Atlantic World studies have grown in recent years and have provided a new way for us to understand historical developments across national boundaries. This course focuses on one of the most important aspects of Atlantic history – slavery and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, from its beginnings in the late 1400s to abolition in the early 1800s. With a broad regional scope, the course looks at slavery and the slave trade on both sides of the Atlantic – in Africa and North and South America. Through the course, you will have a better understanding of the significant role slavery, the trans-Atlantic slave trade, and the abolition of the trade and slavery have played in shaping the Atlantic world socially, culturally, politically, and economically. The course readings, discussions, and written assignments will help you analyze both major historiographical questions and primary sources related to these topics.

Because this course is our interpretation of this period and these issues, we more than welcome lively discussion. The class will feature a mix of lectures and reading discussions, and we expect you to participate vigorously in both. Indeed, critical evaluation of the readings and lectures will be the key to success in all exams and writing assignments, as well as in class discussions.

In order to think critically about the reading, of course, you must do the reading. It will not be possible to do well in or enjoy this course without both participating in class and keeping up with the reading. Wise students will take heed: for unavoidable reasons of course structure, the amount of pages in each week varies widely. Thus we strongly urge each of you to not only keep up with the readings but read ahead of the prescribed schedule. But no matter how you accomplish it, keep in mind that doing and engaging with this reading is a vital part of the work you agree to do by taking this course.

Required Books:
*From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1830*, Walter Hawthorne
*The Diligent*, Robert Harms
*Slave Revolution in the Caribbean 1789-1804: A Brief History with Documents*, Laurent Dubois and John D. Garrigus
*Econocide: British Slavery in the Era of Abolition*, Seymour Drescher
Further readings will be assigned and available online.

Grading Breakdown:

- Class participation: 15%
- In-class reading responses: 15%
- Midterm (Oct. 8 or 9): 20%
- Research paper prospectus (due Sept. 28): 5%
- Research paper (due Nov. 30): 23%
- Final exam: 22%

Class Participation and In-Class Readings Responses

This part of your grade will come from our judgment of how engaged you are in the class. It is based largely on your attention to lectures and especially your contribution to our discussions of the assigned readings. In class discussions we will discuss the core issues involved in the readings rather than the details, so you should read for argument more than detail. We will grade your participation by looking at its general pattern across the semester. Thus two or three absences will not hurt you much, but more than that will, for if you are not in class you obviously cannot participate. What you say will matter at least as much as how much you talk. You should bring the readings to class with you on the days indicated.

It will be on days we discuss readings that you will write brief responses to the readings. We design the questions to both prepare you for discussion and reward you for engaging with the readings. These will be done in the first 5-8 minutes of class on those days; if you are late and miss them you cannot make them up. See below for excused absences and making up reading responses. There will be 11 of these and only 10 will count towards your grade.

Exams

The exams will feature mostly essays of various lengths. You will take the midterm in the Testing Center and the final in our usual classroom. The final will feature a comprehensive essay.

There will be only one, non-negotiable makeup time for the midterms and reading responses. If you miss either the midterm or a reading response and have an excuse, you can take a makeup on Wed. Dec. 5, time and place TBA.

Research paper and prospectus

The final product of these assignments should be a research paper with a clear argument engaging with other scholars’ arguments and based on research in primary sources. We will devote a class period to helping you launch this project, and will both be happily available to help you as you work towards making this the best paper you can.

Good papers will:
1) Have a clear thesis statement, and then will back that thesis up with specific evidence from the historical documents and readings in question. They will make logical use of that evidence;
2) Cite their sources clearly and consistently (we don’t care about citation format as much as that you do cite consistently and clearly);
3) Avoid both plagiarism and simply stringing other sources’ quotes together. In other words, their authors will cite when they both quote and paraphrase, and those authors will provide plenty of their own analysis rather than relying too much on quotations;
4) Violate zero (0) of the Helpful Writing Hints at the end of this syllabus, and in general will approach a clarity and felicity of style that will make their readers rejoice.

The prospectus should clearly state your research question (it’s better to research a question than a topic), discuss the significance of the question, then discuss how the sources proposed in the bibliography will help you answer that question.

The prospectus is to be no shorter than 2 and no longer than 3 pages, not including the (required) bibliography with full citations of the sources involved. It is due Friday, Sept. 28.

The final paper is to be no shorter than 10 and no longer than 13 pages of text (not including notes or bibliography). It must include either a bibliography or full citations the first time you cite every source. In meeting these page limits, you must use normal sized fonts and normal (1-inch) margins, and you are to double-space.

Turning in the written assignments on time is important: the late penalty for each is one half-grade per class day late. Papers turned in any time after the start of class on the due date will be considered one day late. So if a paper is due on a Monday, from the beginning of class that day until Wednesday any paper turned in will be considered one date late, Friday will be two days late, and so forth. And turning them in means giving us a hard copy – emailing us a paper is not turning it in. But emailing us outlines or drafts is recommended in the weeks leading up to the paper’s due date; see the Writing Hints for details. You will likely do much better if you do this.

**Academic Honesty:**

BYU students should seek to be totally honest in their dealings with others. They should complete their own work and be evaluated based upon that work. They should avoid academic dishonesty and misconduct in all its forms, including plagiarism, fabrication or falsification, cheating, and other academic misconduct. Students are responsible not only to adhere to the Honor Code requirement to be honest but also to assist other students in fulfilling their commitment to be honest. If you have any questions about these standards, and even if you don’t think you do, we suggest you read the Academic Honesty Policy available at honorcode.byu.edu.

If we detect academic dishonesty on any written assignment or exam, the offender will face a range of penalties at our discretion, from failing the assignment to failing the course.

**Other Disclaimers:**

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education and pertains to admissions, academic and athletic programs, and university-sponsored activities. Title IX also prohibits sexual harassment of students by university employees, other students, and visitors to campus. If you encounter sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 801-422-5895 or 1-888-238-1062 (24-hours), or http://www.ethicspoint.com; or contact the Honor Code Office at 801-422-2847.

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities
Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD Office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.

Class and Readings Schedule (which can change at any time – keep posted):

Week 1:
August 27       Class introduction
August 29       History of slavery: an introduction
August 31       Introduction to geography in the Atlantic world

Week 2:
Sept. 3        NO CLASS – Labor Day Holiday
Sept. 5        Africa before the Atlantic Slave Trade
Sept. 7        African slavery
                READ by 9/7: Miers and Kopytoff, Introduction to *Slavery in Africa* (online)

Week 3:
Sept. 10       Research papers: teaching you to fish
Sept. 12 and 14 The rise of plantations in the Atlantic

Week 4:
Sept. 17       Enslavement of Indians in the New World
                READ by 9/17: Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 1-60
Sept. 19 and 21 The dynamics of the early slave trade and the production of slaves in Africa
                READ by 9/19: Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 61-107

Week 5:
Sept. 24       The Middle Passage, part 1
                READ by 9/24: Harms, *The Diligent*, 1-186
Sept. 26       The Middle Passage, part 2
Sept. 28  The Numbers

** 9/28: Research Paper Prospectus Due **

Week 6:
Oct. 1  “Charter Generations” of Africans in the Atlantic world
Oct. 3  Slavery in Brazil, part 1
        READ by 10/3: Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 137-172
Oct. 5  Slavery in Brazil, part 2
        READ by 10/5: Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil*, 173-247

Week 7:
Oct. 8  NO CLASS – Take MIDTERM EXAM in Testing Center on Oct. 8 or 9
Oct. 10 The rise of sugar and slavery in the Caribbean
Oct. 12 Slavery in the Caribbean, part 1
        READ by 10/12: Harms, *The Diligent*, 333-410

Week 8:
Oct. 15 Slavery in the Caribbean, part 2
Oct. 17 Slavery and African communities in Ecuador: Interview with Jean Kapenda
Oct. 19 African Cultures in the Americas
        READ by 10/19: John Thornton “Transformations of African culture in the Atlantic world”, 206-234 in *Africa and Africans* (online)

Week 9:
Oct. 22 Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on Africa
        READ by 10/22: Excerpt from Walter Hawthorne *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves* (online)
Oct. 24 and 26 Slavery, the Atlantic Slave Trade, and the Age of Revolution

Week 10:
Oct. 29 The Haitian Revolution, part 1
        READ by 10/29: Dubois and Garrigus, *Slave Revolution*, v-62
Oct. 31
The Haitian Revolution, part 2
READ by 10/31: Dubois and Garrigus, *Slave Revolution*, 63-132

Nov. 2
The Haitian Revolution, part 3
READ by 11/2: Dubois and Garrigus, *Slave Revolution*, 133-196

**Week 11:**

Nov. 5
Abolition of the slave trade: an introduction

Nov. 7 and 9
Film: “Amazing Grace”
READ by 11/9: Adam Hochschild, “English Abolition: The Movie” (online)

**Week 12:**

Nov. 12 and 14
Motives for abolition: a throwdown
READ by 11/12: Drescher, *Econocide*

Nov. 16
The impact of slave trade abolition in Africa

**Week 13:**

Nov. 19
The rise of legitimate trade in Africa

Nov. 20
NO CLASS – work on research papers

**Week 14:**

Nov. 26 and 28
The impact of slave trade abolition in the New World

Nov. 30
Abolition of New World slavery in the 19th century

**11/30: Research Paper Due**

**Week 15:**

Dec. 3
Abolition of slavery in the 19th century, continued

Dec. 5
21st-century global slavery

FINAL EXAM: Wed., Dec. 12, 2:30-5:30 p.m.
HELPFUL WRITING HINTS

Clarity and felicity of expression are things that we, your gentle readers, value highly. We know “this is not an English course, blah, blah,” but writing skills are among those we hope you all will hone in this course, so we hope you’ll take these tips to heart. The FHSS Writing Lab (1051 JFSB, open M-F 9-3) can often also help with these and other matters, and you could benefit from showing them a draft before you turn it in. Be assured there is no stigma attached to getting help on writing – we all need help, or we’d be living large off our book sales profits. To this end, here are some specific suggestions:

1) Strive for simplicity in your writing. Short, direct sentences and phrases are much better than high-falutin’ fancy-pants oratory, even in an academic paper. Trying to be fancier than necessary will almost always earn you an “AWK” (for awkward). Most problems can be avoided by being simple and direct.

2) Remember that the point of language is to communicate, not to obscure, meaning. Read back over what you’ve written to make sure you are saying what you think you are saying. Don’t assume a spell check can catch everything – it just doesn’t work that way. You may feel like a fruitcake when you do it, but if you read a paper out loud you can often catch some of the most egregious or nonsensical errors.

3) You should also enlist someone else to proofread and read for meaning, to make sure you are not leaving unsaid what needs to be said. We both would also be delighted to read over drafts, outlines, etc., to help in this and other regards. (We will not read and comment on papers sent to us within two working days before a paper is due, however.)

4) Having someone else read your paper will also help you clarify points that you think are self-evident because you are closer to the subject. Keep in mind that you should assume your audience knows next to nothing about the subject.

5) Be sure you paper is a coherent essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion. You should present your argument clearly and then support it with relevant evidence. Be sure, as you construct and then read back over the essay, that one point leads logically to another, you transition between points well, etc. Logical presentation and flow will really help you present your points clearly (if you don’t, why bother?).

6) Strive for coherence within as well as between paragraphs. Remember the basics: each paragraph should have ONE (1) main idea, introduced well by a topic sentence. Topic sentences can also help in transitions between paragraphs / main ideas. The inventor of the paragraph sought to bless all our lives; honor his / her legacy in your writing.

Here are some very common problems that we trust you will look out for to keep us, your graders, friendly to your cause:
1) **The passive voice:** Avoid this like the plague. The passive voice is when the subject of your sentence has something “done to” it/him/her. A classic example of the passive voice is used in government, because it obscures the actor: “Mistakes were made.” The active voice is much better and clearer: “The CIA [or whoever] made mistakes.”

2) **Noun-verb disagreement:** When the noun is plural or the verb refers to more than one noun, the verb should be plural. Same with singular. And thoughout the whole sentence.

3) **Incomplete / run-on sentences:** Having a natural voice in writing doesn’t always mean you write like you talk. Each sentence should have a noun and a verb. (For good examples of incomplete sentences, see the second and third sentences just above in #2.) Perhaps a more common problem is the run-on sentence, which can often be avoided simply by keeping your sentences simple and direct.

4) **Tense inconsistency:** Oh, the whiplash we’ve gotten over the years reading sentences or paragraphs that switch from the past to the present tense and then back again! The easiest way to avoid this in a history paper is to write in the past tense for past events. But whatever tense you choose to describe past events, pick a tense and stick with it!

5) **Apostrophe and quotation mark confusion:** Caused by confusing possessives with plurals. The plural does not require an apostrophe, while the possessive does. The same goes for plural possessives. Keep these things straight. So for instance, you are taking Matt Mason’s course, but are not Masons yourselves. But if you go over to the Masons’ house, . . . you get the picture, I hope. Related problems come when people aren’t clear on how we use quotation marks in the United States. The British are delightful people, but get clear on American usage.

6) **Overuse / underuse of the comma:** I thought this was basic stuff before I started grading student papers. Be sure you know the rules on when to use and not use a comma.

In short, English can be a nutty language, and it takes some work to keep it from being an instrument of torture for your reader. So while this is far from an exhaustive writing guide, from a purely selfish perspective we hope it will keep you from repeating some of the mistakes that have put us on the rack in times past.