

**Syllabus, US History 1**  
Rutgers University, Newark

**1. Course and Instructor Information**

**Semester:** Fall 2019  
**Time:** Thursdays, 2:30pm to 5:20pm  
**Location:** Conklin 346  
**Identifiers:** Unit 21, Subject 512, Course 201, Section 02  
**Credits/Hours:** 3  
**Instructor:** Ray Ojserkis, PhD  
**Contact:** ray.ojserkis@gmail.com  
**Office:** Conklin 326, Tuesdays 5:30pm to 6:00pm, and by appointment

**2. Course Description**

We will survey American history until 1865, covering topics such as the Columbian exchange, European colonization of the New World, trans-Atlantic slavery, the causes and consequences of the US War of Independence, the negotiation of the US constitution, industrialization, monetary policy in the early US, westward expansion, slave rebellions, the evolution of sectional conflict, and the US Civil War.

**3. Goals**

You should be able to

- identify significant events that contributed to the development of the United States.
- discuss competing interpretations of major historical events in American history from colonization to the Civil War.
- discuss sources of historical change, and explain cause and effect relationships as they pertain to historical transformations.
- use vocabulary common to history and to be able to explain the historical developments of the American society up to 1865.

**4. Grading Policy**

Your course grade will be determined by weighting the graded components as follows:

Unannounced Reading Quizzes	20% (lowest two quiz grades will be dropped)
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2 (non-cumulative)	20%
Exam 3 (non-cumulative)	20%
Research Essay	20%

We will discuss, and sometimes read sections, of the readings in almost all classes.

Any student who misses four 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.

If you are absent or tardy your score for an exam will be an F unless the absence is excusable. According to the Rutgers catalog, “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.” Documentation will be required.

## 5. Course Materials

### A. Lecture Handouts (We review these in class.)

For each topic listed in the course schedule there will be a handout in the “Course Documents” section of our Blackboard course. Each handout will have a list of key arguments and terms that we’ll discuss. Many also have maps, tables, contemporary newspaper cartoons, and/or primary source readings in addition to those assigned in the links in the schedule.

The handouts are in MS Word, and some students open electronic versions in class and take notes directly in their own copies of the handouts.

### B. Primary Source Documents (You read these at home.)

You will access these through links on the schedule below.

Primary sources are first-hand accounts, often created by participants or witnesses of events, and sometimes created by first-recorders of events. Examples include, but aren’t limited to, memoirs, speeches, documents, data, polls, and contemporary newspaper accounts. Secondary sources are sources created by people who didn’t participate or witness events, but often have the benefit of perspective, and typically draw from a variety of sources to create a nuanced and complex history that can account for multiple interpretations. Examples include history books and lectures.

We’ll try to balance the lectures by reading primary sources in our out-of-class reading.

## 6. Research Essay

You will address **one** of the following essay prompts:

- a. Explain the rise and fall of the mound-builder civilizations of the Ohio River Valley.
- b. To what extent did British colonies in the Americas develop in a similar fashion to older Spanish and Portuguese colonies?
- c. What elements of West African culture exist in twenty-first century African-American society?
- d. If you had been alive in the 1770s, knowing what you know now, would you have been a patriot or a tory? Why?
- e. To what extent were the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution emblematic of the "Enlightenment" era?
- f. Was the creation of political parties in the early era of the United States inevitable? Did the development of those parties help or hinder the political system?
- g. Had you been alive in the 1790s, knowing what you know now, would you have supported Hamilton's faction or Jefferson's faction?
- h. Why did the United States fight the Barbary Wars?
- i. What parallels exist between Andrew Jackson's populism and that of other national political figures who claimed to challenge coastal elites, such as William Jennings Bryan, Harry Truman, and Donald Trump? What are the differences?
- j. Why did the Haitian Revolution succeed but the slave rebellions in the American south fail?
- k. To what extent did a revolution in transportation systems improve the US economy in the first half of the nineteenth century (1800-1849)?
- l. Why did the US population grow so rapidly during the first half of the nineteenth century (1800-1849)?
- m. Was the violence of Nat Turner's revolt justifiable?
- n. To what extent was a US Civil War inevitable?
- o. In the event of a US Civil War, to what extent was a Union victory inevitable?

Write your essays using MS Word, and email them to me at the address above. I will not accept printed copies of your essay.

I will submit the essay to plagiarism software. If you're not sure what plagiarism is, consider this: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism>. Cite a source every time your essay makes use of an idea, quote, anecdote, study, or fact that you found in someone's work.

I call the essay a “research essay” to emphasize that the quality of your essay is largely dependent upon the quality of your research. Use at least four scholarly articles or published books. The phrase “at least” means you are allowed and encouraged to use more than four sources. The length of the essay should be 1,500 to 2,500 words.

Cite your sources wherever you rely on them, using footnotes, parenthetical notes or end notes. Be very specific when citing a source, using either the Chicago, APA, or MLA format throughout. For details, please consult the [Rutgers Library Guide](#). Cite a source every time you make use of someone's ideas.

## **7. Drop and Withdrawal Deadlines**

The last date for students to drop a course with no penalty is September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019, and the last date to withdraw from a course with a "W" grade is November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019.

## **8. Academic Integrity and Honor Pledge**

On each examination, and on your research essay, you will be required to sign the following statement:

On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).

## **9. Information for Students with Disabilities**

Rutgers University 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 on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information, please contact the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219, by phone at [973-353-5375](tel:973-353-5375) or by email at [odsnewark@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:odsnewark@newark.rutgers.edu)

## **10. Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance**

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing

accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to Policy 10.3.12) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does not have this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)-353-1918, or at [run.vpva@rutgers.edu](mailto:run.vpva@rutgers.edu). Learn more about the office here: <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/vpva>

## **11. The Writing Center**

The Writing Center (<http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>), located in Room 126 of Conklin Hall, offers writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in classes on the Rutgers-Newark campus. Their tutors work to help students become more independent readers and writers capable of responding well to the demands of writing within the university. Writing Center services are free for students.

## 12. Schedule

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>ASSIGNMENT (to be done before class, except for the first week)</u>
1	Sep 5	Columbian Exchange (start)	<a href="#">Columbus, letter to Santangel, 1493</a>
		Columbian Exchange (finish)	<a href="#">King Ferdinand, letter to the Taino</a>
2	Sep 12	Atlantic System (start)	<a href="#">O Equiano, <i>Life of Equiano</i>, Chapter 2</a>
		Atlantic System (finish)	<a href="#">Adam Smith, <i>The Cost of Empire</i>, (excerpt from Wealth of Nations)</a>
3	Sep 19	English colonies and development	<a href="#">Charter to Sir Walter Raleigh, 1584</a>
		US War of Independence (start)	<a href="#">Association of the Sons of Liberty of New York, 1773</a> and <a href="#">The Tory Act, 1776</a>
4	Sep 26	US War of Independence (finish)	<a href="#">Declaration of Independence</a>
		Articles of Confederation Era	<a href="#">Articles of Confederation</a>
5	Oct 3	<b>Exam 1</b>	<i>Review your notes from lectures and readings.</i>
6	Oct 10	Creating the Constitution (start)	<a href="#">US Constitution</a>
		Creating the Constitution (finish)	<a href="#">Bill of Rights</a>
7	Oct 17	Washington's Presidency	<a href="#">G. Washington, Proclamation of Neutrality, 1793</a>
		Jefferson's Presidency	<a href="#">T. Jefferson, letter to W. S. Smith, 1787</a> and <a href="#">T. Jefferson, letter to B Rush, 1803</a>
8	Oct 24	Economics: separate paths for North & South	<a href="#">Harriet Robinson: <i>Lowell Mill Girls</i></a> and <a href="#">W. Calloway's slave narrative</a>
		Slavery, Rebellions, and Sectionalism	<a href="#">Richmond Enquirer on Turner's Rebellion, 1831</a> and <a href="#">H. A. Jacobs, <i>Fear of Insurrection</i></a>
9	Oct 31	Jackson's Presidency (start)	<a href="#">A Jackson, speech on veto of Bank of United States charter renewal</a>
		Jackson's Presidency (finish)	<a href="#">A Jackson, <i>On Indian Removal</i>, 1830</a> and <a href="#">Petition Against New Echota Treaty, 1836</a>
10	Nov 7	<b>Exam 2</b>	<i>Review your notes from lectures and readings.</i>
11	Nov 14	Manifest Destiny	<a href="#">J. L. O'Sullivan, <i>Great Nation of Futurity</i> (excerpt), 1839</a>
		Immigration: a great wave	<a href="#">Know Nothing platform, 1856</a> and <a href="#">Milwaukee and Watertown and Seen by Shurz, 1854</a>

12	Nov 21	Breakup of the Union (start)	<a href="#">Alabama, Ordinance of Secession, 1861</a>
		Breakup of the Union (finish)	<a href="#">A Stephens, "Cornerstone Address," 1861</a>
13	Nov 26	Civil War: 1861-63	<a href="#">G McClellan, letter to Lincoln, 1862</a> and <a href="#">A Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation, 1862</a>
	(Tuesday)	Civil War: home fronts and foreign policies	<a href="#">A Toqueville, . . . Democratic Armies . . .</a> and <a href="#">A Williamson, diary entries, 1864</a>
14	Dec 5	Civil War: 1864-65 (start)	<a href="#">W T Sherman, correspondence pertaining to the evacuation of Atlanta, 1864</a>
		Civil War: 1864-65 (finish)	<a href="#">U S Grant, Memoirs, Chapter LXIII</a>
	Dec 11	<b>Research Essay Submission Deadline</b>	<a href="#">Wikipedia, Plagiarism</a>
		<i>(We don't have class – email your essay.)</i>	<a href="#">Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy</a>
	Dec 17	<b>Exam 3 (during final exam week)</b>	<i>Review your notes from lectures and readings.</i>
		<i>(@ 11:45am in our regular classroom)</i>	