

HIS 211: U.S. History Before 1865 (online)

Fall 2013

August 19, 2013-December 2, 2013

Instructor: Dr. Paige Meszaros

Office Hours: By appointment only, please email me for details.

Email: epmeszar@uncg.edu

- I'm so happy to have the opportunity to work with each of you during this course. I check school email **daily** and I always send a response. An online course is available to you 24/7, but please remember that I am not. Just as I do not expect you to spend all of your time on this course, at the expense of other aspects of your life, please grant me the same courtesy. I will reply to your email as soon as I have the chance.
- If you have not heard from me within 48 hours, in reply to your email, then assume that I did not get the message or any information that was communicated and send it again. It is not necessary for you to send multiple messages in one day about the same topic.
- I have deliberately built the schedule so that you have some flexibility in your choice of assignments. Be diligent about remaining on task during the course and you will complete it successfully!
- I will not be teaching at UNCG during Spring 2014 and therefore will grant no Incompletes this semester.

Course Description

This course provides historical perspective on major themes in U.S. history before 1865. We will study a selection of important topics in the pre-Civil War United States which include the First Americans, Colonial Slavery, the American Revolution, the Market Revolution, Jacksonian America, Antebellum Slavery, 19th century reform movements, Lincoln's presidency, and the "impending crisis" of secession and Civil War. Primarily we are concerned about relationships of power- how do institutions exercise power, how do groups and individuals resist power, how do revolutionaries counteract power? We will study these topics using a variety of sources including our textbook, primary source documents, and material culture. You will learn how to use and evaluate these sources, how to identify different methods of historical inquiry, and gain an appreciation of how history impacts our lives. Most importantly we will be doing the work of historians which is to evaluate **CHANGE OVER TIME**.

The textbook will act as a secondary source, providing us with necessary background information, while the discussion board topics will focus on the primary sources found in your *Voices of Freedom* reader— documents, such as laws, religious texts, and literature, written at the time (or shortly after) the events they describe.

Required Textbook

Foner, Eric. *Give Me Liberty! An American History, Volume I To 1877*. Third edition. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2011. ISBN: 978-0393935424 (not the abbreviated Seagull edition)

Foner, Eric, editor. *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary Reader, Volume I*. Third edition. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2011. ISBN: 978-0393935660

The textbook and reader are available on campus at the UNCG bookstore or online from sources such as www.amazon.com (be sure to get the complete 3rd edition of the text and NOT the abbreviated Seagull edition). The textbook is also available for a two-hour in-house check out at the Jackson Library on UNCG's campus. Consult the circulation desk in the library to check out the book.

Alternatively, you can buy an e-book version of the textbook at the link below:

http://books.wwnorton.com/nortonebooks/logon.aspx?SiteId=foner3v1_ebook

Course Documents:

All primary source documents can be found in the *Voices of Freedom* reader you have purchased for the course.

Course Objectives:

1. Students and instructor will create a **tolerant online environment** in which a diversity of opinions are shared and debated.
2. Students will learn to understand and evaluate a variety of **methods for using historical evidence**.
3. Students will learn how to **synthesize central arguments** of readings and evaluate major points of agreement or disagreement among historians and historical actors.
4. Students will **distinguish between primary and secondary** types of historical evidence.
5. Students will **develop critical thinking skills** from a variety writing exercises and key readings.

Learning Outcomes

Students who spend at least 1-2 hours a day completing all reading and writing assignments, who actively engage in the material, and are *thinking* about and *reflecting* on what they are reading and writing will . . .

- have a firm grasp of key themes in United States history
- improve their writing abilities
- be able to communicate ideas, thoughts, and interpretations more clearly and concisely
- become better independent thinkers, students, and historians

Grading Policies

Students who simply follow all the guidelines for assignments earn grades of C. A grade of C is equivalent to "Average." Those whose work and contributions to the class community are clearly more advanced than the majority's earn grades of B, "Above Average," whereas those who contribute less than the majority earn grades of D, "Below Average." Work that is **truly exceptional** earns a grade of A, "Excellent," whereas work that is substandard and unacceptable earns a grade of F, "Unsatisfactory." If you are looking to improve your grade at any point during the course then you must complete work above and beyond the minimum requirements for assignments. For example, you can post thoughtful responses to your classmates on the Discussion Board in addition to your original responses.

Grade Breakdown for the Course

- Discussion Board 65%
 - Quizzes 35%
- Total: 100%**

Grading Scale:

The following grading scale will be used to evaluate student performance:

| | | | | |
|-----------------|----------|----------|----------|----------------|
| 97 and above A+ | 88-89 B+ | 78-79 C+ | 68-69 D+ | 59 and below F |
| 93 and 96 A | 83-87 B | 73-77 C | 63-67 D | |
| 90-92 A- | 80-82 B- | 70-72 C- | 60-62 D- | |

Rules & Procedures

Communication/Questions

Online classes require discipline and time management. Remember that without the normal interactions of a classroom setting, the only way I have to evaluate your participation in this class is through your performance on quizzes and thoughtful Discussion Board posts. Therefore, you should take your readings and responses seriously. In many ways, your work in this course will be independently driven. However, it is NOT an independent study. I have carefully selected the reading assignments, the textbook, and designed comprehensive assignments. You will be a major participant in a community of learners.

Check the “Announcements” section of Blackboard DAILY, and make certain your UNCG email account works. These are the two primary modes of communication I use, and I want to keep you informed of what’s going on throughout the course.

If you have questions about the course, i.e. syllabus, grading policies, or content, please go to the Discussion Board and click on the topic called, “Questions for the Professor.” More than likely you are not the only student with the same question, and I will not have to answer the same question multiple times if you post your question here. This means of communication is for PUBLIC discourse only. If you have a private concern regarding coursework, your grade, tutoring, etc. please address those to email.

If you have questions/complaints regarding how to use Blackboard or anything technological (web browser settings, downloading information, accessing web links, errors, etc.), please do **NOT** contact me. Instead, go to the link below to contact TECH support through phone or online support:

<http://its.uncg.edu/TSC/>

UNCG’s TECH Support is the appropriate office to help you with technology issues.

Late Work

No late work will be accepted, and there are no appeals. All the deadlines are listed on this syllabus. If you have special circumstances preventing you from turning in an assignment on time, then you must communicate that to me ASAP. Failure to turn in work on time will result in a grade of zero (0). It is unfair and disrespectful to the rest of class if I make exceptions for a small minority who are incapable of staying on track. Students requesting exceptions will be referred to this policy.

Academic Integrity

On all graded assignments, students are expected to submit their own original work. Copying and pasting text without giving credit to the source is obviously plagiarism, but so is stealing someone else's idea or interpretation without giving that person credit. Even if you are paraphrasing from memory something you have read in the past, you need to be able to state the source from which you are paraphrasing this material.

You can access the Academic Integrity Policy [HERE](#):

Academic Integrity Policy: <http://sa.uncg.edu/handbook/academic-integrity-policy/>

Please complete the Jackson Library Plagiarism Tutorial by Tuesday 8/20/13 at 11 p.m. and email your quiz results to epmeszar@uncg.edu within the quiz module.

You can access the tutorial [HERE](#):

<http://library.uncg.edu/tutorials/>

You should complete the Introductory Quiz, All Ten Modules, and the Final Quiz in order to get credit for this assignment.

Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing WILL receive a grade of F for the assignment without the opportunity to make up the work. Violations will be reported to the University in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy. Students also risk receiving a final grade of F for the course.

Citation Methodology

If you need to cite the textbook or a primary source in the Discussion Board please use parenthetical documentation at the end of the direct quotation or paraphrase. You cannot earn full credit on a post without using both direct quotations/evidence AND citations.

For example if citing from the textbook: (Foner, 175) in which Foner is the textbook author and you are citing something from page 175. You would use this citation at the end of a direct quotation or paraphrase of our textbook.

If citing from a primary source: (*David Walker's Appeal*, 224) in which *David Walker's Appeal* is the title of the primary source and page 224 is the page on which you found the cited information. You would use this citation when you are directly quoting the author or paraphrasing his words.

If citing from the editor's introduction to a document: Foner has written short introductions to each source in the reader. If you want to quote this introduction (the document appears after the introduction and a double line) use this format (Introduction, Adam Smith, *The Results of Colonization*, 2). In this way, you are quoting something the editor has stated about the document to provide historical context and not the historical document itself.

Citing material from the editor's introduction or our textbook can provide useful historical context for Discussion Posts. However, they do not count towards your required primary source evidence in posts. They can only enhance your primary source evidence.

This course does not require you to use information from outside sources. In Discussion Board you SHOULD NOT quote from outside sources, but rather confine your comments to the materials from the class. Quizzes are taken entirely from material in our textbook.

Discussion Board

Discussion Board topics are designed to test your completion and understanding of the primary sources. Posts open at 8 a.m. on Monday each week of the semester (starting on Monday, August 19th) and close at 11 p.m. on the following Sunday due date listed in the "Course Calendar." Participating in these weekly discussions is absolutely key to succeeding in this course. By practicing your writing abilities on a regular and rigorous basis, and sharing your writing with others, you will become better interpreters of the past. **Posts will be graded on quality, as well as quantity, of writing.** Under the "Course Documents" tab on our course homepage, I have provided a rubric which I use to evaluate discussion posts. Please review this rubric for guidance each time you write a post. Blackboard will block you from reading other student work until you have submitted your own post on the topic. This is an important new feature intended to cut down on repetitiveness and plagiarism in posts. This means you **MUST** post your own essay each week **BEFORE** being allowed to see the posts of others.

For the first few posts on the Discussion Board, I will provide individualized feedback. Once I am sure that everyone is comfortable with the assignment, I will offer generalized comments directed towards the entire class. It is very important to compare your work to both the individualized and group comments so that you can see both the strengths and weaknesses of your work as a writer and get suggestions for how to improve your writing.

All of the topics require reading primary sources (materials written during the time period in question). These readings are located in the *Voices of Freedom* reader. **You MUST reference these readings in your responses with direct quotations and citations.** Select the BEST quotations possible to illustrate your point, but avoid long quotations of several lines, as that is letting someone else do the writing for you. Your posts should reflect direct quotations and analysis of those quotations to answer the questions posed about the primary source(s) in the assignment.

Posts should be between 250 and 350 words (not including the use of direct quotations). Type the "Word Count" at the end of the document before you post. **Please type your posts in a word processor (such as Microsoft Word) before copying and pasting them to the appropriate discussion forum. This will help you avoid spelling errors, and it is always a good idea to have a backup file in case your work does not post correctly in Blackboard.** The edit feature is NOT enabled on Blackboard so your posts should be finalized copies. Don't post unless it's as perfect as you can get it! These are formal essays which should be free of spelling and grammatical errors. Also, remember to get the author and document names CORRECT on your posts. You may always go above the minimum word requirements and in some cases you may feel the need to do so in order to fully answer all questions and fully exploit the evidence.

Students can post their initial response by clicking on "Create Thread," copying and pasting their work into the message box, and then clicking "Submit." To reply to another person's post, students should select that student's post, and then click "Reply." You are encouraged but NOT required to respond to posts of others. It is a good way to check on your understanding of the material to read what others have written about the readings and compare it to your own point of view. Replying to another person's post means you are going above and beyond the basic requirements for the course and that you are positively contributing to the class community.

Feel free either to agree or disagree with someone else's argument, but be certain to provide convincing reasons explaining why you either agree or disagree. **Always be polite and civil on the Discussion Board!** Before you post anything, ask yourself if you would actually say these things to a person in a face-to-face environment? Do not allow the anonymity aspect of the Internet to strip you of your common sense and good manners. This same policy of courtesy should apply to all email communication to the instructor and to your classmates. Disagreeing does not mean disrespecting!

The Discussion Board is worth 65% of your total grade. **There are a total of 14 discussion forums on the Discussion Board. You are required to complete 10 of your choice.** Blackboard will automatically record a zero for the four forums you choose not to complete. However, at the end of the course, your final grade will not average in these four assignments. I will grade the first ten posts you record on the Discussion Board. You cannot complete extra posts for additional course credit, so be sure to monitor which ones you complete or do not complete throughout the duration of the course.

Quizzes

There are fourteen reading quizzes, each one based on one of the chapters from the textbook. Each quiz is made up of 25 multiple-choice questions and each question is worth 4 points for a total of 100 points for each. Students should only take a quiz after they have read the appropriate chapter thoroughly and taken notes on it.

Each quiz will open beginning at 8 a.m. on Monday of each week of the semester, starting with August 19th and will be available for the week until the following Sunday when the window close at 11 p.m. Be sure to read maps, primary sources, captions, and art essays in the chapters, as quiz questions can come from these materials as well.

Read each question carefully; select the BEST possible answer from among the choices. Submit your answer for each question and save each question as you take the quiz. You can only attempt a quiz one time so make sure you are certain of your answers before you submit and that you have allotted the appropriate time to finish the quiz.

If you decide to complete a quiz on the due date and experience any kind of technical difficulties, you will NOT be allowed to make up these quizzes at a later date. Students requesting exceptions will be referred to this policy. I strongly encourage you not to wait until the last moment to complete these quizzes. You should have plenty of time to complete them if you stay on task. I drop the lowest two quiz grades at the end of the semester from your final grade. Quizzes are worth 35% of your final grade for this course. Blackboard will automatically record a zero if you choose not to complete two of the quizzes and then those grades will not be averaged into the final grade for the course. However, if you choose to take all fourteen quizzes, then Blackboard will drop the lowest two grades you earned on a quiz.

Technical Problem Policy

You CANNOT participate in this course without a working computer and reliable internet connection. Due to the nature of online classes, NO special concessions will be made for technological difficulties. Students are responsible for obtaining and maintaining reliable Internet access. Internet access is available at libraries, schools, hotels, and coffee shops worldwide. Therefore, no extensions will be granted due to lack of Internet access. If you have a technical problem, such as a crash or lockup, while taking a quiz, email me requesting a quiz reset. I will reset your quiz within 24 hours if possible.

NOTE: If you wait until the day a quiz is due, you assume responsibility that a technical problem may preclude you from completing the quiz on time. Those who ask for an extension will be referred to this policy. I may or may not have time to give you a quiz reset if you request one.

Course Calendar (Note: All Quizzes and Discussion Prompts are to be completed on UNCG Blackboard. All times and dates are Eastern Standard Time for those of you taking the class outside of North Carolina)

Week One: Monday, August 19-Sunday, August 25

A New World

Readings: Textbook Chapter 1, pages 6-48

Activities: 1-Personal Biography on Blackboard due by Tuesday, 8/20 by 11 p.m. (see Discussion Board for instructions)
2-Complete the Jackson Library Plagiarism Tutorial by Tuesday, 8/20 by 11 p.m. (see the Academic Integrity section of the syllabus for instructions)
3-Take Quiz 1 on Blackboard by Sunday, 8/25 by 11 p.m.
4- Complete Discussion Post 1 on Blackboard by Sunday, 8/25 by 11 p.m.

Week Two: Monday, August 26-Sunday, September 1

Beginnings of English America, 1607-1660

Readings: Textbook Chapter 2, pages 54-89

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 2 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/1 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 2 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/1 by 11 p.m.

Week Three: Monday, September 2-Sunday, September 8

Creating Anglo-America, 1660-1750

Readings: Textbook Chapter 3, pages 94-130

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 3 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/8 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 3 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/8 by 11 p.m.

Week Four: Monday, September 9-Sunday, September 15

Slavery, Freedom, and the Struggle for Empire to 1763

Readings: Textbook Chapter 4, pages 136-174

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 4 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/15 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 4 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/15 by 11 p.m.

Week Five: Monday, September 16-Sunday, September 22

The American Revolution, 1763-1783

Readings: Textbook Chapter 5, pages 184-214

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 5 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/22 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 5 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/22 by 11 p.m.

Week Six: Monday, September 23-Sunday, September 29

The Revolution Within

Readings: Textbook Chapter 6, pages 220-252

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 6 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/29 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 6 on Blackboard by Sunday, 9/29 by 11 p.m.

Week Seven: Monday, September 30-Sunday, October 6

Founding a Nation, 1783-1789

Readings: Textbook Chapter 7, pages 258-288

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 7 on Blackboard by Sunday, 10/6 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 7 on Blackboard by Sunday, 10/6 by 11 p.m.

Week Eight: Monday, October 7-Sunday, October 13

Securing the Republic, 1790-1815

Readings: Textbook Chapter 8, pages 294-325

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 8 on Blackboard by Sunday, 10/13 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 8 on Blackboard by Sunday, 10/13 by 11 p.m.

Week Nine: Monday, October 14-Sunday, October 20

The Market Revolution, 1800-1840

Readings: Textbook Chapter 9, pages 330-366

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 9 on Blackboard by Sunday, 10/20 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 9 due on Blackboard by Sunday, 10/20 by 11 p.m.

Week Ten: Monday, October 21-Sunday, October 27

Democracy in America, 1815-1840

Readings: Textbook Chapter 10, pages 372-406

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 10 on Blackboard by Sunday 10/27 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 10 on Blackboard by Sunday, 10/27 by 11 p.m.

Week Eleven: Monday, October 28-Sunday, November 3

The Peculiar Institution

Readings: Textbook Chapter 11, pages 416-448

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 11 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/3 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 11 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/3 by 11 p.m.

Week Twelve: Monday, November 4-Sunday, November 10

An Age of Reform, 1820-1840

Readings: Textbook Chapter 12, pages 454-486

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 12 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/10 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 12 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/10 by 11 p.m.

Week Thirteen: Monday, November 11-Sunday, November 17

A House Divided, 1840-1861

Readings: Textbook Chapter 13, pages 492-532

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 13 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/17 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 13 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/17 by 11 p.m.

Week Fourteen: Monday, November 18-Sunday, November 24

A New Birth of Freedom: The Civil War, 1861-1865

Readings: Textbook Chapter 14, pages 538-580

Activities: 1-Take Quiz 14 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/24 by 11 p.m.
2-Complete Discussion Post 14 on Blackboard by Sunday, 11/24 by 11 p.m.

FINAL GRADES FOR COURSE POSTED BY MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2013