

# **Perspectives in History: Creation of the American Republic Fall 2021**

21:510:315  
Rutgers University-Newark  
Monday 6:00 pm – 9:00 pm  
Bradley Hall 403

Prof. Brian Murphy  
bm628@rutgers.edu  
Office Hours via Zoom by appointment

This course will explore different events and writings during the collapse of British rule in the American colonies leading up to the War of Independence and the formal declaration of independence in 1776, followed by war and the constitution of the American republic a decade later.

In the course we will look at more than just the usual 'greatest hits' of writings and events during this period. We'll take deep dives with transformational texts and a range of primary sources – newspapers, essays, letters – from a range of perspectives near and distant from the centers of power and authority in the early American period. We'll discuss how these sources can be interpreted to put together a narrative and make sense of the past, doing the work of history to analyze and weigh evidence and critically examine the source base from which different writers have arrived at wildly varying interpretations of this period's events.

## **Learning Goals and Course Objectives:**

Your objective in this course is to develop the skills necessary to interpret and analyze sources and information. This will be accomplished through close readings of documents, written responses to those readings, and discussions about the presented material.

- Recognize and analyze a variety of historical documents known as "primary sources"
- Assess primary sources in terms of their reliability, veracity, and bias
- Evaluate how historians use primary sources to build their own interpretations of the past
- Generate original historical arguments using evidence gleaned from reading primary sources
- Improve your critical thinking and written skills through a critical engagement with early American history

## **Grading and Assignments:**

This is a writing intensive course. Students will produce 6 response papers and one final paper. Each response paper will be worth 10% of your grade; the final paper will be worth 40% for a total of 100%.

Papers may be turned in electronically by midnight on the due date. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per week unless you have requested an extension prior to the due date.

**Assigned Texts:**

The following texts are **required** for this course and should be purchased, borrowed, or otherwise in your possession for this course.

Mary Bilder, *Madison's Hand: Revising the Constitutional Convention*

Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*

Annette Gordon-Reed and Peter S. Onuf, *Most Blessed of the Patriarchs: Thomas Jefferson and the Empire of Imagination*

Robert Parkinson, *Thirteen Clocks: How Race United the Colonies and Made the Declaration of Independence*

**Canvas:**

All other readings will be assigned and distributed via Canvas.

**Email:**

My email address is [bm628@rutgers.edu](mailto:bm628@rutgers.edu).

**Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty:**

*As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>*

**COVID and Health Safety**

In order to protect the health and well-being of all members of the Rutgers-Newark community, masks must be worn by all persons inside campus buildings when in the presence of others, and in buildings in non-private enclosed settings (e.g., common workspaces, workstations, meeting rooms, classrooms, etc.). Masks should securely cover the nose and mouth. Masks must be worn during class meetings. Each day before you

arrive on campus or leave your residence hall, you must complete the brief survey on the My Campus Pass symptom checker self-screening app found at: [myRutgers Portal](#).

### **Technology Resources for Students:**

<https://coronavirus.rutgers.edu/technology-resources-for-students/>

### **Counseling Center:**

The Rutgers-Newark Counseling Center provides a number of counseling and consultative services to enrolled and eligible undergraduate and graduate students. For students, if you are seeking individual or group therapy, you can expect to find a safe, supportive space to collaboratively identify and begin to change the thoughts, behaviors, and beliefs that prevent you from being your best self. <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu>

### **Disabilities:**

Rutgers welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form: <https://webapps.rutgers.edu/student-ods/forms/registration>.

### **Students with Temporary Conditions/Injuries:**

Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury that is adversely affecting their ability to fully participate in their courses should submit a request for assistance at: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

### **Students Who are Pregnant:**

The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist students with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy: (973) 353-1906 or [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu).

### **Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:**

Students experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, should know that help and support are available. To report an incident, contact the Office of Title IX and

ADA Compliance: (973) 353-1906 or [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu). To submit an incident report: [tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm](https://tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm). To speak with a staff member who is confidential and does **NOT** have a reporting responsibility, contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance: (973) 353-1918 or [run.vpva@rutgers.edu](mailto:run.vpva@rutgers.edu).

### **Food:**

PantryRUN, the campus food pantry, helps students who have difficulty affording enough healthy food to remain focused on their studies and stay healthy. You can find hours and information here: <https://myrun.newark.rutgers.edu/pantryrun>.

### **Writing:**

The Rutgers University-Newark Writing Center provides tutoring for students who want to strengthen their reading, writing, and research skills and offers individual sessions and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers University-Newark campus. More details here: <https://sasn.rutgers.edu/student-support/tutoring-academic-support/writing-center>.

### **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS STATEMENT:**

“Lectures and materials utilized in this course, including but not limited to videocasts, podcasts, visual presentations, assessments, and assignments, are protected by United States copyright laws as well as Rutgers University policy. As the instructor of this course, I possess sole copyright ownership. You are permitted to take notes for personal use or to provide to a classmate also currently enrolled in this course. Under no other circumstances is distribution of recorded or written materials associated with this course permitted to any internet site or similar information-sharing platform without my express written consent. Doing so is a violation of the university’s [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

Similarly, these copyright protections extend to original papers you produce for this course. In the event that I seek to share your work further, I will first obtain your written consent to do so. Finally, as the instructor for this course, I have the responsibility to protect students’ right to privacy. Classroom recordings of students will therefore be treated as educational records under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the U.S. federal law that governs access to educational information and records. Instructors and students must provide notification if any part of online sessions are to be recorded, and such recordings cannot be circulated outside the course.”

### **SEMESTER SCHEDULE**

*All assignments will be posted on Canvas. See due dates for each assignment.*

### **Week 1 (September 8)**

**Introduction**

**Week 2 (September 13)**

**How do we define 'early America'?**

**Week 3 (September 20)**

**Colonists and Native Americans**

*Response Paper #1 Due*

**Week 4 (September 27)**

**Colonial Policy**

**Week 5 (October 4)**

**The Imperial Crisis**

*Response Paper #2 Due*

**Week 6 (October 11)**

**Welcome to the Resistance**

**Week 7 (October 18)**

**Making War, Declaring Independence pt. I**

*Response Paper #3 Due*

**Week 8 (October 25)**

**Making War, Declaring Independence, pt. II**

**Week 9 (November 1)**

**Loyalism**

*Response Paper #4 Due*

**Week 10 (November 8)**

**Critical Period**

**Week 11 (November 15)**

**Constituting the Republic**

**Week 12 (November 22)**

**An 'Empire of Liberty'**

*Response Paper #5 Due*

**Week 13 (November 29)**

**Anti-Federalism**

**Week 14 (December 6)**

**Politics in the New Regime**

*Response Paper #6 Due*

**Week 13 (December 13)**

**Wrap-Up**

*Final Papers Due TBD*

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