

Syllabus, US History 1
Rutgers University, Newark

1. Course and Instructor Information

Semester: Fall 2021
Time: Mondays and Thursdays, 1:00pm to 2:20pm
Location: Conklin 424
Identifiers: Unit 21, Subject 512, Course 201, Section 4
Instructor: Ray Ojserkis, PhD
Contact: ray.ojserkis@gmail.com
Office: Please email if you wish to set up an online meeting.

2. Course Description

We will survey American history until 1865, covering topics such as the Columbian exchange, European colonization of the Americas, 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

Our goals include

- A. basic knowledge of US history, especially its broad patterns
- B. familiarity with some common interpretations of US history
- C. ability to engage critically with others who often do not share the same interpretations of events
- D. familiarity with use of primary sources, especially the connections between the author's goals and his or her arguments and his or her method of argumentation
- E. improved skills in synthesizing and communicating historical information, and constructing sound arguments

4. Grading Policy

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

Unannounced Reading Quizzes: 20% (lowest two grades automatically dropped)

Exam 1: 20%

Exam 2: 20%

Exam 3: 20%

Research Essay: 20%

Your five letter-grades will be converted to numerical equivalents, using the Rutgers letter-grade scale:

<u>Letter</u> <u>Grade</u>	<u>Numerical</u> <u>Equivalent</u>
A	4.0
B+	3.5
B	3.0
C+	2.5
C	2.0
D	1.0
F	0.0

These numbers will be summed. For example, if you have a C+, A, A, C, and B on the five components, your total points are:

$$2.5 + 4.0 + 4.0 + 2.0 + 3.0 = 15.5$$

This is the table for converting the sum to a course grade:

18.75 ≤	A	≤ 20
16.25 ≤	B+	< 18.75
13.75 ≤	B	< 16.25
11.25 ≤	C+	< 13.75
7.5 ≤	C	< 11.25
2.5 ≤	D	< 7.5
0.0 ≤	F	< 2.5

The example above yields a **B** course grade.

(Note: only grades divisible by 0.5 are possible, and therefore the sum of your five components will also be divisible by 0.5.)

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 Home page of our course, in Canvas. Each handout will have a list of key arguments and terms that we’ll discuss. Many also have images, maps, tables, 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 take notes directly in their own copies of the handouts.

B. Primary Source Documents (You read these before class.)

The schedule below details the readings for each class. The readings are PDFs posted in Canvas.

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

6. Research Essay

Your essay must answer **one** of the following questions for the research essay:

- (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 in the Americas?
- (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, and. 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 is September 8th, 2021, and the last date to withdraw from a course with a "W" grade is October 25th, 2021.

8. Academic Integrity Policy and Honor Pledge

This is the Rutgers academic integrity policy: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

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

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

9. Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

For Individuals with Disabilities: The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at ods.rutgers.edu. Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at ods@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals who are Pregnant: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Absence Verification: The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to [University Policy 10.2.7](#) for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu.

For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries: The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

For English as a Second Language (ESL): The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing PALS@newark.rutgers.edu to discuss potential supports.

For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment: The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu. Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm. For more information, students should refer to the University's Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at <http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/>.

For support related to interpersonal violence: The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a **confidential resource** and does *not* have an obligation to report information to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing run.vpva@rutgers.edu. There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

For Crisis and Concerns: The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: tinyurl.com/RUNCARE or emailing careteam@rutgers.edu.

For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being: The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: counseling@newark.rutgers.edu or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out *TAO at Rutgers-Newark* for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: <https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO>.

For emergencies, call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling (973) 353-5111.

10. The Writing Center

The Writing Center (<http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingcenter>) offers writing tutoring and writing workshops to all undergraduate students currently enrolled in Rutgers-Newark. 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.

11. Technology Resources

Rutgers has created a page that helps you find student support, resources, and computer recommendations.

Here is the link: <https://runit.rutgers.edu/technology-launch->

If you have unresolved technology questions, please contact OIT-Newark Help. Support is available via phone, web, or email. Here is the link for contact information: <https://runit.rutgers.edu/hd/>.

12. Schedule

CLASS	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT (readings located in Canvas, except for those pertaining to essay)
1	Sep 2	Columbian Exchange (start)	<i>n/a</i>
	Sep 6	Labor Day – No Class	<i>n/a</i>
2	Sep 9	Columbian Exchange (finish)	King Ferdinand, letter to the Taino and Columbus, letter to Santangel, 1493
3	Sep 13	Atlantic System (start)	O Equiano, Life of Equiano, Chapter 2
4	Sep 16	Atlantic System (finish)	Adam Smith, The Cost of Empire, (excerpt from <i>Wealth of Nations</i>)
5	Sep 20	English colonies & development (start)	Richard Hakluyt, Discourse on Western Planting, 1584
6	Sep 23	English colonies & development (finish)	Charter to Sir Walter Raleigh, 1584
7	Sep 27	US War of Independence (start)	Association of the Sons of Liberty of New York, 1773 and The Tory Act, 1776
8	Sep 30	US War of Independence (finish)	Declaration of Independence
9	Oct 4	Articles of Confederation Era	Articles of Confederation
10	Oct 7	Exam 1	<i>Review your notes from lectures and readings.</i>
11	Oct 11	Creating the Constitution (start)	US Constitution
12	Oct 14	Creating the Constitution (finish)	Bill of Rights
13	Oct 18	Washington's Presidency	G. Washington, Proclamation of Neutrality, 1793
14	Oct 21	Jefferson's Presidency	T. Jefferson, letter to W. S. Smith, 1787 and T. Jefferson, letter to B Rush, 1803
15	Oct 25	Economics: separate paths for North & South	Harriet Robinson: Lowell Mill Girls and W. Calloway's slave narrative
16	Oct 28	Slavery, Rebellions, and Sectionalism	Richmond Enquirer on Turner's Rebellion, 1831 and H. A. Jacobs, Fear of Insurrection
17	Nov 1	Jackson's Presidency (start)	A Jackson, speech on veto of Bank of United States charter renewal
18	Nov 4	Jackson's Presidency (finish)	A Jackson, On Indian Removal, 1830 and Petition Against New Echota Treaty, 1836
19	Nov 8	Manifest Destiny	J. L. O'Sullivan, Great Nation of Futurity (excerpt), 1839
20	Nov 11	Exam 2	<i>Review your notes from lectures and readings.</i>
21	Nov 15	Immigration: a great wave	Know Nothing platform, 1856 and Milwaukee and Watertown and Seen by Shurz, 1854
22	Nov 18	Breakup of the Union (start)	Alabama, Ordinance of Secession, 1861
23	Nov 22	Breakup of the Union (finish)	A Stephens, "Cornerstone Address," 1861
	Nov 25	No Class - Thanksgiving	<i>Enjoy the holiday!</i>
24	Nov 29	Civil War: 1861-63	G McClellan, letter to Lincoln, 1862 and A Lincoln, Emancipation Proclamation, 1862
25	Dec 2	Civil War: home fronts & foreign affairs (start)	A Toqueville, . . . Democratic Armies . . .
26	Dec 6	Civil War: home fronts & foreign affairs (finish)	A Williamson, diary entries, 1864
27	Dec 9	Civil War: 1864-65 (start)	W T Sherman, correspondence pertaining to the evacuation of Atlanta, 1864
28	Dec 13	Civil War: 1864-65 (finish)	U S Grant, Memoirs, Chapter LXIII
	Dec 14	Research Essay Due (no class – email your essay)	Wikipedia, Plagiarism Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy
	Dec 21	Exam Three (during Finals' Week) (@ 3:00pm)	<i>Review your notes from lectures and readings.</i>