

# US History I (21:512:201:01)

Dr. Aaron Slater

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Fall 2018

M 2:30-3:50; W 1:00-2:20

Smith Hall, Room 245

Final Exam: Monday, December 17 @ 3:00-6:00 PM

Office Hours: TBD

Course Description: US History I provides a broad survey of US History from the period of first contact between Europeans and Amerindians in the late-fifteenth century through the end of Reconstruction in 1877. Topics include first encounters between Europeans and Native Americans; the origins and rise of American slavery and the Atlantic Slave Trade; the social, political, and economic development of colonial societies in the Americas; the revolutionary break with England and the ratification of the US Constitution; the divergent social, political, and economic development of northern and southern states; "Manifest Destiny" and westward expansion; the rise of sectionalism and the crisis over slavery; and the Civil War and Reconstruction. Though the primary focus of this course is on the geographic region that eventually became the United States, we will take a wider continental and global approach to our subject. North America was the meeting place of peoples from three different continents -- America, Africa, and Europe -- and its land was claimed by a variety of imperial polities, both European (British, French, Dutch, Spanish) and Native American (Iroquois, Cherokee, Comanche). The emphasis of this class will be to transcend the teleology of a purely national history and to understand how a variety of global economic, cultural, and political forces forged the nation and people of the United States.

## Course Objectives:

- Learn the basic facts (who, what, when, where) of early American history
- Recognize and analyze a variety of historical documents known as "primary sources"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 critical thinking and written skills through a critical engagement with early American history

## Required Text:

Edwards, et. al., *America's History*, Vol. 1 **PLUS** LaunchPad Access

NOTE: You have two options for purchasing the text:

- **Paper Text plus LaunchPad (\$60.42):** Includes a paper copy of the textbook and six-month access to an electronic copy of the textbook and the supplementary materials through the LaunchPad website.
- **LaunchPad only (\$36.00):** includes six-month access to an electronic copy of the textbook plus the supplementary materials through the LaunchPad website.

Supplementary Readings: Supplementary readings that are not found in the required text will be posted to Blackboard.

Disabilities Policy: 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. 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 Kate Torres at (973) 353-5375 or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting [odsnewark@rutgers.edu](mailto:odsnewark@rutgers.edu).

Attendance Policy: Attendance in this course is mandatory, and you are expected to attend every class meeting. Students may be excused for 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 (see the Rutgers Catalog: [http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwkug\\_0608/pg23613.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwkug_0608/pg23613.html)).

If you have more than four unexcused absences, your grade will be lower one half grade (from "B+" to "B", for example). If you have more than six unexcused absences, your grade will be lowered one full grade (from "B+" to "C+", for example). Students who miss eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an "F".

Technology Etiquette: Cell phones should be turned off and put away during class. Laptop computers are acceptable, but should be put away during discussion and group work. Please avoid coming and going during class. It is distracting to both me and your classmates.

Assignments and Grading:

Your Final Grade in the course will consist of the following four categories:

- Participation 15%
- Quizzes 10%
- Paper 1 20%
- Paper 2 25%
- Final Exam 30%

Participation: The process of formulating arguments, articulating them to your peers, and defending them against critique is a vital skill that you will have to use in any career you

pursue. As such, we will devote a portion of each class meeting to a group discussion during which we will discuss the important events and concepts related to that week's topic. Students are expected to have read the assigned readings and to be prepared to discuss them in class. Discussion is also an opportunity for students to ask for clarification of any material that is difficult or unclear. All students are expected to participate in the discussion, and I will be keeping track of your performance throughout the semester.

**NOTE:** It should go without saying that students must treat each other respectfully during class discussions. We will be covering controversial and sensitive ideas and materials that some students might find offensive. That said, part of the learning experience at college is to investigate and unpack precisely these kinds of difficult topics so that we can try to arrive at a better understanding of their meaning and significance, both for ourselves and for our society as a whole.

Quizzes: There will be a series of announced and unannounced quizzes at various points throughout the semester. The quizzes will be based on the readings and lectures and will be a combination of short answer and multiple choice.

Papers: Students will write one 1,000-word (~ 4 pages) and one 1,200-word paper (~ 5 pages). I will circulate a list of topics and the specific assignment requirements in advance of the paper due date. Generally speaking, both papers will require you to analyze primary sources, place them in their historical context, and use them to produce your own historical interpretation.

Final Exam: The final exam will cover the entire semester. It will include a combination of identifications (identifying important people, places, events, and concepts), chronologies (putting events in order), and a longer essay.

### Schedule of Classes

#### **Week 1**

M (9/3): NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)

W (9/5): Course Introduction

#### **Week 2**

M (9/10): Africa, America, and Europe before Contact

- Text: Chapter 1, Sections 1-1 & 1-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): P1-1, P1-2

W (9/12): Africa, America, and Europe in the Era of European Expansion

- Text: Chapter 1, Sections 1-2 & 1-3
- Documents (LaunchPad): 1-3, 1-4

### **Week 3**

M (9/17): Challenging Spanish Hegemony: Dutch, English, and French Colonization of the Americas

- Text: Chapter 2, Sections 2-1 & 2-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): P1-5, 1-1

W (9/19): Frontiers of Violence: War and Resistance on the Margins of Empire

- Text: Chapter 2, Sections 2-3 & 2-4
- Documents (Blackboard): Excerpt from Underhill, *Newes from America* (1638)

### **Week 4**

M (9/24): The English Atlantic Empire

- Text: Chapter 3, Sections 3-1 & 3-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 2-2, 3-1

W (9/26): The World the Slaves Made: Slavery, the Slave Trade, and the English Imperial Economy

- Text: Chapter 3, Sections 3-3, 3-4 & 3-5
- Documents (LaunchPad): P2-1, 3-3, 3-6

### **Week 5**

M (10/1): A Diverse and Expanding Empire

- Text: Chapter 4, Sections 4-1 & 4-2
- Documents (Blackboard): Nathan Cole, *Recollections of Great Awakening* (1740s) & Joseph Fish *Reveals the Activities of Samuel Niles, Narragansett New Light Preacher* (1765)

W (10/3): The Quest for Imperial Dominance: British, French, and Native Empires in Seventeenth-Century North America

- Text: Chapter 4, Sections 4-3 & 4-4
- Documents (LaunchPad): 4-4 & 4-5

### **Week 6**

M (10/8): Reform & Resistance: The Seven Years' War and Its Aftermath

- Text: Chapter 5, Sections 5-1 & 5-2
- Documents (Blackboard): Benjamin Franklin, *The Interests of Great Britain Considered* (1760), King George III, *Proclamation of 1763* & Map, George Washington, *Letter Scorning the Proclamation Line* (1767)

W (10/10): From Resistance to Revolution

- Text: Chapter 5, Sections 5-3 & 5-4
- Documents (LaunchPad): 5-2, 5-5 & 5-6

### **Week 7**

M (10/15): The Progress of War

- Text: Chapter 6, Sections 6-1 & 6-2
- Documents: 6-2, 6-3

W (10/17): Republican Challenges: From Confederacy to Constitution

- Text: Chapter 6, Sections 6-3 & 6-4
- Documents (LaunchPad): 6-3, 6-5 & 6-6

### **Week 8**

M (10/22): Fractious Republic or Empire of Liberty? Party Politics and the Rise of a Republican Empire

- Text: Chapter 7, Sections 7-1 & 7-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 7-1, 7-2 & 7-3

W (10/24): The War of 1812

- Text: Chapter 7, Section 7-3
- Documents (LaunchPad): 7-4, 7-5 & 7-6

### **Week 9**

M (10/29): A New Economic Order: Capitalism and Slavery

- Text: Chapter 8, Sections 8-1 & 8-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 8-1 & 8-2

W (10/31): New Technologies, New Social Classes

- Text: Chapter 8: Sections 8-3 & 8-4
- Documents: (LaunchPad): 8-3, 8-4 & 8-5

### **Week 10**

M (11/5): The Rise of Jacksonian Democracy

- Text: Chapter 9, Sections 9-1 & 9-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 9-3, 9-6

W (11/7): Politics after Jackson: The Advent of the Second Party System

- Text: Chapter 9, Section 9-3
- Documents (LaunchPad): 9-1, 9-2 & 9-4

### **Week 11**

M (11/12): Virtues and Vices: The Second Great Awakening and the Tensions of Urban Culture

- Text: Chapter 10, Sections 10-1 & 10-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 10-1, 10-2 & 10-3

W (11/14): New Voices Stirring: Black Abolition and the Women's Rights Movement

- Text: Chapter 10: Sections 10-3 & 10-4
- Documents (LaunchPad): 10-4, 10-5 & 10-6

### **Week 12**

M (11/19): Imperial Ambitions, 1820-1848

- Text: Chapter 11 (entire)

W (11/21): NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)

**Week 13**

M (11/26): Diverging Interests: The Rise of Sectionalism

- Text: Chapter 12, Sections 12-1 & 12-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 12-2 & 12-3

W (11/28): Abolition and the End of the Second Party System

- Text: Chapter 12, Sections 12-3 & 12-4
- Documents (LaunchPad): 12-4 & 12-5

**Week 14**

M (12/3): A House Divided: The Advent of Civil War

- Text: Chapter 13, Sections 13-1 & 13-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 13-4

W (12/5): A Violent Victory: The End of the Civil War

- Text: Chapter 13, Section 13-3
- Documents (LaunchPad): 13-2, 13-5 & 13-6

**Week 15**

M (12/10): From the Ashes of War: Reconstructing the Nation

- Text: Chapter 14, Sections 14-1 & 14-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 14-1, 14-2 & 14-3

W (12/12): Freedom Denied: The End of Reconstruction

- Text: Chapter 14, Section 14-2
- Documents (LaunchPad): 14-4, 14-5 & 14-6

**\*\*\*NOTE: THIS SYLLABUS IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE\*\*\***