(25%)
Paper	(25%)

**Participation:** Attendance and class participation is a vital part of your grade. This means coming to class having completed reading assignments and prepared to actively discuss. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. If a student is not present when attendance is taken it will be recorded as an absence. Students are also responsible to find out about any changes in scheduling or assignments announced in classes they missed. If a student misses more than three classes their grade will be reduced by a half-letter. Further absences may prevent a passing grade in the course.

\*\* Texting is not permitted in class. If you text in class you will be asked to leave and will receive an absence for that class. Repeated texting in class will result in a deduction of class participation credit and will be reflected in your final grade.

**Response Papers:** You will be required to complete a 2-page essay on the readings (dates indicated below). \*\*No late papers will be accepted

**Exams:** Exams will be comprised of a selection of essay questions based on lectures, class discussions, readings, and films. \*\*There are no make-up exams

**Research Paper:** You will be required to complete one paper (5 pages) based on the topic of your choosing with the approval of the professor. More specific guidelines and instructions will be provided as the term progresses. \*\*No late papers will be accepted

#### *Important Student Information Link*

*In addition to course requirements and objectives that are in this syllabus, Montgomery College has information on its web site (see link below) to assist you in having a successful experience both inside and outside of the classroom. It is important that you read and understand this information. The **link below provides** information and other resources to areas that pertain to the following: student behavior (student code of conduct), student e-mail, the tobacco free policy, withdraw and refund dates, disability support services, veteran services, how to access information on delayed openings and closings, how to register for the Montgomery College alert System, and finally, how closings and delays can impact your classes. If you have any questions please bring them to your professor. As rules and regulations change they will be updated and you will be able to access them through the link. If any student would like a written copy of these policies and procedures, the professor would be happy to provide them. By registering for this class and staying in this class, you are indicating that you acknowledge and accept these policies.*

**<http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/mcsyllabus/>**

#### **Course Outline:**

##### **Week 1**

Course Introduction: Why Study History?  
Before the Trade Began

##### **Week 2**

Sept. 5: From Africa to the America (Jacobs-1-70)

##### **Week 3**

Slavery in North America  
Research Paper Review (Jacobs-71-150; West-Introduction and Chapter 1)

##### **Week 4**

The Colonial Era (Jacobs-151-224, West-Chapter 2)

##### **Week 5**

Slavery during the American Revolution (Jacobs-225-303; West-Chapter 3)

**Week 6**

The American Slave System (**Response Paper on Harriet Jacobs only and Paper Topics due**)

**Week 7**

Life in the South

**Week 8**

**MIDTERM EXAM**

Antebellum Slavery (West-Chapter 4)

**Week 9**

Antebellum Slavery

The Free Black Community (Hancock-Introduction and Chapter 1)

**Week 10:**

The Abolitionist Movement (Hancock, Chapter 2)

**Week 11**

Film Screening: "12 Years a Slave" at 6pm in Commons 211 (Hancock, Chapter 3)

**Week 12**

"12 Years A Slave" Discussion (Hancock, Chapter 4)

Slavery during the Reform Era (**Response Paper on West and Hancock due**)

**Week 13**

Slave Rebellions (Hancock, Chapter 5)

**Week 14**

Slave Rebellions (**Research Papers Due**)

The Civil War (Hancock, Chapter 6)

**Week 15**

The Civil War (West- Chapter 5 and Epilogue)

Reparations and the Legacy of Slavery

**Week 16**

**FINAL EXAM** (10:15-12:15)