

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES I

Course Number: 21:512:201:01
Mondays, 2:30-3:50pm & Wednesdays, 1-2:20pm
Conklin Hall, Room 346
Fall 2014

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Office Hours: Mondays, 1-2pm & Wednesdays, 11:30am-12:30pm, or by appointment
Office: 327 Conklin Hall

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces the history of the United States, from the beginnings of European colonization of the Americas in the fifteenth century, through the era of Reconstruction after the Civil War. In addition to providing a solid grounding in key political and economic aspects of American history, this course will also explore important questions in cultural and social history.

Most of what counts as “history” in American popular culture is a catalog of the deeds of a minority of the population: able-bodied white men who owned property and were the heads of families. This course will give as much attention to the rest of the inhabitants of the United States—women, Native Americans, enslaved Africans and their descendants, laborers, immigrants, children, the disabled, sexual nonconformists, and others. In particular, we will be paying close attention to the ways in which the lines dividing full “citizens” from “the rest” shifted over time, as different bodies and the labor they performed were endowed with different symbolic and cultural meaning. By studying the parallel and mutually reinforcing logic of settler colonialism, racism, and sexism in the early United States, we can come to see how they were, paradoxically, constituent elements in the creation of American ideals of equality and justice.

Students will learn and practice techniques for analyzing primary source documents, images, and material culture; and to develop and support historical arguments, drawing on evidence from our class readings as well as other scholarly sources. Reading and studying material for each chapter outside of class is extremely important—we will use the class time to work with primary documents and discuss key terms and themes related to the material. Students must complete and submit a short quiz or preparatory assignment on Blackboard prior to every class.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance and participation in class are required—see details under “Policies” below. For each unexcused absence beyond three, your FINAL GRADE will drop by 5%.

25% Blackboard readings assignments/quizzes (due BEFORE each class)

15% Three primary source analyses

60% Exams (October 1, November 5, December 17)

POLICIES

Academic Integrity All assignments submitted for this class must be your own original work, and information derived from other sources—whether or not you quote it directly—must be cited appropriately. All instances of plagiarism and cheating will be investigated fully, in accordance with the Rutgers Policy of Academic Integrity (<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>). All students are required to sign the Academic Integrity pledge on Blackboard prior to the third week of class.

Accommodations If you require accommodations to meet course requirements, please inform me as early in the semester as possible. If you do not already have a Letter of Accommodation from Disability Services, please contact the Paul Robeson Campus Center Office of Student Life and Leadership to obtain one (<http://robeson.rutgers.edu/studentlife/disability.html>).

Attendance Students are expected to make every effort to attend class regularly. Excused absences require documentation in writing, and are defined by the course catalog as: “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.” More than three unexcused absences will negatively affect your participation grade. Any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Cell Phones Except in cases of emergency, cell phones must be turned completely off during class.

Communication Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions related to the class. I strongly urge everyone to take advantage of my office hours—or to make an appointment if you are unable to come then. I will respond to all emails within 24 hours, so please plan ahead if you have a question related to a paper or exam.

Lecture Slides PowerPoints for all lectures will be posted on Blackboard before each class, and are recommended to be used as study guides for exams.

LECTURES AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

We will be using the following textbook, which is available for purchase at the bookstore:

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History*, 4th edition, Volume 1: to 1877. (Norton, 2014)

All other required readings and online exercises will be posted on Blackboard.

Please bring your readings and notes with you to every class

Wednesday, September 3
Introductions
(no readings)

Unit I: American Colonies to 1763

Monday, September 8
Give Me Liberty! Chapter 1: A New World

Wednesday, September 10
McClintock, "Lay of the Land: Genealogies of Imperialism"

Monday, September 15
Give Me Liberty! Chapter 2: Beginnings of English America

Wednesday, September 17
Wilder, "The Edges of the Empire: Colleges in the Arsenal of European Imperialism"

Monday, September 22
Give Me Liberty! Chapter 3: Creating Anglo-America, 1660-1750

Wednesday, September 24
Give Me Liberty! Chapter 4: Slavery, Freedom, and the Struggle for Empire to 1763

Monday, September 29
Review for Exam 1

Wednesday, October 1
In-Class Exam

Unit II: A New Nation, 1763-1840

Monday, October 6
Give Me Liberty! Chapter 5: The American Revolution, 1763-1783

Wednesday, October 8

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 6: The Revolution Within

Monday, October 13

Soderlund, "The Delaware Indians and Poverty in Colonial New Jersey"

Wednesday, October 15

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 7: Founding a Nation, 1783-1791

Monday, October 20

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 8: Securing the Republic, 1791-1815

Wednesday, October 22

Nielson, "The Deviant and the Dependent: Creating Citizens, 1776-1865"

Monday, October 27

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 9: The Market Revolution, 1800-1840

Wednesday, October 29

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 10: Democracy in America, 1815-1840

Monday, November 3

Review for Exam 2

Wednesday, November 5

In-Class Exam

Unit III: Slavery, Freedom, and the Crisis of the Union, 1840-1877

Monday, November 10

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 11: The Peculiar Institution

Wednesday, November 12

Block, "Lines of Color, Sex, and Service: Sexual Coercion in the Early Republic"

Monday, November 17

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 12: An Age of Reform, 1820-1840

Wednesday, November 19

Sappol, "'Anatomy is the Charm': Dissection and Medical Identity in Nineteenth-Century America"

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday

Newark Museum Visits – sign-up sheets will be distributed in class

Monday, November 24

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 13: A House Divided, 1840-1861

Wednesday, November 26

NO CLASS (Friday schedule)

Monday, December 1

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 14: A New Birth of Freedom: The Civil War, 1861-1865

Wednesday, December 3

Savage, "Freedom's Memorial"

Monday, December 8

Give Me Liberty! Chapter 15: "What is Freedom?": Reconstruction, 1865-1877

Wednesday, December 10

Review for Final

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 17, 3pm