

UNITED STATES HISTORY TO 1865 (HIS 211-09)

Tuesday and Thursday 3:30-4:45pm ~ MHRA 1214

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Course Description: This course highlights some of the events, themes, and issues across more than 250 years of United States history from the first encounters between Europeans and Native Americans through the American Civil War. History is more than a set of facts brought out of the archives and presented as “the way things were;” it is a careful construction held together with the help of hypotheses and assumptions.¹ Therefore, this course will also examine the “construction” of history as students analyze primary sources, discuss debates in secondary works written by historians, and use both primary and secondary sources to create their own interpretation of history.

Required Textbooks: (available at the UNCG bookstore or online)

Hollitz, John. *Thinking Through the Past: A Critical Thinking Approach to U.S. History, Volume I: to 1877*, 4th edition. Boston: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning, 2010.

Henretta, James A., Rebecca Edwards and Robert O. Self. *America: A Concise History, Volume I: To 1877*, 5th edition. Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2012.

Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard throughout the semester

Learning Objectives:

Through class discussion and written assignments, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of major themes and events in American history from the initial encounters between Native Americans and Europeans through the American Civil War.
- Analyze continuity and change across historical eras in terms of individual human choices and the larger societal structures. [Historical Comprehension]
 - Draw comparisons across time periods and regions in order to define enduring issues as well as large-scale or long-term developments that go beyond regional and temporal boundaries.

¹ James West Davidson and Mark Hamilton Lytle, *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*, Volume I, 6th edition (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2010), xiii.

- Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view. [Historical Thinking/Analysis]
 - Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations, acknowledging that the two are related, but that historians select facts based on their ideas about what is most significant about the past.
 - Analyze historical sources by evaluating their authenticity and credibility, and their social, political, and economic context.
- *Goals for Primary Sources:*
 - Reconstruct the literal meaning of a historical passage by identifying who was involved, what happened, where it happened, what events led to these developments, and what consequences or outcomes followed.
 - Read historical narratives imaginatively, taking into account what the narrative reveals of the humanity of the individuals and groups involved--their probable values, outlook, motives, hopes, fears, strengths, and weaknesses.
 - Appreciate historical perspectives: (a) describing the past on its own terms through the eyes and experiences of those who were there, as revealed through their literature, diaries, letters, debates, arts, artifacts, and the like; (b) considering the historical context in which the event unfolded—the values, outlook, options, and contingencies of that time and place; and (c) avoiding “present-mindedness”—judging the past in terms of present-day norms and values.
- *Goals for Secondary Sources:*
 - Identify the central question(s) the historical narrative addresses and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.
 - Distinguish between unsupported expressions of opinion and informed hypotheses grounded in historical evidence.
 - Challenge arguments of historical inevitability by formulating examples of how different choices could have led to different consequences.
 - Hold interpretations of history as tentative, subject to changes as new information is uncovered, new voices heard, and new interpretations broached.
 - Evaluate major debates among historians concerning various interpretations of the past.
- Begin the process of conducting original research by investigating and interpreting primary and secondary sources. [Historical Research]
- Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument orally and in writing. [Historical Interpretation]
 - Support interpretations with historical evidence in order to construct closely reasoned arguments rather than opinions.

Blackboard: Be sure to check Blackboard for course announcements, readings, assignments, and links to important websites.

Communication: The easiest way to contact me is by email. I will reply to all emails, and I try to respond promptly, so if you do not hear from me within 24 hours, try again. Any emails sent after 6pm can expect a response no earlier than the following morning. All emails should include “HIS 211” in the subject line. I will send out any class emails to your UNCG email address, so be sure to check it regularly.

Attendance: Attendance in class is mandatory, and students are expected to arrive on time. Each student is allowed 3 unexcused absences during the semester. Having more than 3 unexcused absences will negatively impact your grade in addition to receiving a 0 for participation on the days you miss.

- If you know you are going to be absent from a class, please notify me *prior* to that class and include the reason for your absence. Notify me of an absence as far in advance as possible, so that alternative arrangements can be made to compensate for the missed class and assignments, if necessary. If you are on an athletic team or will miss class because you are representing UNCG elsewhere, I may request a letter from your coach or supervisor detailing the days you will be absent. If you are missing class for a religious observance, you must notify me in writing prior to the absence. *Be aware that telling me you will miss class does not constitute an excused absence.*

Electronic Devices: Laptops and other electronic note-taking devices are permitted; however, I reserve the right to ban them individually or as a group should they be used for purposes unrelated to class, or if they distract other students. Use of electronic devices for anything other than note-taking in class (e.g. Facebook, Youtube, gaming, texting, chatting, etc.) is prohibited.

Syllabus Quiz: On August 28th there will be a quiz on the content of the syllabus. This quiz is in addition to the 6 pop quizzes. The quiz will ask basic questions about information from the syllabus to ensure that students have read and understand the course requirements. The Syllabus Quiz grade will be part of the Participation grade.

Quizzes: There will be 6 pop quizzes throughout the semester. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes will focus on content from the weekly readings and will be discussed further during class.

Assignment Policy: All assignments must be submitted in hard copy. *Late assignments will receive a lower grade than assignments submitted on the due-date.* With appropriate documentation, I may accept late assignments without penalty at my discretion. If a student leaves an assignment in my mailbox, the student should email me to let me know it is there.

Writing Assignments: There are 4 writing assignments throughout the semester. Due dates are listed in the Class Schedule. Specific information on each assignment will be discussed during class as the date approaches.

Plagiarism: Students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity. It is your responsibility to avoid even the appearance of dishonesty regarding your work. UNCG defines plagiarism as “intentionally or knowingly representing the words of another, as one’s own in any academic exercise” and the university’s Academic Integrity policy is available online: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>. All sources used in any paper or assignment must be properly cited or they will be considered plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism will receive a 0 for the assignment and may be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate action.

Grading:

Participation and Syllabus Quiz	15%
Quizzes (lowest quiz grade dropped)	15%
Written Assignments	20%
Unit 1 Assessment	15%
Unit 2 Assessment	15%
Final Exam	20%

CLASS SCHEDULE**UNIT I: THE CREATION OF AMERICAN SOCIETY****Week 1 – Introduction**

Tuesday, August 21 – An Early American Murder Mystery – What is History?

Readings:

Class handout

Thursday, August 23 – Reading History

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 1 – “The Truth about Textbooks”

Henretta: pages 6-14 (from Chapter 1)

Week 2 – Colonial America: The Chesapeake – Past and Present

Tuesday, August 28 – Jamestown and the Chesapeake

Readings:

Bboard: Horwitz. “Jamestown: The Captain and the Naturals”

Henretta: pages 36-53 (from Chapter 2)

Thursday, August 30 – Rediscovering Jamestown

Readings:

Bboard: Earle. “Environment, Disease, and Mortality in Early Virginia”
Jamestown Rediscovery Archaeological Report

Week 3 – Colonial America: New England

Tuesday, September 4 – Protestantism, “New” England, and the Indians’ New World

Readings:

Henretta: pages 14-35 (from Chapter 1)

pages 53-65 (from Chapter 2)

Thursday, September 6 – Puritan New England

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 2 – “The Primary Materials of History”

Week 4 – Developments in Colonial Society

Tuesday, September 11 – Creating a British Empire in America

Readings:

Henretta: pages 66-95 (Chapter 3)

Thursday, September 13 – Changes in Colonial America

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 3 – “Evaluating Primary Sources”

Henretta: pages 96-107 (from Chapter 4)

Week 5 – Eighteenth Century Changes

Tuesday, September 18 – Religion and Conflict

Readings:

Henretta: pages 107-127 (from Chapter 4)

Writing Assignment #1 due (550-750 words)

Thursday, September 20 – *UNIT I ASSESSMENT* (in-class)

UNIT II – CREATING THE NEW REPUBLIC

Week 6 – The American Revolution

Tuesday, September 25 – Colonial Disorder

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 4 – “Evaluating One Historian’s Argument”

Thursday, September 27 – Rebellion, War, and Society

Readings:

Henretta: pages 128-161 (Chapter 5)

pages 162-183 (Chapter 6)

Week 7 – Founding a Nation

Tuesday, October 2 – A New Form of Government

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 5 – “Motivation in History”

Thursday, October 4 – Politics and Society in the New Republic

Readings:

Henretta: pages 183-193 (from Chapter 6)

pages 194-226 (Chapter 7)

Week 8 – Creating a “Republican” Society

Tuesday, October 9 – “Republicanism” and Slavery

Readings:

Henretta: pages 227-246 (from Chapter 8)

Bboard: Davidson and Lytle. “Chapter 5: Material Witness”

Thursday, October 11 – Race and the Republic

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 6 – “Ideas in History”

Week 9 –

Tuesday, October 16 – Fall Break (NO CLASS)

Thursday, October 18 – *UNIT II ASSESSMENT* (in-class)

Writing Assignment #2 due (550-750 words)

UNIT III – ANTEBELLUM AMERICA AND THE CIVIL WAR

Week 10 –Nineteenth Century Changes

Tuesday, October 23 – Religion and Reform

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 7 – “The Problem of Historical Causation”

Henretta: pages 246-256 (from Chapter 8)

pages 321-350 (Chapter 11)

Thursday, October 25 – Western Expansion and Economic Developments

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 8 – “Grand Theory and History”

Henretta: pages 262-290 (Chapter 9)

Week 11 – Democracy and Slavery

Tuesday, October 30 – A Democratic Revolution

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 9 – “History as Biography”

Henretta: pages 292-320 (Chapter 10)

Thursday, November 1 – Slavery and Society

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 10 – “History ‘From the Bottom Up’”

Henretta: pages 351-379 (Chapter 12)

Week 12 – Ideology and Society: Women in Antebellum America

Tuesday, November 6 – “Woman’s Sphere”

Readings:

Bboard: “Taking Sides – Issue 10: Did the Industrial Revolution Provide More Economic Opportunities for Women in the 1830s?”

Writing Assignment #3 due (550-750 words)

Thursday, November 8 – Regional Perspectives on Womanhood

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 11 – “Ideology and Society”

Week 13 – The Road to Disunion and the Wartime North

Tuesday, November 13 – Expansion, War, and Sectional Crisis

Readings:

Bboard: Nelson and Sheriff. “Ch. 1 – The Road to Bleeding Kansas”

Henretta: pages 380-415 (Chapter 13)

Thursday, November 15 – Two Societies at War: The North

Readings:

Bboard: Alcott. *Hospital Sketches*, “Ch. 3 – On Duty”

Nelson and Sheriff. “Ch. 11 – Cair, Anxiety, & Tryals”

Henretta: pages 416-446 (Chapter 14)

pages 494-496 (from Chapter 16)

Week 14 – The Civil War: The Confederate Home Front

Tuesday, November 20 – Two Societies at War: The South

Readings:

Bboard: Nelson and Sheriff. “Ch. 12 – War’s Miseries”

Henretta: pages 416-446 (Chapter 14)

pages 494-496 (from Chapter 16)

Thursday, November 22 – Thanksgiving (NO CLASS)

Week 15 – The Civil War: A Retrospective

Tuesday, November 27 – Why Did Secession Fail?

Readings:

Hollitz: Chapter 12 – “Grand Theory, Great Battles, and Historical Causes”

Writing Assignment #4 due (550-750 words)

Thursday, November 29 – Revisiting “The Truth about Textbooks”

Readings:

Bboard: Sheriff. “Virginia’s Embattled Textbooks”

Civil War Excavations – Jamestown Rediscovery Archaeological Report

FINAL EXAM: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 6 – 3:30-6:30PM