

History 211-11
Fall, 2008
TR : 8-9:15

Laurinda de Beck
Office: MHRA 2104
Hours: TR 11-12:15
E-mail: lkdebeck@uncg.edu

This course will survey both chronologically and topically the history of the United States from the first English settlement at Jamestown in 1607 through the Civil War. We will seek to understand the events of our early history in terms of individual decisions and the forces that shaped them, creating a unique American culture.

As this is a writing intensive class, we will also focus on writing skills of three kinds: constructing a research paper, informal in-class assignments, and critical analysis of some historical essays.

1. Two required texts first, Alan Brinkley, American History, A Survey. Vol. I, to 1877. In your reading assignments, the chapters cited refer to the Brinkley text. It is very important for you to read your text BEFORE coming to class, a half of a chapter before each class. The second text is The Social Fabric, Volume one, edited by Thomas Hartshorne and others. Four of your assigned writings will be based on this text. I STRONGLY suggest that you go online to purchase these 2 books. The latest editions are expensive, but you can find a deal on earlier editions. Be sure to get volume one of each, however.
2. Attendance: You are expected to attend class regularly. (You are held responsible for material presented in lectures, which may not appear in your text.) You may have 4 unexcused absences. To be excused, contact me within 48 hours after your absence. Most acceptable excuse: you are too ill to be in class.
3. Tests and grades: There will be two one- hour tests and a final exam. You will be given study guides for each. The tests and the exam are each 20% of your final grade. Your research paper is 20%, and all other writings together, plus your contributions to class discussions, are 20%.
4. This class follows a lecture format, with times for class discussions also. You should take notes as you listen, and feel free to ask questions or contribute your comments at any time.
5. The research paper will be done in stages. You will choose a topic from a list I provide, or one of your own, which I will need to approve.. Then you will turn in a brief outline and list of your sources, followed by a first draft of your paper. A final draft is due later. All dates are given in the syllabus.

CLASS SCHEDULE

August 26: Introduction

August 28: Chapter 1, Meeting of Cultures.

Week of September 2: Chapter 2, Transplantations and Borders.

Week of September 9: Chapter 3, Society and Culture in America.

September 9: First short paper due: an analysis of "The Witchcraft Scare" essay in the Social Fabric.

Week of September 16: Chapter 4, The Empire in Transition.

Week of September 23: Chapter 5, The American Revolution.
September 23: Outline and sources for your research paper due.
Week of September 30: Chapter 6, The Constitution and the New Republic.
Week of October 7: Chapter 7, The Jeffersonian Era.
October 9: TEST
Week of October 14: Chapter 8, Varieties of American Nationalism.
October 16: Draft of research paper due. HARD COPY only.
October 21: No class. Fall break.
October 23 & October 28: Chapter 9, Jacksonian America.
October 28: Paper due on “The Trail of Tears” in the Social Fabric.
October 30: Chapter 10, America’s Economic Revolution.
November 4: Chapter 11, Cotton Slavery and the Old South.
November 4: Paper due on “The African American Family”.
November 6: TEST
Week of November 11: Chapter 12, Antebellum Culture and Reform.
November 13: Final research papers due. Class discussion of them.
Week of November 18: Chapter 13, The Impending Crisis.
November 20: Paper due on “Why Soldiers Went to War.”
November 25 thru our last day of class: Chapter 14, The Civil War.

Exam: December 16 at 8:00 am.