Fought over 150 years ago, the U.S. Civil War has recently been much in the news. Protestors have clashed repeatedly, in one case with deadly consequences, over the presence of Confederate monuments; today’s politicians frequently weigh in on personalities and events from the Civil War era. A North Carolina college campus remains embroiled over the fate of a Confederate soldier statue. A better understanding of the divisive attitudes that caused the war in the first place will give us some insight into the bitter feelings of today. Over the course of this semester, we will examine the coming of the US Civil War, the war itself, and the period of Reconstruction that followed. Our goal is to examine the Civil War experience in a broad social, cultural, and political context, looking at both Northern and Southern society (men and women, black and white) in the antebellum, wartime and post-war years. Although we will pay attention to military events, this is not primarily a course on military history.

The first part of this course will consider the roots of the war by examining key events and issues in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century American society (slavery, the market revolution, westward expansion, etc.), including the crisis that immediately preceded the Civil War. The second part of the course will focus on the war itself, looking at battles, as well as homefront experiences and political developments. The third, and final, part of the course will consider the aftermath and legacy of the Civil War, specifically the Reconstruction experiment, the retreat from Reconstruction, and the legacy of the “Lost Cause”.

After taking this course, students will be able to:
* Explain various factors that led to the Civil War and especially how the conflict over slavery emerged as the most important source of division;
* Explain various factors – military, political, social - that shaped how the war was waged and resolved;
* Explain how the pre-war, war-time, and post-war experiences and attitudes differed for Americans depending on race, region, and gender;
* Use primary source material to consider how a variety of Americans understood and participated in the events of the Civil War era.

This course fulfills the BU Hub requirement for Historical Consciousness.

READINGS: All books can be purchased at the BU Bookstore.

William Gienapp, *The Civil War and Reconstruction: A Documentary Collection*
Drew Faust, *James Henry Hammond and the Old South*
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of F. Douglass*
Michael Shaara, *Killer Angels*
Louisa May Alcott, *Hospital Sketches*
Nicholas Lemann, *Redemption: The Last Battle of the Civil War*

There is no required textbook, but students who would like a guide to the key developments of the period can consult any number of Civil War texts that can be found at Mugar including: Fellman, Gordon, and Sutherland, *This Terrible War: The Civil War and its Aftermath*; Robert Cook, *Civil War America: Making a Nation*; and James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*.

In general you should plan on completing the assigned readings by the Friday class. However, there will be times, especially with the readings from Gienapp’s book, when I’ll ask you to be ready to discuss specific selections on specific days.

**FORMAT:** The class will meet for three lecture hours each week. The format will consist of lectures, with discussions interspersed throughout, especially focused on the documents from Gienapp’s collection. Certain blocks of time will be set aside, and have been indicated on the syllabus, to discuss longer assigned readings although I will also make time to discuss those readings before the specified date. Students should regularly check (their BU) email for updated information on readings, discussions, paper instructions, exam study guides, and news items regarding the continued relevance of the Civil War in American life.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Students will be evaluated on the basis of the following assignments:

1) “*The Civil War People & Stories*” Project. Each student in the class will, a few weeks after the semester begins, create a historical character of the Civil War era. You will compose an initial sketch about the character and three pieces of written testimony (600-700 words), composed in the first person. You may also be asked, on occasion, to take the part of this character in class discussions. (See separate instruction sheet on this project.) This project is worth 35% of your final grade.

2) *One in-class midterm exam* worth 25% of your final grade.

3) *Class participation.* This consists of contributions to general discussions, discussions about the assigned readings, as well as discussions drawing on the work you do with your historical character. Students who would like to boost their participation grade are also invited to make contributions to the Discussion Board on the Blackboard site or come and talk with me during office hours. This is worth 10% of your final grade.

4) *A final exam* given during the final exam period worth 30% of your final grade.

Please note that ANY ASSIGNMENT TURNED IN AFTER THE DUE DATE WILL BE DOWNGRADED BY A PARTIAL GRADE FOR EACH LATE DAY.

**ACADEMIC CONDUCT:** Cheating – plagiarism included – is absolutely forbidden. Plagiarism means presenting somebody else’s work as if it is your own, *even if you do so unintentionally.* It is the responsibility of all students to know and understand the BU Academic Conduct Code that deals with plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. This code is posted at: [http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/](http://www.bu.edu/academics/resources/academic-conduct-code/)

**POLICY ON TECHNOLOGY:** Studies show that students do not benefit from multi-tasking
and that some students’ tendency to shop or face-book during class time can be a distraction for everyone. Evidence also suggests that students really don’t learn better by taking notes on electronic devices. So, unless there is a demonstrated need, laptops, cell phones, and other electronic devices are NOT PERMITTED in class. The only exception to this rule will be when students must access a reading assignment from the web or from Blackboard that is being discussed in class.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**: Students are allowed a TOTAL OF THREE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. More than three absences will affect your participation grade although there might be ways to avoid this. As always, come speak to me if there’s a problem.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

**PART I: ROOTS OF THE SECTIONAL CONFLICT**

**WEEK I**
- January 23: Introduction: the Meaning of the Civil War
- January 25: Slavery, the Constitution, and Southern Dominance

**WEEK II**
- January 28: Jackson & Nullification
- January 30: Southern Distinctiveness and Slavery
- February 1: Southerners and Slavery

*READING*: Faust, *James Henry Hammond*, 1-111; 131-134; *Gienapp Collection*: Anonymous (16)

**WEEK III**
- February 4: The North & Abolition
- February 6: Abolitionists
- February 8: Abolitionists and their Influence

*READING*: Douglass, *Narrative*, all; *Gienapp Collection*: Garrison (5), Declaration of Sentiments (7)
WEEK IV

February 11  Slavery and American Politics/Discuss Douglass’ *Narrative*

February 13  Pro-Slavery Responses & Sectional Politics

February 15  Discuss *James Henry Hammond*/Expansionism & Free Soil Politics

**READING:** Faust, *James Henry Hammond*, 137-185, 204-254; *Gienapp Collection*: Helper (12), De Bow (14), Harper (18)

*INITIAL STATEMENT FOR CIVIL WAR PEOPLE PROJECT DUE VIA BLACKBOARD PORTAL ON FEB. 17 BY 11:59 PM*

WEEK V

February 18  NO CLASS (Presidents’ Day Holiday)

February 19  Compromise and Conflict
(Tuesday)

February 20  Republicans and the Crime Against Kansas

February 22  Slave Power Conspiracy

**READING:** *Gienapp Collection*: Wilmot (27), Cobb (28), Calhoun (29), Webster (31), Mobile Register (37), New York Post (38), Richmond Enquirer (40)

WEEK VI

February 25  NO CLASS (Instructor out of town)

February 27  Road to War

March 1  Election & Secession

**READING:** *Gienapp Collection*: Taney (41), Hammond (46), Freeport (51), John Brown (52), Lincoln (62) and the following: Mississippi’s Secession Declaration: [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa missec.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_missec.asp)
South Carolina’s Secession Declaration: [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_scarsec.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_scarsec.asp)

*FIRST ASSIGNMENT FOR CIVIL WAR PEOPLE PROJECT DUE VIA BLACKBOARD PORTAL ON FEBRUARY 28 BY 11:59 PM*
WEEK VII
March 4  War Begins/Midterm Review
March 6  MIDTERM
March 8  What Caused the War: Interpretations

WEEK OF MARCH 9-17: SPRING RECESS

PART II: CIVIL WAR

WEEK VIII
March 18  Manassas Syndrome/Civil War Strategies
March 20  Strategies of War
March 22  Soldier Experiences

READING: Shaara, *Killer Angels*, xv-150; Gienapp Collection: Scott (83), McClellan (86, 87), Boyd (89)

WEEK IX
March 25  Union Stalemate/Emancipation
March 27  Emancipation
March 29  DISCUSSION: Historical Characters Reflect on War & Emancipation

READING: Shaara, *Killer Angels*, 155-270; Gienapp Collection: Butler (115), Douglass (117), Lincoln (125), Harper’s Weekly (126); Lincoln (165), Douglass (220), Johnson (222), Welch (225), Potter (241), Welton (242)

WEEK X
April 1  Confederate Homefront
April 3  Summer of ‘63
April 5  Northern Homefront/Discuss Alcott

READING: Alcott, *Hospital Sketches*, all; Gienapp Collection: Twenty Negro Law (132), Georgia Soldier (133), New York Evening Post (187), Agnes (199), Thomas (210)
WEEK XI

April 8  Discuss *Killer Angels*/Turning Tide of War
April 10 Union Victory & Confederate Defeat
April 12 Aftermath of War

*READING:* Shaara, *Killer Angels*, 275-345; *Gienapp Collection*: Sherman (253), Lincoln (299), Cumming (309), Kean (311)

*SECOND ASSIGNMENT FOR CIVIL WAR PEOPLE PROJECT DUE VIA BLACKBOARD PORTAL ON APRIL 9 BY 11:59 PM*

PART III: RECONSTRUCTION AND THE LEGACY OF WAR

WEEK XII

April 15  PATRIOT’S DAY HOLIDAY (No class)
April 17  Postwar Problems/Presidential Responses
April 19  Guest Lecturer: Professor Aaron Sheehan Dean

*READING:* Lemann, *Redemption*, 3-62; *Gienapp Collection*: Grant (321), Schurz (323), Johnson (335), Mississippi Black Codes (325), Virginia Blacks (329)

WEEK XIII

April 22  Black and White in the Postwar South
April 24  Congressional Reconstruction
April 26  Reconstruction in the South

*READING:* Lemann, *Redemption*, 63-169; *Gienapp Collection*: Stevens (333), Johnson (335), Johnson (352), Alabama Blacks (367), Lucas (379), White (374), DeForest (382), Adams (385)

WEEK XIV

April 29  Reconstruction and Backlash
May 2   Legacy of the Civil War/Discuss Lemann, *Redemption*
READING: Lemann, Redemption, 170-209; Gienapp Collection: The Nation (397), Lee (408)

THIRD ASSIGNMENT FOR CIVIL WAR PEOPLE PROJECT DUE VIA BLACKBOARD PORTAL ON MAY 2 BY 11:59 PM

FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY MAY 7, 12:30 PM – 2:30 PM