

Course Outcomes Guide

Directions: Please complete this form to document your progress toward improving student learning. For each item, indicate your progress and your anticipated next steps. Thank you!

Course/Program Title: HIS-207 Civil War

Date: Fall 2011

Course/Program Team: Tom Clemens

Expected Learning Outcomes

Successful students will have an appreciation and understanding of the events and people that, through the Civil War, have shaped modern American institutions. They will also augment and develop their research skills as well as enhancing their ability to read, comprehend and articulate complex concepts and ideas in a variety of formats

Assessment (How do or will students demonstrate achievement of each outcome? Please attach a copy of your assessment electronically.)

Two very broad essay papers done outside of class for the mid-term and final exams. A large and complex research assignment, with three different options for the guided research constitutes the third graded assignment. Attendance and participation are 10% of the final grade. (See assessment details at end of this document.)

Validation (What methods have you used or will you use to validate your assessment?)

Primary emphasis is placed on historical accuracy and completeness of the assignment. Secondary consideration is given to spelling, grammar and writing style. Both are validated through 30+ years of teaching experience and historical research and writing of my own.

Results (What do your assessment data show? If you have not yet assessed student achievement of your learning outcomes, when is assessment planned?)

I am generally pleased with the results of the assignments. This is a specialty class and usually only highly-motivated students sign up for the class.

Follow-up (How have you used or how will you use the data to improve student learning?)

Budget Justification (What resources are necessary to improve student learning?) N/A

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES: There will be two examinations in this class, a mid-term and a final. The mid-term test will center around the question of the causes of the Civil War. All discussions and note-taking will focus on this question during the first part of the course. The

final test will be similar, the questions on it will center around the reason one side or the other prevailed. Again our discussions and reading will focus on this single theme. Both of these assignments will be limited to ten type-written double-spaced, pages, excluding footnotes and bibliography. I will expect quality work, including the use of outside and even primary sources if pertinent. I will discuss the details in class early in the semester.

In addition to the exams, all students will complete a **research project**. There are three options with this project. One option is to **research an individual soldier**, perhaps relative of yours who fought in the war, or someone else. To complete this project you will consult the National Archives for service records, pension data and census information. Much of this is available on-line or through local library resources. This material can be presented as an oral report, and should be 5-7 minutes in length, and a written outline must be submitted to me. It can also be written. Written projects should be 5-10 pages, typed, properly footnoted, and include a bibliography.

Another option for research is working on cataloging and **transcribing the Ezra Carman Papers** from Antietam National Battlefield. Carman was the official historian there from 1894 to 1904, and he amassed a huge collection of correspondence about the battle, many of these letters are from veterans of the battle. There is a great need to get these letters transcribed into typescript, cataloged and filed, and organized. If a student is interested in pursuing this project I will assign them a portion of the letter files to work on and we can devise a written report that will summarize the learning attained from this work.

The third option is a **traditional research paper**. The topic must be approved by me and must be something that I do not know, and/or is not commonly known in the Civil War field. This is not as foreboding as it may seem, there is a lot of local information that can be researched which scholars have not used. Consult with me for a topic and hints about what to do. The same format applies here as the first option, *i.e.* written or oral, typed, footnoted, with bibliography.

All three graded projects will be averaged to determine the final grade in the course. I do not deduct for absences, but will round grades upward for regular attendance and participation.