

***History 211, sections 1-4:***  
***U.S. History to 1865***  
Spring Semester 2009  
Prof. Greg O'Brien  
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Office Hours: Monday & Wednesday 10am-12pm and/or by appointment

### **ABOUT THE COURSE**

**Course description:** This course is an introduction to the history of America from pre-Columbian times to 1865. This course will acquaint students with an understanding of the basic forces that have shaped American life through Reconstruction. We will pay attention to the interaction of Native, European, and African peoples, as well as the development of a uniquely American culture, society and government. This course should also further develop your skills in writing, reading, and reasoning.

### **Meeting times and places:**

#### **Lectures**

W, F 12-12:50 Nursing Bldg. (Moore) 130

#### **Monday discussions**

4 sections:

- 1) Section 01—12-12:50 MHRA 1204
- 2) Section 02—12-12:50 MHRA 1206
- 3) Section 03—1-1:50 MHRA 1207
- 4) Section 04—1-1:50 MHRA 1204

The two teaching assistants for this course are:

Sarah Gates, email: [sjgates@uncg.edu](mailto:sjgates@uncg.edu), sections 2 & 3

Rick Shelton, email: [rickshelton58@triad.rr.com](mailto:rickshelton58@triad.rr.com), sections 1 & 4

**Readings:** The two textbooks are available at the university bookstore. For most weeks, as you can see below, you are to read about a chapter per week in each text before that week's classes. The readings in *Taking Sides* are intended to supplement your textbook readings and to be the



focus of your writing and discussion sections this semester. They are to be completed before your Monday meetings with your TAs. Whether or not you are completing a paper for your Monday discussion section (see paper assignment below), take notes on each week's reading from *Taking Sides* and be prepared to analyze and interpret the material in a group setting and discussion.

**Required Textbooks:**

1. Jones, Jacqueline, et. al. *Created Equal: A Social and Political History of the United States, Vol. 1 to 1877*. Brief Second Edition. New York: Pearson Longman, 2008.
2. Madaras, Larry and James M. SoRelle. *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in United States History, Volume 1*. 13<sup>th</sup> edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2009.

**Attendance and related issues:**

You are expected to attend every class. Roll will be taken in lecture and in the discussion sections. If you miss more than one discussion section (Mondays) or more than three lectures (Wednesdays & Fridays), your course grade will be reduced by half a letter grade per extra absence. I do not give out my lecture notes or copies of the PowerPoint presentations. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes on the lecture from a classmate. All assignments and exams must be completed on the date they are due, or earlier. No late assignments or make-up exams are accepted.

**Professionalism:**

I expect you to be professional in class and to respect those around you by using common sense and:

1. Turning off and putting away your cellphones (this includes no texting).
2. Using your laptop computer to take notes only – no websites, no music, etc.
3. Not using iPods or any other electronic music/video/gaming devices.
4. Not talking unless you are asking a question of me or the TAs (which is encouraged) or responding to a question asked by me or the TAs.

**Grading Summary:**

Position Briefs = 5% each (8 total)	= 40%
Mid-term Exam	= 20%
Final Exam	= 30%
Participation in discussions	= 10%
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TOTAL	= 100%

**Graded Assignments:**

ALL assignments must be completed; failure to complete any exam or paper will result in failure of the course.

**Exams** will be drawn from lecture material, textbook readings, films in class, and class discussions. The format will be essays plus a section of "objective" questions.

**Position Briefs:** based on the book *Taking Sides: Clashing Views in United States History*. This book includes 16 chapters on various issues in early American history. Choose 8 of those chapters and write a 2-3 page position paper explaining which one of the two views you most

agree with and why. Incorporate specific evidence from each of the readings on that topic to prove your interpretation. You may disagree with both views presented on a particular topic or you may think that they both make compelling arguments - that is fine, tell me why you feel that way in your position brief along with supporting evidence. Pay attention to each historian's arguments and thoroughly explain why one of them makes a better case for his/her view than the other one. This exercise is meant to portray the differing interpretations of major issues in American history and to give you the opportunity to analyze the arguments and make a judgment about which one is more valid. There is not a preset "right" or "wrong" answer; rather you are being graded on how effectively you support your interpretation. Each position paper is worth 5% of your overall grade and will be graded for insightful thought and analysis, use of evidence from the readings, as well as proper grammar and spelling. Check the schedule below for due dates for each of the 16 possible papers (remember, you only complete 8 of them of your choosing). **IMPORTANT:** At least three (3) position papers must be turned in before Spring Break (by March 2). You may write a ninth position paper, if you wish, and then your lowest position paper grade will be dropped.

**NOTE: plagiarism** (to take the ideas, writings, etc. of another and present them as your own) is strictly forbidden and will be punished to the fullest extent possible, including failure of the course and/or expulsion from the university. Do not even look for internet material to write your papers; we will discover it and you will fail. Please review UNCG's policy on plagiarism: <http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/tutorial/integrate/plagdef.asp>

**Schedule:**

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|-------------|---|
| 1/21 & 1/23 | Introduction<br>America before Amerigo, or the People who Discovered the Europeans<br>Reading: <i>Created Equal</i> , chapter 1                           |
| 1/26        | <b>Discussion Section</b><br>Reading & Paper: <i>Taking Sides</i> , Issue 1   |
| 1/28 & 1/30 | Biological and Ecological Invasions of America<br>European Invasions: Spain & France<br>Reading: <i>Created Equal</i> , chapter 2 & Chapter 3, pp. 55-65  |
| 2/2         | <b>Discussion Section</b><br>Reading & Paper: <i>Taking Sides</i> , Issue 2   |
| 2/4-2/6     | European Invasion: England<br>The Development of Slavery in Virginia & South Carolina<br>Reading: <i>Created Equal</i> , chapter 3, pp. 66-79 & chapter 4 |
| 2/9         | <b>Discussion Section</b><br>Reading & Paper: <i>Taking Sides</i> , Issue 3   |
| 2/11-2/13   | Growth & Conflict in Colonial America   |

- Reading: *Created Equal*, chapters 5 & 6  
 Film: *Massacre at Mystic*
- 2/16      **Discussion Section**  
 Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 4
- 2/18-2/20      The American Revolution:  
 Causes, War, and Impacts  
 Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 7 & chapter 8, pp. 191-202
- 2/23      **Discussion Section**  
 Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 5
- 2/25-2/27      A new Constitution & Politics  
 Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 8, pp. 203-214 & chapter 9
- 3/2      **Discussion Section**  
 Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issues 6 & 7  
**Review for Mid-term Exam**
- 3/4-3/6      The War of 1812  
 Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 10, pp. 242-250  
**Mid-term Exam on March 6**
- 3/9-3/13      **Spring Break – no classes**
- 3/16      **Discussion Section**  
 Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 8
- 3/18-3/20      Economic Revolutions  
 Changing Northern and Southern Societies  
 Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 10, pp. 251-259
- 3/23      **Discussion Section**  
 Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 9
- 3/25-3/27      The Second Party System  
 Andrew Jackson as President  
 Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 11
- 3/30      **Discussion Section**  
 Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 10
- 4/1-4/3      Indian Removal  
 Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 12, pp.283-291  
 Film: *Gold Rush*

- 4/6            **Discussion Section**  
Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 11
- 4/8            Reform & New Thinking:  
Individualism, Communalism, New Religions  
Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 12
- 4/10           **Good Friday – no classes**
- 4/13           **Discussion Section**  
Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issues 12
- 4/15-4/17     Women’s Movement & Abolitionism  
Texas, Mexico, and a War  
Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 12
- 4/20           **Discussion Section**  
Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 13
- 4/22-4/24     The Road to Disunion  
Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 13
- 4/27           **Discussion Section**  
Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issue 14
- 4/29-5/1      The Civil War  
How did the United States win?  
Film: *Antietam*  
Reading: *Created Equal*, chapter 14
- 5/4            **Discussion Section**  
Reading & Paper: *Taking Sides*, Issues 15 & 16  
**Review for Final Exam**

**Final Exam: Friday, May 8 @ 12:00 noon**