

AMH 4930
Atlantic Slave Rebellions

Mon., Per. 7-9 (1:55 - 4:55 p.m.)
Keene-Flint 113
Instructor: Prof. Jon Sensbach, Dept. of History
Office: 233 Keene-Flint
Hours:
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During the nearly four centuries that African slavery endured in the Americas, enslaved people escaped, committed acts of resistance large and small, and led dozens of major uprisings, the largest and most successful resulting in the independent republic of Haiti. This course will examine the frequency of, motivations for, and tactics behind rebellion as a window onto African-Atlantic resistance to slavery. After examine several famous uprisings such as Nat Turner, the Stono Rebellion and the Haitian Revolution, students will write a term paper on one rebellion based on a combination of primary and secondary sources. This research project will provide experience in analyzing documents and in developing historical interpretation and argument. The goals of the course are:

1. To study the causes, effects, and historical context of slave rebellion and resistance.
2. To gain an introduction to the theory, methodology, and practice of history.
3. To write a major research paper using the techniques of the historian's craft.

The course is designed to satisfy the senior seminar requirement for history majors. In addition to learning about the subject matter of the course, students will gain experience in the philosophy, methodology, and practice of history. By studying primary and secondary documents and by writing several short papers as well as a longer research paper, students will become equipped to undertake advanced work in history or in other research-related fields.

The following required books may be bought at the university bookstore or from your favorite online distributor:

Mark M. Smith, *Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt*
(Columbia:
University of South Carolina Press, 2005).

Daniel Rasmussen, *American Uprising: The Untold Story of America's Largest Slave Revolt*
(New York: Harper Perennial, 2012).

Laurent Dubois and John Garrigus, eds., *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804: A Brief*

History with Documents (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006).

Requirements: An early writing exercise in the form of a 5-page analysis of the Stono Rebellion is due on **Sept. 12**. The principal requirement of the course will be a 20-page final paper of high literary merit based on original research in primary sources on a topic chosen in consultation with the instructor. Of the 20 pages, at least 17 should be double-spaced typed text (12-pt font, 1-in. margins), plus endnotes and bibliography. A three-page prospectus of the project is due on **Oct. 10** that will present a tentative project title, description of the historical problem to be addressed, methodology, primary sources to be used, and bibliography of at least half a dozen secondary sources. A rough draft of at least ten pages of the research paper is due on **Nov. 21**. The final paper is due **Monday, Dec. 12**.

This course is designed to be more demanding than the average lecture-based history course. As a seminar, the course requires consistent preparation and active participation by students before and during class every week. Because class meetings are relatively few, attendance is mandatory, though each student is allowed one absence, and all other absences must be accompanied by a physician's note or other written explanation. A significant portion of the semester will be devoted to individual research. There is no midterm and no final exam.

Technology in the classroom. Class starts, cell phones disappear. Email, Facebook, surfing, shopping, stock-trading and all other purposes unrelated to class are prohibited.

Course Requirements:

Research project:	70%
20+ page research paper	40%
Rough draft	20%
3-page prospectus	10%
5-page documents analysis paper	15%
Class participation	15%

NOTE: In writing papers, be certain to give proper credit whenever you use words, phrases, ideas, arguments, and conclusions drawn from someone else's work. Failure to

give credit by quoting and/or footnoting is plagiarism and is unacceptable. Please review the University's honesty policy at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm>.

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Schedule

Week 1. Aug. 22. Introduction.

Week 2. Aug. 29. Manifestations of rebellion

Jason Sharples, "Discovering Slave Conspiracies: New Fears of Slave Rebellion and Old Paradigms of Plotting in Seventeenth-Century Barbados," *American Historical Review* 120 (June 2015), 811-43.

Marjoleine Kars, "Dodging Rebellion: Politics and Gender in the Berbice Slave Uprising of 1763," *American Historical Review* 121 (Feb. 2016), 39-69.

Michael Craton, "The Baptist War: The Jamaican Rebellion of 1831-1832," in Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 291-321, 375-79.

Week 3. Sept. 5. Labor Day - no class

Week 4. Sept. 12. Writing about slave rebellion: Part 1

Mark Smith, *Stono: Documenting and Interpreting a Southern Slave Revolt*

5-page Stono paper due

Week 5. Sept. 19. Reading/analyzing evidence; defining the research question

Selections from Dubois and Garrigus, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean*

Week 6. Sept. 26. Writing about slave rebellion: Part 2

Rasmussen, *American Uprising*

Week 7. Oct. 3. No class - individual meetings with instructor, work on prospectus

Week 8. Oct. 10. **3-page prospectus due**

Week 9. Oct. 17. 1831: Year of Rebellion

“Confessions of Nat Turner”

Week 10. Oct. 24. Work on papers

Week 11. Oct. 31. Work on papers

Week 12. Nov. 7. Slave rebellions in broad context - Prof. Peter Wood, guest

Week 13. Nov. 14. No class - second round of individual meetings with instructor, work on papers

Week 14. Nov. 21. **Rough drafts due** (Thanksgiving week)

Week 15. Nov. 28. Student oral reports

Week 16. Dec. 5. Student oral reports

Final papers due Monday, Dec. 12