

UMBC UGC New Course Request: HIST 320 Atlantic Revolutions on Film

Date Submitted: 4/9/2019

Proposed Effective Date: Winter 2020

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COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number(s)	HIST 320
Formal Title	Atlantic Revolutions on Film
Transcript Title (≤30c)	Atlantic Revolutions on Film
Recommended Course Preparation	HIST 340
Prerequisite NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	None
# of Credits Must adhere to the <u>UMBC Credit Hour Policy</u>	3
Repeatable for additional credit?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3 This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.
Grading Method(s)	X <input type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (Approximately 75 words in length. Please use full sentences.):

This course uses documentary and feature-length films to examine the revolutions that spread across the Atlantic World in the late-18th to early-19th century, a period often called the "Age of Revolutions." Students will view films on the American, French, Haitian, and Latin America revolutions to analyze how film is used to portray history and why filmmakers have treated each of these revolutions so differently.

RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE:

I have taught this course twice before as a summer and winter session course (as a HIST 355 "special topics" course) with great success and intend to continue offering it during winter session under its own number. HIST 320 will complement my HIST 340 Atlantic Revolutions course, which provides a history of these same four revolutions. HIST 320 will be a stand-alone course that can also build on HIST 340 for students who took HIST 340 first. Having taken HIST 340 will be helpful but is not necessary, since the focus of HIST 320 will be on analyzing "film as history" and the portrayal of the revolutions by filmmakers rather than the history of the revolutions themselves. Students will be provided with sufficient background on each revolution to understand the basic history. But the emphasis in HIST 320 is on how filmmakers shape (and often distort) historical understanding through their choices of imagery, character development, plotting, etc. I teach HIST 340 every fall. I will teach HIST 320 each winter. When I taught the course during winter session 2018, there was decent carryover from students who had taken HIST 340 in the fall. I expect this relationship will continue and strengthen once the course enters the catalog.

This will be a fully online course. I created the course in Spring 2017 through UMBC's Alternative Delivery Program's "Course Designer Track" to be an entirely online offering. The course has been vetted by my

colleagues in the history department and passed all the benchmarks on a “Quality Matters” assessment for online courses that rates it according to its adherence to best practices. I taught the course in Summer 2017 and Winter 2018 as HIST 355 Special Topics.

ATTACH COURSE SYLLABUS (mandatory):

I have attached a PDF of the syllabus for this course when I taught it during winter session 2018 under HIST 355 Special Topics.

Syllabus

HIST 355: Atlantic Revolutions on Film

Winter 2018

Professor Terry Bouton
E-MAIL: bouton[at]jumbc.edu
Office: 510 Fine Arts
Office Hours: Online
Course Dates: Jan. 2, 2018 to Jan. 26, 2018

Course Description:

This course uses documentary and feature-length films to examine the revolutions that spread across the Atlantic World in the late-18th to early-19th century, a period some have called the “Age of Revolutions.” Specifically we will examine films about the American Revolution (which established independence from Great Britain), The French Revolution (which overthrew the French monarchy), the Haitian Revolution (which overthrew both French and white planter rule), and the Latin America Revolutions (which achieved independence for Spanish colonies in South America, Central America, and Mexico). The objective is less about learning the history of these revolutions than understanding how and why filmmakers portray these revolutions the particular ways they do. There are no prerequisites and you do not need any special knowledge of these revolutions to take this course. The focus here is using these revolutions to assess “film as history” rather than analyzing the revolutionary Atlantic itself. Before turning to those films, students will start by taking a step back and examining the relationship between history written by academics and historical films produced by documentary filmmakers and Hollywood studios. Students will learn to assess the relative strengths and weaknesses of film as history and identify the particular problems raised when history moves from the pages of a book to the silver screen. Then students will turn to analyzing films about the four revolutions with several goals in mind. Students will evaluate film tropes and patterns, biases and blind spots, and the advantages and virtues film offers for telling history. Students will learn to fact-check films and analyze the effects when they include significant historical inaccuracy. Students will learn to identify the storytelling conventions common to “films on revolution” and formulate a set of “rules” that filmmakers seem to follow when they make documentaries and features about revolutions. Students will test and refine those rules by applying them to different feature-length dramas. They will learn how and why filmmakers have treated some revolutions in remarkably different ways than others. And they will learn to identify the many hurdles that stand in the way of producing historically accurate documentaries and films that include a wide array of voices and perspectives beyond the traditional confines of what is often called “Great White Man’s History.” Along the way, students will also learn how to construct a persuasive essay and effectively support opinions with evidence. My hope is that, by the end of the course, students will never look at historical documentaries and movies the same way again (and exit the course a better writer than when they entered).

Course Format:

The course will be taught entirely online through its Blackboard site. If you have registered for the HIST 355, then you have access to the HIST 355 Blackboard site (if you don't, contact me immediately and I will get you added). The course is broken down into five units: Unit 1 "Real History vs. Reel History," Unit 2 "The American Revolution," Unit 3 "The French Revolution," Unit 4 "The Haitian Revolution," and Unit 5 "The Latin American Revolutions." Each unit has its own folder on Blackboard and contains a distinct set of learning objectives and assignments. Students will be required to complete a mix of readings and film viewings. Most of that material is available directly in the unit folders on Blackboard, either as PDF files or links to sites where students can stream films for free online (either through a streaming service to which UMBC subscribes or a reputable, independent site). There are two items—a film, The Patriot, and a book, Simon Bolivar: Liberation and Disappointment—that will require purchase or rental (the full titles and ordering information are listed below). Students will analyze readings and films through six three-to-five page papers and six "debates" conducted on the Blackboard Discussion Board. The debate will be interactive and put students in direct conversation with one another through an exchange of evidence-backed opinions expressed in a series of Discussion Board postings and replies. The essays and debates will each have specific guidelines, due dates, and grading rubrics. There are no exams or other graded assignments beyond the six essays and six debates.

Course Learning Objectives (CLOs):

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of using film (documentaries and feature length films) to tell history and compare those to the strengths and weaknesses of written history.
- CLO2: Explain how a filmmaker's biases, the limits of the medium, and the storytelling conventions of documentaries and feature films shape how history is presented in films on revolution.
- Formulate a set of "rules" that filmmakers seem to follow when they make documentaries and feature films about revolution.
- CLO4: Compare and Contrast the different ways filmmakers have treated the American, French, Haitian, and Latin American Revolutions and explain why those differences exist.
- Identify historical inaccuracies in movies about revolution, analyze what those inaccuracies reveal about the filmmaker's message, and assess what is gained and lost by sacrificing historical accuracy to other objectives.
- Write analytical essays that are well organized around single-idea paragraphs that start with strong topic sentences and make effective use of evidence in the form of specific examples and quotations from readings and films.
- Defend opinions with persuasive arguments and evidence in Discussion Board debates.

Materials to Purchase:

Nearly all of the readings and films for the course are available through the Blackboard site, except the following two items that you will need to purchase or rent. However you choose to obtain these items, you MUST arrange to have them in time to complete the assignments for which they are required.

1) The feature film *The Patriot* (2000), starring Mel Gibson.

This title is available for purchase on DVD or rental through online sellers like Netflix or Amazon.com.

2) David Bushnell, *Simon Bolivar: Liberation and Disappointment* (Library of World Biography Series), Pearson, 2004, paper, ISBN-13: 9780321156679.

This title is available at the campus bookstore or can be purchased through online sellers like Amazon.com.

NOTE: Currently, two other course items are available to stream online for free outside of the UMBC portal: the documentary on the Haitian Revolution, [Egalite for All: Toussaint Louverture](#), and feature film on the Latin American Revolutions, [The Liberator](#). Both titles have both been available to view free online for over a year and are housed at reputable sites. However, should they be removed from public access, I have included links in the respective unit folders on Blackboard so you can purchase DVDs or rent streaming versions of the titles. I will monitor those sites regularly to ensure that the films remain publicly available and, if they somehow get pulled from circulation, I will alert you immediately so that you can obtain the titles through purchase or rental.

Course Requirements:

(NOTE: If circumstances arise that make it difficult or impossible to complete an assignment, like Blackboard being down or technical difficulties access any of the films, I reserve the right to make changes to the requirements, assignments, and due dates for essays and debates.)

1) SIX THREE-TO-FIVE PAGE DOUBLE-SPACED ESSAYS: 600 points (100 points each):

Each of the essays asks students to respond to a particular question based on required course readings and film viewings. For each question students will write a three-to-five page double-spaced essay. Essays will be graded based on the critical thinking displayed in answering the question, the evidence used to support the essay's arguments, the length of the essay, and its writing mechanics (good organization and the use of strong topic sentences). Each essay has a specific set of guidelines and its own due date (the guidelines can be found in the Unit folders on Blackboard along with the due dates, which are also listed below). All of the essays follow the same grading rubric, which, for your convenience, I have posted throughout the course Blackboard site.

2) SIX SETS OF DEBATE POSTINGS: 600 points (100 points each):

The “Debates” will serve as the class discussion part of the course. For each debate, students will complete the required reading and/or viewing and then respond to the Debate topic prompt (all of the specific debate requirements and prompts can be found in the unit folders on Blackboard along with the Debate Rubric, called “Grading Rubric for Discussion Board”). Your Discussion Board Debate grade will depend on the quantity and quality of your participation. Students are required to make at least THREE substantive postings, at least TWO of which must be detailed replies to the postings of other students. I encourage you to make more than three posts. If you post more than three times, they need not all be substantive, meaning you can also include short posts asking questions, looking for clarification from a peer, or making a brief statement to spur debate. The only requirement is that, at some point, you also make at least three longer, substantive posts. The Debate topic prompts ask a wide range of questions to spur discussion, so everyone should be able to find something new to add to an existing discussion or else start a new debate thread on different question when the older conversations have run their course.

Each Debate will have a roughly 48-hour window in which students must make all of their posts. Students MUST post within that 48-hour window to receive credit for the debate. Moreover, to receive full credit, students must post throughout that 48-hour window rather than all at the very beginning or end. The point of the debates is for there to be interaction among students in the course and that means responding to one another’s posts and then replying to the responses from others. If you try to get all your posts done at once, by making three postings as soon as the window opens or (more likely) right before it closes, you are not fully engaging in the conversation and are denying yourself and your peers the give-and-take discussion and feedback needed to make the debates a success. **For these reasons, I am requiring that at least one of the substantive posting be made during the first 24 hours of the debate window and at least one other substantive posting be made during the second 24 hours of the debate widow.** When you post the third substantive posting is up to you provided you have posted at least once in the first half and once in the second half of the full Debate Window.

Although the debates are about expressing your opinions, each of the three required posts for every Debate must include evidence to support your opinions. This will primarily be in the form of specific examples and quotations from the readings and films. A few assignments encourage (but do not require) students to incorporate evidence they find from outside the course.

I will grade the Debate postings based on several factors: 1) The length of the combined responses and whether they were submitted throughout the 48-hour window; 2) The mechanics of writing, including clear, logical organization, the use of topic sentences for paragraphs, and proper grammar and spelling; 3) The use of evidence in from of specific examples and quotations from the readings; 4) The critical thinking and analysis displayed by the posts, including the originality of the points made, the level of engagement with course material demonstrated, and the factual accuracy of the posts; and 5) The student’s overall contribution toward creating community, promoting interaction, and observing “netiquette.” All of these elements are spelled out in the Debate Grading Rubric.

Backup Copies of Work Submitted Online:

IMPORTANT: I require each student to save a personal copy of all of their essays and debate postings on their home computer, thumb drive, cd, or whatever storage device they choose.

IMPORTANT: Blackboard is occasionally buggy. I HIGHLY suggest that you type out your response with a word processing program and then cut and paste it into Blackboard rather than the other way around. If you have a problem with Blackboard, it is your responsibility to ensure that I receive a copy of your posting by the deadline. DO NOT automatically email me a copy of every essay or posting. ONLY email essays or postings in the event of a Blackboard emergency.

Policy on Submitting Late Work:

For the debates, I will NOT accept late work. You either make your three postings within the debate window or receive no credit for that debate or partial credit for whatever you have posted short of the required three substantive postings. The point of the debates is for students to interact with one another. Late work submitted after the debate has closed would not be entering into conversation with anyone and, therefore, would not meet the assignment objectives and as a result will not be counted.

For the essays, late work will be penalized 10 points per day late. NOTE: if you post one minute past the due date and time (11:59pm on the date the essay is due), I will consider your essay to be 1 day late and deduct 10 points from whatever score it would have earned had you submitted it on time.

If Blackboard goes out, this will affect everyone trying to post and can be easily verified (it can likewise be easily verified by OIT if Blackboard has not gone down—so don't use this as an excuse unless it actually happens because I will check. If Blackboard does go out, simply wait to see if it comes back online. If it does not come back before the assignment deadline or if you are unable to wait, submit your assignment to me via email by the deadline.

Finally, I understand that emergencies happen. These will be handled on a case-by-case basis and will require documentation of proof.

(Note: the “internet was down at my house” is not an excuse. In this day and age, free internet and temporary fee-based internet is available nearly everywhere. Work could also be submitted via smartphone. In other words, there are plenty of reasonable backup options even if your home internet goes out).

Grading:

SIX THREE-TO-FIVE PAGE ESSAYS: 600 points (100 points each)
SIX SETS OF DEBATE POSTINGS: 600 points (100 points each)

TOTAL GRADE: 1,200 pts.

At the end of the semester:

1,080 to 1,200 points will be an A
960 to 1,079 points will be a B
840 to 959 points will be a C
720 to 839 points will be a D
Below 720 points will be an F

Blackboard:

Students enrolled in this course must have an active email account and access to the internet. HIST 355 uses Blackboard online software. This means that you will have online access to course materials 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Most assignments will be submitted online at the Blackboard course website. As a UMBC student, you have a personal email account and access to the internet and through the many on-campus computer labs (locations, hours, etc.). You can also access Blackboard off campus through a personal account or from the UMBC dial-up.

Getting started on Blackboard: Your registration with the UMBC Registrar for HIST 355 will make you eligible to enroll in Blackboard. To gain entrance to discussion boards and course material, you MUST enroll in the online version of HIST 355 on the course Blackboard site in order to have full access. BEFORE you do anything else, enroll in the course online at: <http://blackboard.umbc.edu>.

Communication:

Because all of this course takes place online, it is absolutely imperative that you have regular access to your email and to Blackboard. I am best reached by email at [bouton\[at\]umbc.edu](mailto:bouton[at]umbc.edu). You can expect a response from me in 24 hours. If you do not hear back in that time, please resend the email. Please check your school email and at least once per day.

All changes to assignments or the syllabus will be made via Blackboard Announcements, so be sure to check in to stay on top of any changes.

Academic Integrity:

I expect students enrolled in this course to abide by the UMBC Code of Student Conduct for Academic Integrity (<http://www.umbc.edu/sjp/articles/code.html>). If you are unclear about what plagiarism is, take a look at the Indiana University website: Plagiarism: What It Is and How to Recognize and Avoid It (<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>).

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UMBC's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. To read the full Student Academic Conduct Policy, consult the UMBC Student Handbook, the Faculty Handbook, or the UMBC Policies section of the UMBC Directory.

Netiquette:

Success in this course will require that everyone follow the rules of “netiquette,” which are a set of guidelines to help you communicate effectively and appropriately in online environments with your instructor and your classmates. Following the rule of netiquette will ensure that students maintain civility and respect for each other and one another’s views even as they might disagree over controversial issues on which all sides feel have passionate feelings. For specific guidelines, see the “Netiquette” file in the “Course Policies” folder on Blackboard.

Course Schedule and Due Dates:

UNIT 1: Reel History vs Reel History

Tues., Jan. 2: READ: Unit 1, Readings 1-5

Weds., Jan. 3: Essay # 1: Real History Vs Reel History, Due by 11:59pm

Thurs., Jan. 4: Debate #1: Film, Emotion, and History, Window Opens at 12:01am

Fri., Jan. 5: Debate #1: Film, Emotion, and History, Window Closes at 11:59pm

UNIT 2: The American Revolution

Sat., Jan. 6: WATCH: Liberty!, Episodes 1 and 6

Sun., Jan. 7: Essay #2: “The People” and the “Founding Fathers” in Liberty! Due by 11:59pm

Mon., Jan. 8: Debate #2: Liberty! and Diversity, Window Opens at 12:01am

Tues., Jan. 9: Debate #2: Liberty! and Diversity, Window Closes at 11:59pm

Weds., Jan. 10: WATCH: The Patriot

Thurs., Jan. 11: Essay #3: Themes of Revolution in The Patriot, Due by 11:59pm

Fri., Jan. 12: Debate #3: Historical Accuracy and The Patriot, Window Opens at 12:01am

Sat., Jan. 13: Debate #3: Historical Accuracy and The Patriot, Window Closes at 11:59pm

UNIT 3: The French Revolution

Sun., Jan. 14: WATCH: Documentary 1, The French Revolution: The Terror and Documentary 2, 1789–The French Revolution

Mon., Jan. 15: Essay #4: American Documentaries on the French Revolution, Due by 11:59pm

Tues., Jan. 16: WATCH: Danton

Weds., Jan. 17: Debate #4: Historical Validity and Films on the French Revolution, Window Opens at 12:01am

Thurs., Jan. 18: Debate #4: Historical Validity and Films on the French Revolution, Window Closes at 11:59pm

Unit 4: The Haitian Revolution

Fri., Jan. 19: WATCH: Egalite for All: Toussaint Louverture and the Haitian Revolution; READ: Readings 1-4

Sat., Jan. 20: Essay #5: Toussaint L'Ouverture Movie Pitch, Due by 11:59pm

Sun., Jan. 21: Debate #5: Why Isn't There a Film on the Haitian Revolution? Window Opens at 12:01am

Mon., Jan. 22: Debate #5: Why Isn't There a Film on the Haitian Revolution? Window Closes at 11:59pm; READING: Simon Bolivar: Liberation and Disappointment

Unit 5: The Latin American Revolutions

Tues., Jan. 23: READING: Simon Bolivar: Liberation and Disappointment; WATCH: The Liberator

Weds., Jan. 24: Essay #6: Fact-Checking The Liberator, Due by 11:59pm

Thurs., Jan. 25: Debate #6: Testing Film "Rules" on The Liberator, Window Opens at 12:01am

Fri., Jan. 26: Debate #6: Testing Film "Rules" on The Liberator, Window Closes at 11:59pm