

HIS 211: The United States to 1865

HIS 211

Teaching Assistants:

Chris Graham and Therese Strohmer

Professor Mark Elliott

Office: 2125 MHRA

Office Hours: M-W 10:30-11:30
or by appointment

E-mail: me Elliot@uncg.edu

Meeting Times and Places:

Lectures:

Mon and Wed. 9:00-9:50 EBER 284

Elliott

Friday discussions:

1) Section 05—9:00-9:50 PETT 150

Strohmer

2) Section 06—9:00-9:50 BRYN 202

Graham

3) Section 07—10:00-10:50 PETT 150

Strohmer

4) Section 08—10:00-10:50 BRYN 205

Graham

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course surveys the social, cultural, and political history of the nation from the conquest and colonization of America, to the reunification of the United States at the end of the American Civil War. Some of the issues covered include: When does the history of the "United States" begin? How did Europeans, Indians and Africans interact and how were the cultures of each group influenced and transformed by their interactions? How and why did the institution of slavery begin? How did the Americans reconcile ideas of popular self-rule with the reality of American slavery? How did conflicting political ideas about Republican government shape the constitution and divide the Revolutionary generation? How did the rise of capitalism transform class and gender roles in American society? What has been the relationship between democracy and capitalism? What was the relationship between slavery and capitalism? Why and how did the political controversy over slavery "cause" the American Civil War? Why did the Confederacy fail?

These are just some of the issues that students must confront when they study early American history. Because of its broad historical sweep, the variety of topics covered in this course make no claim to be comprehensive. No single course can cover all of the important issues over two hundred and fifty years of American history! Therefore this course focuses on particular events, historical figures, and social issues that illuminate the issues and experiences of the time that have been of the greatest current interest to historians. It is hoped that the material explored in this course will provide the student with a springboard to further study in American history where issues of particular interest can be studied in more depth.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

--Students will establish a strong foundation of knowledge in the major themes and events in American history before 1865.

--Students will improve their ability to analyze and interpret historical documents.

--Students will improve their ability to make historical arguments, drawing upon primary source documents.

--Students will improve their writing and verbal skills.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance:

A student who is not present to sign the attendance sheet at the beginning of class will be marked “absent.” Also, any student who signs the sheet but is observed by the professor or teaching assistants leaving the class after signing the sheet, will be marked “absent.” More than five absences will lower your *Final Grade* by one-third of a grade for each subsequent absence (that is, your sixth absence will cause an “B” to become an “B-,” your seventh will make it a “C+,” your eighth will make it a “C,” etc.). Missing a total of 14 or more classes for any reason (one-third of the semester) will result in an automatic “F” for the course. No exceptions. Please use your 5 absences wisely by saving them for emergencies or severe illness. Students are responsible to complete on time all work assigned or due on days in which they are absent.

Please note: You must be attentive and awake during class. Sleeping in class will cause you will be marked “absent”—so do not bother coming to class if you cannot remain conscious! Cell phones should be turned off and stored away. No talking, texting, e-mailing or internet surfing during class.

Participation:

It is important that you participate actively in your discussion section. Your participation grade will be based on the overall *quality* of your contributions in the discussion sections—not the quantity of contributions you make. Please make your contributions informed, intelligent, and constructive. Students must complete the reading assignments in time to participate in their weekly discussion sections with your assigned Teaching Assistant.

Quizzes:

There will be in-class quizzes on the readings to encourage you to keep up with the reading. Quizzes will take place at *the beginning of discussion sections* on Fridays. If you miss a quiz due to lateness or absence, you must do a short paper as a replacement within one week or else receive a zero for the quiz.

Written Work:

There will be one term paper of 1500-1800 words in length (app. 5 pages). You may write your term paper on one of two assigned topics. If you choose **Topic #1** your paper is due on **October 2**; if you choose **Topic #2** your paper is due on **November 23**. If you miss the deadline for the first topic, you must choose **Topic #2**. An assignment sheet with the term paper topics will be distributed in class. In order to pass this course you must hand in all written work on time and complete all assignments.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. All papers will be turned in using the “Safe Assignment” function on Blackboard which automatically scans your paper for plagiarism. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and the penalties for plagiarism. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/>

Grading Formula:

20% Class participation
20% Quiz grade average
20% Term Paper
20% Midterm
20% Final Exam.

REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG’s Bookstore):

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History Vol. 1* (Second Edition)
Mary Rowlandson, *The Sovereignty and Goodness of God*.
Thomas Paine, *Common Sense and other Writings*
Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*
Charles Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*

Further short reading assignments will be distributed via the Class Blackboard site.

Week 1. INTRODUCTION

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 1.
Documents on Blackboard: Voyage of Verrazano (1524); Pope Paul’s Decree (1537).

Aug. 24 Course introduction: When does U.S. history begin?
Aug. 26 The Conquest of North America
Aug. 28 Discussion Section

Week 2. EUROPEAN SETTLING OF NORTH AMERICA

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 2-3.
Documents on Blackboard: Equiano's Narrative (1789);
Bacon's Declaration (1676).

Aug. 31 Puritan New England: Community and Social Change
Sept. 2 The Middle and Southern Colonies
Sept. 4 Discussion Section.

Week 3. SLAVERY AND FREEDOM IN AMERICA

Reading: Mary Rowlandson, *A True History*, all.

Sept. 7 CLASS CANCELED (LABOR DAY)
Sept. 9 Slavery in the American Colonies
Sept. 11 Discussion Section

Week 4. IMPERIAL WARS AND RIVALRIES

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 4.
Documents on Blackboard: "Summation from Trial of John Peter Zenger (1735); Founding of Georgia (1733); Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." (1741)

Sept. 14 Growth of British North America
Sept. 16 France, Indians, and War
Sept. 18 Discussion Section

Week 5. THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION

Reading: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, all

Sept. 21 Crises of the 1760s
Sept. 23 Declaring Independence
Sept. 25 Discussion Section

Week 6. REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 5-6.
Documents on Blackboard: Patrick Henry Speech (1775); Thomas Jefferson's draft of Declaration of Independence (1776);
Alexander Hamilton to John Jay (1779);

Sept. 28 The War Against the British
Sept. 30 The Impact of the War

Oct. 2 Discussion Section [Paper on topic #1 due]

Week 7. FOUNDING A NATION

Reading: U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights

Oct. 5 The 1787 Constitution, and its Ratification.

Oct. 7 The Tumultuous 1790s

Oct. 9 **Midterm Exam**

Week 8. JEFERSONIAN AMERICA

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 7-8
Documents on Blackboard: Objections from a former Continental Army Officer (1787); Washington's Farewell Address (1796)
Jefferson's Inaugural Address (1801)

Oct. 12 **NO CLASS (FALL BREAK)**

Oct. 13 Jefferson's America

Oct. 16 Discussion Section

Week 9. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 9
Documents on Blackboard: Child, *The Frugal Housewife* (1829); Cherokee Memorial (1829); Andrew Jackson on Indian Removal (1830); The Trial of Tears (1838);

Oct. 19 The Market Revolution

Oct. 21 Age of Jackson: Banks, Nullification, and Indian Removal

Oct. 23 Discussion Section

Week 10. DEMOCRACY AND SLAVERY

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 10-11
Documents on Blackboard: Dew on Nat Turner (1832); John C. Calhoun (1848); George Fitzhugh (1850) and (1854);

Oct. 26 Slavery and the Second Party System

Oct. 28 The Plantation South

Oct. 30 Discussion Section

Week 11. ABOLITIONISM AND REFORM

Reading: *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, all.

Nov. 2 Abolitionism, Religious Reform

Nov. 4 Slavery and Sectionalism
Nov. 6 Discussion Section

Week 12. ANTEBELLUM POLITICS AND CULTURE

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 12-13
Documents on Blackboard: *On Temperance* (1869);
Declaration of Sentiments (1848); Margaret Fuller (1845);
California in 1846; Miner's 10 Commandments (1853).

Nov. 9 Westward Expansion
Nov. 11 Mexican-American War
Nov. 13 Discussion Section

Week 13. POLITICAL MELTDOWN

Reading: Charles Dew, *Apostles of Disunion*, all.

Nov. 16 The Tumultuous 1850s
Nov. 18 Drift to Civil War
Nov. 20 Discussion Section

Week 14. THE CIVIL WAR

Reading: *Give Me Liberty*, Chapter 14
Documents on Blackboard: Responses to the Emancipation
Proclamation (1863); Gettysburg Address (1863); Lincoln's 2nd
Inaugural Address (1865).

Nov. 23 **The Civil War.** [Paper on topic #2 due]
Nov. 25 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY)
Nov. 27 NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY)

Week 15. CONCLUSION

Dec. 7 **Wrap-up Session**

Week 16. FINAL EXAM

Dec. 16 **8:00-11:00 am.**