

HIS 211: The United States to 1865

HIS 211

Teaching Assistants:

Mr. Ian Michie

Mr. James Hall

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. 1:00-1:50 NMOR 130

Dr. Elliott

Friday discussions:

1) Section 01—12:00-12:50 NMOR 328

Mr. Michie

2) Section 02—12:00-12:50 NMOR330

Mr. Hall

3) Section 03—1:00-1:50 NMOR 328

Mr. Hall

4) Section 04—1:00-1:50 NMOR330

Mr. Michie

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 when it circulates at beginning of class will be marked “absent.” No students will be allowed to sign the sheet at the end of class. 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 a “B” to become a “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. We do not accept doctor’s notes or other excuses. Please use your 5 un-penalized 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.

Participation:

You must take notes during class lectures and 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 muted or turned off and stored away. No talking, texting, twittering, e-mailing or internet surfing during class.

Students must complete the reading assignments in time to participate in their weekly discussion sections with your assigned Teaching Assistant. 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.

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 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 four assigned topics. If you choose **Topic #1** your paper is due on **February 7**; if you choose **Topic #2** your paper is due on **February 28**; if you choose **Topic #3** your paper is due on **April 11**; if you choose **Topic #4** your paper is due on **April 24**. Late papers will be marked down one grade for each day they are late. If you miss the deadline for a topic by one week, you must choose one of the remaining topics. An assignment sheet with the term paper topic questions will be distributed in class. In order to pass this course you must hand in all written work and complete all assignments. You will be required to take your paper to the Writing Center for help revising it before the due date.

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):

Oakes, et al. *Of the People: A Concise History of the United States, Vol. I.*
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: *Of the People*, Chapter 1.
Documents on Blackboard: Voyage of Verrazano (1524); Pope Paul's Decree (1537).

Jan. 10 Course introduction: Where to begin U.S. history?
Jan. 12 The Conquest of America
Jan. 14 Discussion Section

Week 2. EUROPEAN SETTLING OF NORTH AMERICA

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 2-3.
Documents on Blackboard: Equiano's Narrative (1789);

Jan. 17 **MLK DAY (NO CLASS)**
Jan. 19 British Colonies
Jan. 21 Discussion Section.

Week 3. SLAVERY AND FREEDOM IN AMERICA

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

Jan. 24 Puritan New England
Jan. 26 Slavery in the American Colonies
Jan. 28 Discussion Section

Week 4. IMPERIAL WARS AND RIVALRIES

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 4-5.
Documents on Blackboard: "Summation from Trial of John Peter Zenger (1735); Bacon's Declaration (1676); Edwards, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God." (1741)

Jan. 31 Growth of British North America
Feb. 2 France, Indians, and War
Feb. 4 Discussion Section

Week 5. THE ROAD TO REVOLUTION

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

Feb. 7 Crises of the 1760s [Paper topic #1 due]
Feb. 9 Declaring Independence
Feb. 11 Discussion Section

Week 6. REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

Reading: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, all

Feb. 14 The War Against the British

Feb. 16 The Impact of the War

Feb. 18 Discussion Section

Week 7. FOUNDING A NATION

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 7-8
Documents on Blackboard: U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights;
Objections from a former Continental Army Officer (1787).

Feb. 21 The 1787 Constitution, and its Ratification.

Feb. 23 The Tumultuous 1790s

Feb. 25 Discussion Section

Week 8. JEFERSONIAN AMERICA

Reading: Documents on Blackboard: Washington's Farewell Address
(1796) Jefferson's Inaugural Address (1801)

Feb. 28 Jefferson's America [Paper topic #2 due]

Mar. 2 The Market Revolution

Mar. 4 **Midterm Exam**

SPRING BREAK, MARCH 7-9

Week 9. SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 9-10.
Documents on Blackboard: Cherokee Memorial (1829); Andrew
Jackson on Indian Removal (1830); The Trail of Tears (1838);

Mar. 14 The Second Party System

Mar. 16 Age of Jackson: Banks, Nullification, and Indian Removal

Mar. 18 Discussion Section

Week 10. ABOLITIONISM AND REFORM

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 11-12.
Documents on Blackboard: Child, *The Frugal Housewife* (1829);
On Temperance (1869); Declaration of Sentiments (1848);
Margaret Fuller (1845)

Mar. 21 Abolitionism, Religious Reform
Mar. 23 Separate Spheres and Women's Rights
Mar. 25 Discussion Section

Week 11. DEMOCRACY AND SLAVERY

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

Mar. 28 The Plantation South
Mar. 30 Slavery and Sectionalism
April 1. Discussion Section

Week 12. ANTEBELLUM POLITICS AND CULTURE

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 13-14.
Documents on Blackboard: Dew on Nat Turner (1832);
John C. Calhoun (1848); George Fitzhugh (1850) and
(1854); Miner's 10 Commandments (1853).

April 4 Slavery and Capitalism
April 6 Westward Expansion and the Mexican-American War
April 8 Discussion Section

Week 13. POLITICAL MELTDOWN

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

April 11 The Compromise of 1850 [Paper topic #3 due]
April 13 The Rise of the Republican Party
April 15 Discussion Section

Week 14. THE CIVIL WAR

Reading: *Of the People*, Chapter 15.

April 18 The Secession Crisis 1860-61
April 20 The Road to Emancipation
April 22 **GOOD FRIDAY (NO CLASS)**

Week 15. EMANCIPATION AND CONFEDERATE DEFEAT

Reading: Documents on Blackboard: Responses to the Emancipation
Proclamation (1863); Gettysburg Address (1863); Lincoln's 2nd
Inaugural Address (1865).

April 25 Union Victory [Paper topic #4 due]

Week 16.

FINAL EXAM

May 4

12:-00-3:00 pm in NMOR 130