

Department of History

Semester II Year 79

<u>COURSE NO.</u>	<u>COURSE TITLE</u>	<u>INSTRUCTOR</u>
573 -002	Undergraduate Seminar Comparative Slavery in the Americas	Stern

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A century after its abolition, Afro-American slavery continues to exert a profound legacy in many parts of the Western Hemisphere. For that very reason, few topics generate as many historical controversies, and contemporary views of racial relations have strongly influenced historians' interpretations of slavery. This course will examine both the realities of the slave experience, and the factors which shaped subsequent historical interpretations of the chattel institution. The context will be comparative, with emphasis on Brazil and the United States. Particular stress will be given to: 1) the relationship between slavery, as a pre-capitalist institution of labor and property, and the historical development of capitalism; 2) patterns of Afro-American culture, adaptation, and resistance, and the impact of the slaves' initiatives upon society; 3) common and divergent features of slavery and race relations in Latin America and the United States; and 4) the evolution of interpretations of slave societies. The ultimate goal of the course is to enrich our understanding of specific Afro-American experiences under slavery, and to relate those historical experiences to broader issues concerning the origins and development of exploitative labor systems, and the ideologies to which these systems give rise.

LECTURES

Since this is a seminar, it will rely on intensive weekly discussions rather than lectures.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS and EXAMINATIONS

There will be NO exams.

Required written work is subject to negotiation at the beginning of the course, but will probably involve one short paper and a longer one (total: 20-25 pages).

GRADING SYSTEM

Tentative weighting: discussion--50%; papers--50%.

REQUIRED READINGS

Readings stress major books and articles which combine theoretical, empirical, and historiographical interests. Required assignments are about 80-100 pages a week. (A list is available.)