

21:512:201:07 History of The United States

Lecture Location: Engelhard Hall 215

Lecture Meeting Times: Tuesday & Thursday 11:30am – 12:50am

Instructor: AJ Blandford

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm

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Course description:

In this course we will learn about some of the major events that helped to shape the development of the United States of America. Beginning with a brief review of various global circumstances prior to first contact in the Americas we will then shift our focus specifically on the regions of North America and the Caribbean that did, or might have, become, the United States of America. We will follow social, political, technological, environmental, and cultural changes in these diverse regions up to the years in which it seemed the national experiment might fail, and close the course by looking at how the Nation reconstructed itself after the Civil War.

At the end of this course you should have a good understanding of key events, and important individuals, but also some appreciation for the more ambiguous factors that contribute to historical change over time—coincidence, unintended consequences, confusion, and collaboration.

In this class, students will regularly practice their writing skills in short writing assignments, a midterm, and a final exam, and will have many opportunities to express their ideas verbally in class discussions. In both written assignments and class discussions, students will practice reading and analyzing primary sources, and will develop their analytical skills by identifying the readings' main theses, supporting arguments, evidence, assumptions, and rhetorical strategies.

Course Requirements:

Students are required to attend lectures and take notes. The books or essays marked "Readings" must be read before the start of the lecture for which they are assigned. Student participation in the discussion makes up 10% of the grade. Aside from course participation, there are five short response papers, five quizzes, one midterm, and one final exam. The midterm and final exam will be composed of short answers and more extensive essays in which you will be asked to address broad themes.

1. Participation in class discussion. Students are expected to read the assigned texts before the class (by date indicated on the syllabus). Simple attendance in class is not factored into the participation grade – students are required to come to class ready with questions or observations about the

readings and to take part in the discussion to earn a good participation grade. Being merely present is not enough to receive a good participation grade.

2. Short Response Papers. There will be five short response papers. Grades for the assignments will be based on three factors: 1. originality and persuasiveness of argument; 2. use of evidence from the assigned texts; 3. prose mechanics: grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. Assignments **MUST** be handed in at the beginning of class. I will only accept late written assignments in case of emergency, but proof of emergency is required. If students know they will not be able to attend class (for instance for religious holiday observance), they must submit the assignment in advance. There will be one extra credit option later in the semester to replace a missing assignment or a low assignment grade.

3. Pop Quizzes. There will be five quizzes assigned throughout the semester. The quizzes will be ten minutes long, given at the beginning of the class session, and based on the content of the texts to be discussed in that particular class meeting. They will be administered randomly so you should always come to class familiar with the material.

4. Midterm. The in-class, closed book Midterm will be comprised of a series of short answer question and one synthetic essay that will allow you to integrate the material from the readings and lectures.

5. Final Exam. The in-class, closed book Final exam will be structured similarly to the Midterm, offering you the opportunity to improve your performance based on what was, and was not successful on the midterm. In addition to the short answers and essay question, the Final Exam will include an additional, cumulative essay question asking you to concisely synthesize the semester's material.

Grading:

In-class participation: 10%

Quizzes: 20%

Assignments: 20%

Midterm: 20%

Final exam: 30%

Grading Rubric:

A: Outstanding A-: Outstanding, with one or two areas of improvement B+: Very good B: Good B-: Good overall, with some significant weaknesses C+: Satisfactory, with some potential for improvement C: Satisfactory, but needs significant development C-: Barely satisfactory D: Poor: overwhelming flaws F: Failing: doesn't complete assignment

The grades are applied to your work in the class: at the college level, this means the final product of your work – what you hand in to me – not just on the amount

of effort you put into the work. (In other words, students don't get an "A for effort" at the college level.) "Outstanding" is not defined on how the final product compares to your own previous work, but on how it compares to other students' work. All of this is a reflection of the real world: in the professional working world that you will soon be entering, you will succeed based on the quality of your work, and not just on how hard you try. However, substantial improvement in the quality of your work over the course of the semester will factor into my overall assessment of your performance.

I am happy to talk to you about your assignments and the readings any time during the semester – but I will only do so in office hours. You can send me short informational questions via email, but for an evaluation of your work, or detailed questions about the material you must make the effort to come to my office hours in person. If you have a scheduling conflict with my regular office hours, email me to make an appointment at another time.

Class Rules:

The History of the United States is largely a story of the rise of and interplay between individual rights and civic duties. The classroom is a microcosm of that relationship, and the classroom rules reflect a respect for individual rights and the need for group responsibilities. I expect students to behave in a manner that shows respect for the civic community: for others' needs and desire to learn. Any behavior that might be disruptive to other students, making it difficult for them to hear or distracting them from the lecture, or in any way intimidates them from participating in class, is prohibited and will be counted against the participation grade. This means, in concrete terms: no talking in private conversations (even in whispers), no cell phone use or any other form of texting, no surfing the web, no working on other course homework. Arriving at class late or leaving early is extraordinarily disruptive to other students, and is only acceptable in an emergency situation. More than anything else, though, private conversations draw attention away from the common civic forum – if I have to stop the class to ask you to stop a private conversation, you will receive an F for your participation grade for the course.

Attendance policy:

Attendance is required. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed classes. Excused vs. Unexcused absences: The Rutgers-Newark Undergraduate catalog (http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_current/pg576.html) states: "The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions."

If you plan to claim a religious holiday as an excused absence, you must inform me of this fact within the first two weeks of class. As a serious adherent of your

faith, you should know at the outset of the semester which holidays are important enough to warrant time away from the civic community of the classroom.

If you have more than four unexcused absences, your overall course grade will be lowered by a partial grade (from B+ to B, for example). If you have more than six unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered by one full grade (B+ to C+, for example). Any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F.

Late assignments and exams:

Short Response Papers: I will not accept late assignments – it creates chaos. You can always hand an assignment in early. If you know that you will be absent on a particular day, plan ahead and email the assignment to me early. For unexpected circumstances: I will provide one make-up opportunity to replace a missed or low grade, which will act as your insurance policy against not being able to hand in an assignment.

Pop Quizzes: it is impossible to make up the quizzes, as it defeats their purpose entirely. There is no solution to this problem other than: come to class on time, having read the materials. I will drop the lowest of the five quiz grades, so this is your insurance policy against missing one quiz due to unforeseen circumstances.

Disabilities:

Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, requiring assistance and/or accommodation should speak with Disability Services in a timely manner to set up appropriate accommodations.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and an ethical offense. It violates both your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those students who took the time to work on the assignment honestly. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: "On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment.

You may only use the texts assigned in this syllabus to complete the assignments, quizzes, and exams. Be original in your thinking but keep your references grounded in the material specific to this course. Anything we have

discussed in class counts towards this source base, so the more you bring to discussion the better.

Course Readings:

The following books are required for the course. They are available at New Jersey Books, 167 University Avenue (corner of University and Bleeker) and at the Rutgers University Book Store. They are also on two-hour reserve at Dana Library.

Required Books: Nancy Hewitt and Steven F. Lawson, *Exploring American Histories*. Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2013.

The rest of the required readings are either on Blackboard (B) under 'Course Documents' or on-line (you can follow the links on the syllabus).

Reading & Class Schedule

(Subject to Modification)

1. Tuesday 9/2: Mapping and Global Frontiers to 1585

Textbook: Chapter 1: pp. 2-33

2. Thursday 9/4: New Identities in the New World

Blackboard: Camilla Townsend, *Malintzin's Choices*.

Blackboard: Cabeza de Vaca's *Narrative*

3. Tuesday 9/9: Colonization and Conflicts 1550 - 1680

Textbook: Chapter 2: pp. 34 - 64

4. Thursday 9/11: Trade Networks, Scarcity and Resource Wars

Blackboard: Jeffrey L. Hantman "Long-Term History, Positionality, Contingency, Hybridity: Does Rethinking Indigenous History Reframe the Jamestown Colony?"

Jean Granderson, "New World Tempests: Environment, Scarcity, and the Coming of the Pequot War"

****Short Response Paper Due****

5. Tuesday 9/16: Global Changes Reshape Colonial America 1680- 1750

Textbook: Chapter 3: pp. 65-96.

6. Thursday 9/18: Atlantic Creoles, Slavery & Uprisings

Blackboard: Bacon's Rebellion Documents (1676)

Jill Lepore *The Name of War*

New York Slave Rebellion Trials (1741)

Tacky's Rebellion <http://revolt.axismaps.com/project.html>

- 7. Tuesday 9/23: Religious Strife and Social Upheavals 1680 – 1750**
Textbook: Chapter 4: pp. 97 – 128.
- 8. Thursday 9/25 : Refinement & Enlightenment**
Blackboard: T.H. Breen “Baubles of Britain”
Carline Winterer “Where is America in the Republic of Letters ?”
<http://republicofletters.stanford.edu/casestudies/franklin.html>
****Short Response Paper Due****
- 9. Tuesday 9/30: Wars and Empires 1750 – 1774**
Textbook: Chapter 5: pp. 129 – 160.
- 10. Thursday 10/2: Gaining and Losing ‘Middle Ground’**
Blackboard: Paul Mapp and *The Elusive West*
Fred Anderson *The War That Made America*
Neolin’s Dream and Pontiac’s War
- 11. Tuesday 10/7: Revolutions 1775 – 1783**
Textbook: Chapter 6: pp. 161 – 192.
- 12. Thursday 10/9: Whose Revolution?**
Blackboard: Massachusetts Slave Freedom Petitions
Thomas Paine *Common Sense*
The Declaration of Independence
Sun Bok Kim “The Limits of Politicization”
- 13. Tuesday 10/14: Political Cultures 1783 – 1800**
Textbook: Chapter 7: pp. 193 – 226.
- 14. Thursday 10/16:A Contested Republic**
Blackboard: The Federalist Papers
Terry Bouton “A Road Closed”
The Constitution and The Bill of Rights
Murray on Sexual Equality (1790)
****Short Response Paper Due****
- 15. Tuesday 10/21: New Frontiers 1790 – 1820**
Textbook: Chapter 8: pp. 227 – 257.
- 16. Thursday 10/23: The Age of Revolutions**
Blackboard: Olaudah Equiano *A Strange and Interesting Narrative*
Gordon Wood “The French Revolution in America”

Alexander Hamilton Criticizes the Louisiana Purchase
Arturo Linklater *An Artist in Treason*

17. Tuesday 10/28: Defending and Redefining the Nation 1809 – 1832

Textbook: Chapter 9: pp. 258 – 291.

18. Thursday 10/30: Bank Wars & Indian Removal

Blackboard: Theda Purdue and Michael Green “Indian Removal Policy”
Readings from The Cherokee Phoenix
Jackson’s Bank Veto
Daniel Walker Howe, “Battles over Sovereignty”
Alexis De Tocqueville Democracy in America

19. Tuesday 11/4: Slavery Expands South and West, 1830 – 1850

Textbook: Chapter 10: pp. 292 – 325.

20. Thursday 11/6: The Chattel Principle

Blackboard: Frederick Douglas
Solomon Northrup
North Carolina Slave Codes
Walter Johnson *Soul By Soul*

21. Tuesday 11/11: Social and Cultural Ferment in the North, 1820 – 1850

Textbook: Chapter 11: pp. 326 – 359.

22. Thursday 11/13: Abolition Takes Hold Amid a New Awakening

Blackboard: David Walker and William Lloyd Garrison
Angela Grimké on Women’s Rights
“Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions”
Sojourner Truth “Ain’t I a Woman” (1851)

****Short Response Paper Due****

23. Tuesday 11/18: Imperial Ambitions and Sectional Crisis, 1848 – 1861

Textbook: Chapter 12: pp. 360 – 391.

24. Thursday 11/20: Going West

Blackboard: Andrés Reséndez “An Expedition and Its Many Tales”
Theda Purdue and Michael D. Green “The Trail of Tears”
Richard White *It’s All Your Misfortune and None of My Own*

25. Tuesday 11/25: Civil War, 1861 – 1865

Textbook: Chapter 13, pp. 392 – 423.

Blackboard: “Lincoln’s 1st Inaugural Address” and “Gettysburg Address”

26. Thursday 11/27: Thanksgiving NO CLASS

27. Tuesday 12/2: Emancipations and Reconstructions, 1863 - 1877

Textbook: Chapter 14: pp. 424 – 457.

Blackboard: “Emancipation Proclamation”

28. Thursday 12/4: Remembering and Forgetting

Blackboard: Reconstruction Amendments

Eric Foner *A Short History of Reconstruction*

Steven Hahn *A Nation Under Its Feet*

****Short Response Paper Due****

29. Tuesday 12/9 LAST CLASS: Looking Back and Looking Forward

Review and Final Thoughts