LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students will learn to 1) describe the major events of the Civil War period and understand their geographic relationship to each other; 2) compare and contrast the era’s major political parties and factions and analyze their stances on the period’s main political issues; 3) appreciate how the issues of politics and race raised by the Civil War continue to impact the United States today; and 4) appraise an aspect of the period’s military or political history through the assessment of primary sources or a historiographic debate.

ATTENDANCE: I will not take attendance, but students will find it very difficult to do well unless they attend class regularly. Changes to this syllabus may be announced in class at any time. If you miss class, you are responsible for determining if any changes were announced in the class you missed.

EXAMS AND PAPERS: You will take two in-class exams during the semester and a third, non-cumulative exam during finals week. On the exams I will usually list 13 names and terms and you will write about one bluebook page per term in which you will define and describe the significance of 10 of them. Students will also write a five-page, typed, double-spaced paper (approximately 1500 words) during the semester. Papers will be graded on the basis of: 1) the extent to which your ENTIRE paper is devoted to answering the question; 2) how well you define and substantiate your thesis with specific facts and quotations (especially of statements made by people alive in the period you are writing about) from the specified readings; 3) the sophistication of your answer; and 4) how well the paper is written and organized. Make sure every paragraph of your paper is devoted explicitly to presenting evidence and making arguments that support your thesis. Be sure to use effective introductory and concluding sentences to your paragraphs to link the information in each paragraph to that thesis. Also, all quotations must be followed by a citation which makes it clear from which book and on what page the quotation can be found—for example: (Potter, 27). Footnotes are not necessary in this class—parenthetical citations with just the author’s last name, a comma, and a page number are fine. Additional paper writing advice is provided in a document called “Paper Writing Advice for HIST 2312” which is in the “Electronic Reserves” section of Blackboard. In terms of sources, only use those assigned for this class (unless you get permission from me to do otherwise in advance). Papers will be downgraded ONE FULL LETTER GRADE if late (two letter grades if handed in after the papers have already been returned), unless an extension has been granted BEFORE the day the paper is due. Papers must be submitted IN CLASS unless I give you explicit permission to do otherwise. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES can a paper be submitted by e-mail or any other electronic means, though you will also be asked to submit the paper electronically to “Safe Assign” via Blackboard to help prevent plagiarism. Please keep a copy of your paper because in a class of this size, papers can be misplaced from time to time. If you have a disability that necessitates extra time or some other accommodation for the exams or papers, you must register with the Office of Disability Support Services at the beginning of the semester and have them forward notice of your special needs to me.

MISSED EXAMS: If you are absent on the day of an exam, you must contact me THAT DAY either by phone or e-mail to explain your absence and arrange to make up the missed exam. Failure to do so will result in your forfeiture of the opportunity to make up the test. Only students with the most extreme medical emergencies will be exempted from this rule. Even if you contact me, a make-up test will only be given if the student can suitably justify having missed the exam.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism is a serious violation of university rules that can be punished by suspension or expulsion. I prosecute all suspected cases of plagiarism and cheating. Borrowing someone else’s words without giving them credit is plagiarism. Closely paraphrasing someone else’s work without making substantive changes to the content is plagiarism. Handing in a paper written completely or in part by someone else or for another class is academic dishonesty. Using sources other than those specified for the assignment without permission is academic dishonesty as well. But keep in mind that well-known facts (as opposed to quotations) taken from the
readings, lectures, or discussions do not need to be cited. If you are unsure of the rules, e-mail me or see me at office hours before you hand in your paper. You can also consult http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html.

GRADING: The exam and paper grades will each count as 1/4th of your final grade, with two exceptions. First, if a student's final grade is very close to the next higher grade, steady and significant improvement on the exams may help push the grade up one level. Also, students who have a failing average (65 or below) on the exams can at best get a grade of “D” for the course, no matter what grades they receive for the paper!!!

READINGS: The reading averages 120 pages per week. The books are available at the bookstore:
David Potter, The Impending Crisis
James McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom
Eric Foner, Reconstruction

LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS (Readings should be completed by the Monday of each week unless you are instructed otherwise)

AUGUST 25-27: AMERICA IN 1850; THE COMPROMISE OF 1850
    Potter, Impending Crisis, chs. 2-5 (complete by Wednesday the 27th)

SEPTEMBER 3: THE DECLINE OF THE WHIGS:
    Potter, Impending Crisis, chs. 6-7

SEPTEMBER 8-10: IMMIGRATION AND NATIVISM; KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT
    Potter, Impending Crisis, chs. 8-10

SEPTEMBER 15-17: THE REPUBLICAN PARTY; DRED SCOTT
    Potter, Impending Crisis, ch. 11

SEPTEMBER 22-24: THE EMERGENCE OF LINCOLN; THE ELECTION OF 1860;
    Potter, Impending Crisis, chs. 12-16

SEPTEMBER 29: SECESSION AND SUMTER
    Potter, Impending Crisis, chs 17-19; McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, chs, 8-9
    There will be a voluntary review session Sept. 29 at 6:00 pm in our normal classroom.

OCTOBER 1: FIRST EXAM!!!!!!!

OCTOBER 6-8: STRATEGY NORTH AND SOUTH; STAILEMATE IN THE EAST
    McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, chs. 10-15 (a heavy reading week!!!)

OCTOBER 13-15: ANTIETAM; EMANCIPATION
    McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, chs. 16-18 (a light reading week!!!)
    CLASS TRIP TO GETTYSBURG SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

OCTOBER 20-22: THE CONFEDERATE NATION; GETTYSBURG AND VICKSBURG
    McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, chs. 18-21

OCTOBER 27-29: DAVIS AND LINCOLN; DRAFT RIOTS AND COPPERHEADS
    McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, chs. 22-24
    There will be a voluntary review session Friday Oct. 31 at 1:00 in Rome 204.

NOVEMBER 3: SECOND EXAM!!!!!!!

NOVEMBER 5: GRANT
    McPherson, Battle Cry of Freedom, ch. 25-26
NOVEMBER 10-12: SOUTHERN NATIONALISM DESTROYED; THE MEANING OF FREEDOM; PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION
McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, chs. 27-28 & Epilogue; Foner, *Reconstruction*, chs. 3-4 plus pp. 176-208 (it is fine if you only get to chs. 4 and 5 by Wed.)

NOVEMBER 17-19: PRESIDENTIAL RECONSTRUCTION
Foner, *Reconstruction*, chs. 5 (remainder) and 6

PAPER DUE AT THE START OF CLASS NOVEMBER 17: Answer one of the following questions:
A) Who was a better general, Lee or Grant? Be sure to consider both strategy and tactics. Do not summarize the generals’ careers or write a history of their battles. Assume that I know the basic history of their engagements. Discuss battles only to substantiate your thesis as to who was the superior general.
B) Given the Republican Party’s national platform of 1860 (easily found via Google), was Republican policy during the war surprisingly radical, surprisingly conservative, or about what one should have expected? Consider both Congress and the President in your answer. Devote no more than one page to summarizing and/or evaluating the platform. The remainder of the paper should focus upon Republican policies DURING THE WAR.
C) Pick a battle that took place during 1861, 1862 or 1863 that was covered in a class lecture. Then find correspondence concerning that battle in *War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Gelman E 491 .U61). Given what you have read about this battle in McPherson, what do we learn from the contemporary sources that is surprising, significant, and/or neglected in *Battle Cry of Freedom? The War of Rebellion* can also be accessed online at [http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/sources/records/list.cfm](http://ehistory.osu.edu/osu/sources/records/list.cfm).
D) Choose a Northern or a Southern newspaper available in Gelman Library, the Library of Congress, or on-line (clear your chosen newspaper with me at office hours or by e-mail). Using that newspaper as the primary source of information, describe how life on the home front changed as the Civil War progressed. You might compare late 1861 to early 1865, or choose some other interval in which you would expect to find significant changes. Remember that the term “home front” refers to non-military life away from the battlefields. The “19th Century U.S. Newspapers” electronic collection on the GW library site ([http://libguides.gwu.edu/content.php?pid=98717&sid=1719917](http://libguides.gwu.edu/content.php?pid=98717&sid=1719917)) has the Savannah Morning News, the Lowell Citizen and News (Mass.), the Bangor Daily Whig, Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper (NYC), the Cleveland Daily Herald, the Philadelphia North American, and the Milwaukee Sentinel. Also accessible via Aladin are Harper’s Weekly (“HarpWeek” in GW Libraries’ research databases), the New York Times, and the New York Tribune. Available in Gelman on microfilm are the New York Herald (Democratic) and the New York Evening Post (Republican).
E) Choose and read a published collection of letters written by a Civil War soldier (a list of approved titles owned by Gelman Library is posted under “Electronic Reserves” on Blackboard). After reading it, write a paper describing what we learn about the war from the soldier’s own words that is surprising, significant, and/or neglected by McPherson. Be sure to quote enough passages from the published letters to substantiate your thesis or theses.
HINT: Carefully read the paper criteria on the first page of this syllabus. In particular, be sure that EVERY paragraph of your paper clearly and explicitly substantiates your thesis. Good introductory and concluding sentences, that directly link the content of each paragraph to your thesis, are crucial in this regard. Make sure citations are given for ALL QUOTATIONS!!!!!

NOVEMBER 24: CONGRESSIONAL RECONSTRUCTION; GRANT AS PRESIDENT
Foner, *Reconstruction*, chs. 7-9

DECEMBER 1-3: THE REPUBLICAN SCHISM; RETREAT FROM RECONSTRUCTION; THE LEGACY OF THE CIVIL WAR AND RECONSTRUCTION
Foner, *Reconstruction*, chs. 10-12 & Epilogue

VOLUNTARY FINAL EXAM REVIEW SESSION, Monday Dec. 8, 1:00-2:00, Rome 204
FINAL EXAM: tentatively scheduled for Monday, December 15, 3:00-5:00 p.m.