



Peru State College  
**ENG/HIST 461: LITERATURE FIGHTS &  
RE-FIGHTS the CIVIL WAR**  
Syllabus – Spring – 2012

**Course Meets: 2:00 -3:15 p.m., Mondays & Wednesdays in Fine Arts 205**

**Instructor: Dr. Dan Holtz**

**Office: Fine Arts 206**

**Office Hours: 8 – 9:15 a.m. and 3:15 – 4:00 p.m. on M & W**

**9:30 – 11 a.m. and 3:30 – 4 p.m. on T & Th**

**Other times available by appointment**

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**Web page: <http://www.hpcnet.org/peru/schoolartsandsciences/language/holtz>**

**Required Textbooks:**

***Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stowe (Penguin Group)**

***The Killer Angels* by Michael Shaara (Random House)**

***The Unvanquished* by William Faulkner (Knopf)**

***Ride with the Devil* by Daniel Woodrell (Simon & Schuster)**

**Required Software: None**

**Course Description:** This course is an interdisciplinary literature/history course that examines how the Civil War and Reconstruction and the events and issues leading up to and arising from them have been portrayed in American literature. The course will include a field trip to a battlefield site in Kansas or Missouri.

The course supports the College's goals of instilling in students independent critical thought and the intellectual capacity for change. It also supports the English Department's goals of fostering critical reading skills and the clear expression of ideas, as well as the goals of promoting students' abilities to interpret and understand major literary works in a variety of genres and their abilities to master language skills in composition. Finally, it supports the History Department's goals of making students more knowledgeable about the major periods of American history and more able to understand the conflicting interpretations of major issues from those periods.

**Prerequisites: None**

**Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course you should:

Be more able to use the interplay of literature and history (and music as well) as a means of better understanding the Civil War and the events leading up to and following it. This course is interdisciplinary and will seek to make connections between literature and history throughout.

Better understand how literature can work to reinforce and, conversely, to undermine “popular history,” that is, historical beliefs which are held by large numbers of people but which are not supported by historical fact.

Better understand how the writers we study influenced or were influenced by the times in which they lived.

Have gained a more refined ability to respond to literature and related history through your own writing.

Be able to put together a creative presentation on the Civil War that melds understandings from both history and literature.

### **Expectations & Instructional Approach**

Classes will include lectures about the lives of the authors, their writing styles and techniques, and the history of the Civil War and Reconstruction periods. Just as often, though, classroom time will be devoted to whole-class or small-group discussion of the historical readings and the creative literature. Some classroom time toward semester’s end time will include presentations by you and your classmates of the interdisciplinary projects you have developed. Finally, some classroom time will be given to the viewing of selected videos that concern the writers and history we are studying.

Attendance and participation are vital to the learning experience. Consequently, I expect you to be at each class having read the material and ready to participate in the day's discussions and exercises. Please be in class on time. In order to foster a climate conducive to learning, please join me in treating your classmates with respect. I encourage you to ask questions, to seek my help when you need it, and to help your classmates understand the material.

### **Assessment and Grading**

This course is designed to let you study and appreciate the Civil War from a variety of perspectives, one of the most important of which you will develop through a project of your choosing. Consequently, there will be no tests, provided that people attend class regularly, read the assigned material, and submit their discussion questions, reaction papers, and completed study guides in a timely fashion. If I see that these things are not happening, I will schedule a final exam for students not meeting these requirements. Otherwise, the requirements are the following:

**Study Guides:** For some of the readings, particularly from the history sources, I will give you short study guides to direct your reading. You will answer the questions on these and submit them the days these readings are to be completed.

**Project:** This exercise will generate a major portion of your final grade. It should be equivalent to an eight- to 10-page research paper with at least five credible sources. However, it does not have to be a research paper. It does have to be a project that puts you on the road to becoming an expert in some aspect of the Civil War or Civil War literature.

For example from a literary angle, you may choose to explore the occurrences of anti-war messages in Civil War literature or common themes of Civil War literature written by southern writers, etc. From a historical angle, you may choose to explore the evolution of military strategy, the role/s of African Americans, the contributions of women, the role/s of music in presenting issues and images, etc. in or of the war. Whatever topic and kind of project you choose, however, you must have the equivalent of a one- to one-and-a-half-page, typed (double-spaced) summary of your project's intent.

The finished product for your project may take the form of a display or diorama, a videotape, a classroom presentation, a power-point or web-page presentation, a research paper, a summary of relevant, additional (those not assigned for this class) works read with an annotated bibliography, a set of study guides for the literature we've read, or original stories or poems about the Civil War, etc. I will meet with each of you individually in the first few weeks to help you start planning your project and will meet with you later in the semester to offer suggestions and to check your progress.

**Sometime during the last three weeks of the semester, you will present your project to the rest of the class.**

**These projects are due on Monday, April 9.**

**Reaction Papers:** Once every two weeks, I will give you two questions (from which you will choose one) on which to write a short reaction paper (**one to one-and-a-half pages [no more-no less]** typed, double-spaced [or space-and-a-half] using a type face no larger than 12 pts, with one-inch margins all around). These papers will deal with issues that arise from the readings and discussions, and you will submit them one week after you receive each pair of questions. Your reaction should be a thoughtful, unified response to the question that supports the main point you formulate. Your papers should also be free of distracting or repeated grammatical or mechanical errors. **You will complete six of these papers during the semester.** Because I will be giving you seven pairs of questions, you get to take a break on writing one of them—your choice. If you don't submit a paper on time, I will deduct one point for each day the paper is late.

**Field Trip:** There will be an all-day field trip to the Battle of Lexington site (Lexington, Missouri) or the Mine Creek Battlefield (about an hour south of Kansas City) site. If you cannot go on the field trip, I will assign you equivalent alternative work.

### **Grading Scale**

You can earn up to a total of 300 points for the semester. The following point levels will earn these respective grades:

270 points and above = A  
240 points = B  
210 points = C  
180 points = D

255 points = B+  
225 points = C+  
195 points = D+  
164 points and below = F

The project is worth 120 points.

Your reaction papers, in total, are worth 90 points, 15 for each one.

Your completed study guides, in total, are worth 40 points.

Attendance is worth 30 points. **Two or fewer unexcused absences** earns 30 points in this semester-grade category; **three** earns 25 points; **four** earns 22 points; **five** earns 19 points; and **more than five** earns no more than 16 points in this semester-grade category.

Your participation in the field trip or attendance and follow-up work for the equivalent activity are worth 20 points.

**I will also use instructor's discretion in figuring borderline grades.** In other words, if you are two or three points below a grade level but have attended regularly and participated well in class, you will probably get the next highest grade. By the same token, if your attendance and participation haven't been good, you may get the next lowest grade if you are two or three points above the borderline.

### **College's Incomplete Coursework Policy**

To designate a student's work in a course as incomplete at the end of a term, the instructor records the incomplete grade (I). Students may receive this grade only when serious illness, hardship, death in the immediate family, or military service during the semester in which they are registered prevents them from completing course requirements. In addition, to receive an incomplete, a student must have completed substantially all of the course's major requirements.

Unless extenuating circumstances dictate otherwise, students must initiate requests for an incomplete by filling out an Incomplete Grade Completion Contract, which requires the signature of the student, instructor, and Dean. The Incomplete Grade Completion contract cites the reason(s) for the incomplete and details the specific obligations the student must meet to change the incomplete to a letter grade. The date by which the student agrees to complete required work must appear in the contract. The Dean, the instructor, and the student receive signed copies of the Incomplete Grade Completion Contract.

Even if the student does not attend Peru State College, all incomplete course work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester. Unless the appropriate Dean approves an extension and if the student does not fulfill contract obligations in the allotted time, the incomplete grade automatically becomes an F.

### **College's Academic Integrity Policy**

The College expects all students to conduct themselves in a manner that supports an honest assessment of student learning outcomes and the assignment of grades that appropriately reflect student performance. It is ultimately the student's responsibility to understand and comply with instructions regarding the completion of assignments, exams, and other

academic activities. At a minimum, students should assume that at each assessment opportunity they are expected to do their own original academic work and/or clearly acknowledge in an appropriate fashion the intellectual work of others, when such contributions are allowed. Students helping others to circumvent honest assessments of learning outcomes, or who fail to report instances of academic dishonesty, are also subject to the sanctions defined in this policy.

Instances of academic dishonesty may be discovered in a variety of ways. Faculty members who assign written work ordinarily check citations for accuracy, run data base and online checks, and/or may simply recognize familiar passages that are not cited. They may observe students in the act of cheating or may become aware of instances of cheating from the statements of others. All persons who observe or otherwise know about instances of cheating are expected to report such instances to the proper instructor or Dean.

In order to promote academic integrity, the College subscribes to an electronic service to review papers for the appropriate citations and originality. Key elements of submitted papers are stored electronically in a limited access database and thus become a permanent part of the material to which future submissions are compared. Submission of an application and continued enrollment signifies your permission for this use of your written work.

NSCS Board of Trustees Policy 4220 states that each College “. . . will establish a distance learning assessment policy that will include, at a minimum, a substantial culminating experience that is proctored.” Peru State College’s policy is that each course that is offered entirely online will feature a proctored final exam that substantially measures the extent the course’s stated learning objectives are achieved. Online course syllabi will clearly state that, regardless of grades earned previously, the proctored final exam must be passed in order to receive credit for the course. Courses which feature graded site-based activities (e.g., teaching demonstrations) and/or video-taped presentations that occur near the end of the term, and that are designed to substantially assess the achievement of learning objectives, can be considered in compliance with this policy. Project-based capstone and graduate courses utilizing real-time discussions held by web-cam, phone or in person with the faculty member as part of the assessment process can also be considered in compliance with this policy.

Should an occurrence of academic misconduct occur, the faculty member may assign a failing grade for the assignment or a failing grade for the course. Each incident of academic misconduct should be reported to the Dean and the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The VPAA may suspend students for two semesters found to be responsible for multiple instances of academic dishonesty. The reason for the suspension will be noted on the student’s transcript.

A faculty member need present only basic evidence of academic dishonesty. There is no requirement for proof of intent. Students are responsible for

understanding these tenets of academic honesty and integrity. Students may appeal penalties for academic dishonesty using the process established for grades appeals.

### **Title IX Compliance Notice**

Peru State College is an equal opportunity institution. PSC does not discriminate against any student, employee or applicant on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or age in employment and education opportunities, including but not limited to admission decisions. The College has designated an individual to coordinate the College's nondiscrimination efforts to comply with regulations implementing Title VI, VII, IX, and Section 504. Inquiries regarding non-discrimination policies and practices may be directed to Eulanda Cade, Director of Human Resources, Title VI, VII, IX Compliance Coordinator, Peru State College, PO Box 10, Peru, NE 68421-0010, (402) 872-2230.

Students requesting reasonable accommodation and tutoring services should contact the Center for Achievement and Transition Services (CATS).

### **Tentative Course Schedule**

#### **Topics:**

- A. The Rise of Slave Culture and the Planter Class
- B. Abolitionist Literature
- C. Bleeding Kansas: The Preamble to the Civil War
- D. The War on the Battlefield and the Home Front
- E. Reconstruction and the Aftermath of the War

**Reading Schedule: First Half of the Semester** (I will supply the second half of the semester's schedule during the last week of February.)

<b>Date</b>	<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Activity</b>
Jan. 9		Introduction to course/ Explanation of syllabus Civil War knowledge quiz <b>(not graded)</b>
Jan. 11	Master-Class Pluralism, pp. 37 – 51 <b>(study guide due) / (Digital Copy)</b>	Watch Introductory Civil War video – Discussion of today's reading
Jan. 16	Master-Class Pluralism, pp. 51 – 68 <b>(study guide due)</b>	Discussion of today's reading – Begin watching <i>Gone with the Wind</i>
Jan. 18	<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> , chpts. I –V and chpts. VII – IX	Continue watching <i>Gone with the Wind</i> -- Discussion of today's reading
Jan. 23	<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> , chpts. X – XV	Discussion of today's reading
Jan. 25	<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> , chpt. XVIII and chpts. XX – XXVII	Sharing of reaction papers in class

	<b>** (First Reaction Paper Due)</b>	
Jan. 30	<i>Uncle Tom's Cabin</i> , chpts. XXVIII – XXXIV and XXXVI - XXXVIII	Discussion of today's reading
Feb. 1	Selections from <i>Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass</i> , <b>(On reserve in the library)</b>	Watch video on Frederick Douglass – Discussion of today's reading
Feb. 6	The Convenient Sin, <b>(Digital Copy) -- (study guide due)</b>	Discussion of today's reading
Feb. 8	Selections on Bleeding Kansas era and <i>Ride with the Devil</i> , chpts. 1 – 3 <b>** (Second Reaction Paper Due)</b>	Watch movie <i>Ride with the Devil</i> – Discussion of today's reading
Feb. 13	Daniel Woodrell / <i>Ride with the Devil</i> , chpts. 1-3	View selected scenes of movie adaptation of this book
Feb. 15	<i>Ride with the Devil</i> , chpts. 4-7	View selected scenes of movie adaptation of this book
Feb. 20	Michael Shaara: <i>The Killer Angels</i> , The Foreword and chpts. 1 & 2 of Monday, June 29	
Feb. 22	<i>The Killer Angels</i> , chpts. 3 & 4 of Monday, June 29 and chpt. 1 of Wednesday, July 1 <b>** (Third Reaction Paper due)</b>	
Feb. 27	<i>The Killer Angels</i> , chpts. 2 - 7 of Wednesday, July 1	
Feb. 29	<i>The Killer Angels</i> , chpts. 1 - 3 of Thursday, July 2	<b>No Class – District History Day Contest</b>

**FINAL TEST PERIOD – Wednesday, May 2, from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.**