This class is not only designed to teach you about United States History, but it is also intended to improve those skills known to be essential in the workplace. Those skills include the ability a) to identify, organize, plan and allocate resources, b) to assess skills, evaluate performance and provide feedback, c) participate as a member of a team, d) to teach others new skills, e) to work toward agreements involving exchange of resources and resolve divergent interests, f) to work well with men and women from diverse backgrounds, g) to acquire and evaluate information, h) to organize and maintain information, i) to interpret and communicate information, and j) to understand complex inter-relationships.

During the semester you will be assigned to an Historical Scene Investigation Team. Your team’s assignment will be to uncover an unknown piece of history and expose it. Your team will meet in class several times over the course of the semester to give each other assistance and to organize your evidence.

Your HSI training will take place in the library on 12 September. Meet your team there.

Step One: Find an Historical Scene (Primary Source).

a. Find a short explanation of the difference between Primary and Secondary sources.
b. Find a piece of history that you would be interested in analyzing, i.e. a letter or two, newspaper article, census data, court document, etc. (Must be a primary source).

More and more historical evidence is being digitized and placed online. If you go to Google and search for “Primary Source Collection” you will find many sites that house collections. Some that I found:

First Person Narratives of the American South, 1860-1920
North American Slave Narratives
True and Candid Compositions: The Lives and Writings of Antebellum Students at the University of North Carolina.
The Church in the Southern Black Community
see specifically Slave Songs of the United States
Repositories of Primary Sources
www.uidaho.edu/special-collections/other.repositories.html

c. Make sure no one has left footprints all over your Historical Scene (Ensure Originality of Proposed Project):

*This project was conceived and written in part by Laurie Wu McClain, Social Sciences and Asian Studies Departments. For the purpose of formatting for this Web page, the assignment has been edited and the example of the primary source has not been included.
Rough Search: Do a Web search for your primary source. Check the various websites that mention or link to your primary source. Keep a specific list of all the steps you took and what you found at each step.

Specific Search of Infotrac Expanded Academic Database. Search this database and keep track of all the steps you took to confirm that the work you plan to do is unique. If your work would not be original, find another source.

Step Two: Collect Your Evidence

Identify the evidence this Historical Scene provides. Although your source may be short, 4 -6 pages, you need to research each piece of evidence in depth. Make a list of all nouns in the source: people, events, places, times, (who, what, where, when) and research each one carefully, thinking about the motive (why).

d. Divide up the work and begin researching your evidence. Ask yourself such questions as: Where is Georgia, Bullock Co? What is the history of that area? When was it founded? By who? What kinds of things do they do there? Farming? What kind? What was going on in 1857? Etc.

Step Three: Build Your Case

You will need to present your case using the Guidelines for Writing a Well Organized Essay provided in your syllabus. Discuss what you have discovered and what conclusions your evidence has lead you to. Create an overall thesis statement to work from. Divide your conclusions into sections and assign each team member a section to write up. I would recommend making a complete copy of the evidence and thesis statement for each investigator to refer to.

Your team will need to prepare a common introduction, thesis, conclusion, and bibliography. Each investigator is responsible for the grammar, punctuation, organization, fluency, and footnotes (Turabian Style) of their section.

Turn in on one page:
- Explanation of difference between primary and secondary sources
- List of evidence found in your Historical Scene
- Rough Search Details
- Specific Search Details

A Copy of:
- Your Evidence (Research)
- Your Formal Case (Final Paper)
- Your Primary Source
Step Four: Team Member Participation Review

You will be asked to review, confidentially, the performance of each of your team members. Each individual team member will be reviewed by all other team members. A review form is attached. You need to make copies of this form. Fill one out, respectfully and honestly, on the performance of each team member. Sign these and turn them in to me 21 November 2006 (the same day as the Final Paper).

Step Five: Go To Court

Each HSI Team will present their case to the class during the last week of school or during the final exam time period. This is intended to be fun, entertaining and rewarding. Be creative. This can be a serious presentation, a mock court room drama, a skit, a musical, whatever you wish. Your team will have 20 minutes to present its findings. Your attendance and participation is required.

Honors Project:

If you wish, you can take the Honors Option for this class and conduct an investigation on your own. You would need to expand your research to include additional primary sources, additional secondary sources (3+) , write a fifteen page paper, and make a formal presentation of your research to the class (visual aids, outlines, dress for the occasion). Honors Students also have additional due dates.

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History 17A                                          TEAM EVALUATION FORM

1) What contributions did ______________________________ make to this team research project?

2) If you were working at the same company as ____________________________, and you were assigned to work on a project with him/her, would you feel that you could rely on him/her to do a good job? Why or why not? In answering this question, please consider his/her attitudes (such as attendance, willingness to cooperate, motivation to work), and skills (such as research, writing, and speaking skills).

______________________________

Sign your name here