Proposal for HIS 5370 (Seminar in Early American History)

1. Catalogue Description
   a) HIS 5370  
   b) Seminar in Early American History  
   c) (3-0-3)  
   d) F  
   e) Early Am His Sem  
   f) An intensive study of selected topics in Colonial and Revolutionary American History. This will be a reading and discussion course. The readings will cover both standard historical works and new research. Grading will consist of class discussion, weekly writing assignments, and historiographical essays.  
   g) Graduate standing or permission of the instructor  
   h) Fall 2004

2. Objectives and Evaluations of the Course
   a) Student Learning Objectives
      1) Students will be able to articulate key arguments of historiographical debates.  
      2) Students will interpret and discuss the primary arguments of historical articles and monographs.  
      3) Students will evaluate historical evidence and its use in historical arguments.  
      4) Students will take a position on specific historiographical issues, and articulate their own arguments in support of their position.  
   b) Methods of Assessment
      1) Historiographical Essays—these essays will assess students’ grasp of a distinct historiographical issue, and require them to take a position on those issues. During the semester, students will produce four historiographical essays, worth 10% each, for a total of 40%.  
      2) Weekly reading responses—these weekly papers will assess students’ ability to recognize and evaluate arguments, and their ability to evaluate the use of evidence. Students will produce fifteen 1-2 page responses, equaling 30% of the total grade.  
      3) Participation—class participation will demonstrate students’ ability to articulate ideas verbally and to engage in historiographical debate. Class participation will constitute 30% of the total grade.  
   c) This course is not technology-delivered.  
   d) This course is eligible for graduate credit.
3. Outline of the Course
   a) The course will be taught in 15 weeks, meeting once a week for 2½ hours.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1: Colonial America: A Developmental Model
   a) The New England v. Chesapeake Model
   b) Social Simplification to Social Elaboration
   c) Anglicization v. Americanization

Week 2: English Origins
   a) The World We Have Lost?
   b) A Mobile Society
   c) Overpopulation, Recession, and Migration

Week 3: Migration and Settlement: The Chesapeake
   a) Origins of Chesapeake Settlers
   b) Tobacco andIndentured Servitude
   c) Opportunity and Mobility in the Chesapeake

Week 4: Religion and Commerce: New England
   a) Were Religion and Commerce Incompatible Ideas?
   b) The New England Merchants and the Elaboration of the Trade
   c) Commercial Towns v. Agricultural Towns: Diversity in New England?

Week 5: The West Indies
   a) The Role of Slavery in Sugar Economies
   b) The Paradox of a White Minority

Week 6: Slavery and the South
   a) The Chesapeake and the Lower South: Two Models
   b) Accommodation/Resistance Paradigm
   c) Was Slavery Capitalist or Pre-Capitalist?

Week 7: Diversity and the Middle Colonies
   a) Were the Middle Colonies the “Best Poor Man’s Country?”
   b) What was the Impact of Diversity on Government and Stability?
   c) Were the Middle Colonies a Model for 19th century America?

Week 8: A Middle Ground?
   a) Richard White’s Theory and its Critics
   b) The Problems of Regionalism
   c) Is a Middle Ground Possible in an Imperial Context?

Week 9: Gender and Power
   a) Gender Theory
   b) Race and Gender
   c) How Total was Patriarchy?

Week 10: Political Culture and Reputation
   a) The Problem of a Non-aristocratic Elite
b) Hierarchy and Reputation  
c) Colonial Government and the Electorate  

Week 11: Class and Popular Culture  
a) Tavern Culture  
b) Elite Culture  
c) Patronage and Deference: Reality or Wishful Thinking?  

Week 12: The Seven Years War  
a) Imperial Politics and the Colonies  
b) The First World War?  
c) Did the French and Indian War make the American Revolution?  

Week 13: The Coming Crisis  
a) The Stamp Act Crisis and its Outcome  
b) Internal v. External Taxation: A Genuine Argument, or a British Misunderstanding?  
c) Constitutional Arguments  

Week 14: Republicanism and the American Revolution  
a) Classical Republicanism and Political Thought  
b) Republicanism and the Founders  
c) Was the Revolution Radical or Conservative?  

Week 15: Student Paper Presentations  

b) N/A

4. Rationale  
a) HIS 5370 is a new graduate-level seminar. It will replace HIS 4903 and HIS 4904 for graduate credit. The introduction of the course will allow the History department to increase its graduate course offerings. A graduate level course will provide more in-depth training for graduate students, allowing for investigations of historiographical questions that cannot really be addressed in a combined graduate/undergraduate course.  
b) HIS 5370 is a graduate level reading seminar. It will provide specialized training for graduate students in the study of Colonial American History.  
c) HIS 5370 is not similar to any other graduate course being offered.  
d) HIS 5370 will serve as an approved elective for the Master of Arts in History and the Master of Arts in Historical Administration Programs.

5. Implementation  
a) Michelle LeMaster  
b) N/A  
c) Kathleen Brown, Good Wives, Nasty Wenches and Anxious Patriarchs: Gender, Race, and Power in Colonial Virginia  
Jack P. Greene, Pursuits of Happiness: The Social Development of Early Modern British Colonies and the Formation of American Culture
Philip D. Morgan, *Slave Counterpoint: Black Culture in the Eighteenth-Century Chesapeake and Lowcountry*
Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*
Gordon Wood, *Creation of the American Republic, 1776-1787*

Additional articles and books on reserve.

6. **Community College Transfer**
   
   N/A

7. **Date Approved by Department of History Curriculum Committee**
   
   October 1, 2003

8. **Date Approved by College of Arts and Humanities Curriculum Committee**
   
   October 15, 2003

9. **Date Approved by CAA**
   
   December 6, 2003