For many years, historians focused on statesmen and other great men as the sole agents of change in American history. This course shifts focus to ordinary Americans and their efforts to shape their own history and the history of their nation. The goals of this course are to introduce students to the controversies, trends, events, and actors in the first half of American history and to familiarize students with the analytical skills employed in the study of history.

**Course Requirements:** The requirements for this course include assigned readings for each class, periodic assignments and quizzes on the assigned readings, one paper, and two exams. Assignments submitted in class are due at the beginning of the class period. Students who submit assignments after the deadline will be penalized with a grade deduction based on the lateness of the assignment. No assignments will be accepted one week after the due date. All assignments must be submitted in hard copy.

**Sections:** Students are required to sign up for a discussion section. Attendance in section each week is mandatory. The sections are scheduled as follows:

- Fridays, 11:00 a.m. to 11:50 a.m., SOEB 108
- Fridays, 12:00 p.m. to 12:50 p.m., FERG 322

**Assigned Readings:** There are two books assigned for this class: Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias: A Story of Sex and Salvation in 19th-Century America* (1995) and William L. Barney, *The Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir’s Civil War* (2007). Both books can be purchased at the University Bookstore. Additional readings are on Canvas and the internet. The assigned reading list may undergo minor changes, including the addition of primary source readings; students should be sure to consult the most current and official version of the Syllabus on Canvas.

**Electronic Devices:** The use of laptops, tablets, cellular phones, or any other type of electronic device is prohibited during class. Use of electronic devices will incur grade penalties.

**Attendance:** Attendance in class is mandatory. The door will close ten minutes after class starts. After ten minutes, students will no longer be admitted to the class and will be considered absent. Each student is allowed three absences. After three unexcused absences, students will receive a zero for participation for that day. The instructor will excuse absences with a doctor’s note or legitimate documentation of other emergencies. After fifteen absences, students will receive an automatic F.

**Late Assignments:** All assignments must be submitted in hard copy. Unless otherwise specified on the syllabus, papers are due in class at the beginning of the class period. Students who submit assignments after the deadline will be penalized with a grade deduction based on the lateness of the
assignment. No assignments will be accepted one week after the due date. If a student leaves a paper in the professor’s mailbox, it is the student’s responsibility to check that the professor has received the paper.

**Plagiarism:** The University defines plagiarism as "intentionally or knowingly representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise."¹ (See the University's Academic Integrity Policies for further information.) All sources (books, articles, documents, internet sites, etc.) used in any paper or assignment must be properly cited or will be considered plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism will receive a zero and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the University.

**Final Grade Composition**
- Participation 15%
- Assignments 10%
- Midterm Exam 20%
- Final Exam 25%
- Paper 30%

Participation: Participation in discussion is mandatory. **Students should be prepared to discuss the readings on the day that they are assigned.** Attendance alone is not sufficient for full participation credit.

Assignments: Students will be given brief in-class and take-home writing and research assignments based on the assigned readings. Students will also be periodically quizzed on readings and lectures. There will be no make-up assignments in the case of a missed class.

Exams: There will be two exams in this class: one midterm exam on March 4 and one final exam on May 4.

Paper: Students are required to a ten- to twelve-page paper based on assigned readings and lectures. The paper is segmented with preliminary assignments, which allows students opportunities for feedback before submitting their final drafts. The first five- to seven-page segment of the paper is due on February 26 and the final ten- to twelve-page version is due on April 4. All sources in the paper must be properly cited according to the guidelines laid out in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, which is available on-line.

**Class Schedule**

**Week 1:**

**01: Monday, January 11: Introduction**

¹ [http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/violation/plagiarism/](http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/violation/plagiarism/)
02: Wednesday, January 13: Precontact

Readings:
• UNCG Library, Path Tutorial: Lighting Your Way from Research to Writing. Primary and Secondary Sources in US History

03: Friday, January 15: Sections

Week 2:

04: Monday, January 18: MLK Day – Class Canceled

05: Wednesday, January 20: Creating the Atlantic World

Readings:
• Documents: Christopher Columbus, The Diario of Christopher Columbus’s First Voyage to America, (1492-1493), on Canvas; Bernal Diaz del Castillo, The Conquest of New Spain, (1632), on Canvas; Mexican Accounts of Conquest from the Florentine Codex, (c. 1547), on Canvas; Bartolomé de Las Casas, The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account, (1542), on Canvas; “Two Views on Columbus Day,” (1991 and 2005) on Canvas

06: Friday, January 22: Sections

Week 3:

07: Monday, January 25: The Atlantic Slave Trade

Readings:
• Documents: John Hawkins, “An Alliance to Raid for Slaves” (1568), Willem Bosman, “Trading on the Slave Coast” (1700), Olaudah Equiano, “Kidnapped, Enslaved, and Sold Away” (c. 1756) on Canvas

08: Wednesday, January 27: An English Empire in the Americas

Readings:
• Documents: George Peckham, “A True Reporte of the Late Discoveries,” (1583); Richard Hakluyt, the Younger, “Discourse of Western Planting,” (1584); Richard Hakluyt, the Elder, “Inducements to the Liking of the Voyage Intended towards Virginia,” (1585) on Canvas

09: Friday, January 29: Sections

Week 4:

10: Monday, February 1: Encounter

Readings:
• Documents: John Winthrop, “But What Warrant Have We To Take That Land” (1629) (See document collection in “08”); John Smith, “Description of Virginia” on Canvas; Father Paul LeJeune, “Encounter with the Indians” on Canvas

11: Wednesday, February 3: Colonial America: Chesapeake

Readings:
• Documents: [Virginia Company], “A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia,” (1610) (See document collection in “08”); James Revel, “The Poor Unhappy Transported Felon’s Sorrowful Account of His Fourteen Years Transportation at Virginia in America,” (c. 1680) on Canvas; “Servitude and Slavery in 17th-Century Virginia Courts,” (1630-89) on Canvas

12: Friday, February 5: Sections

Week 5:

13: Monday, February 8: Colonial America: New England

Readings:
• Document: Mary Rowlandson, from “The Narrative of Mary Rowlandson” (1682) on Canvas

14: Wednesday, February 10: Colonial America: Lowcountry

Readings:
• Alan Taylor, American Colonies: The Settling of North America (New York: Penguin Press, 2002), pp. 222-244 on Canvas
• Document: “The Stono Rebellion in South Carolina” (1739) on Canvas

15: Friday, February 12: Sections

Week 6:

16: Monday, February 15: Colonial America: Middle Colonies

Readings:
• Document: Gabriel Thomas, “Pennsylvania, The Poor Man’s Paradise” (1698) on Canvas

17: Wednesday, February 17: Colonial (Dis)Order

Readings:
• Documents: “New Jersey Land Riots” (1746 and 1748) on Canvas; William Livingtons, “The Vanity of Birth and Titles; with the Absurdity of Claiming Respect without Merit” (1753) on Canvas; Paxton Boys, “Manifesto” (1764) on Canvas; North Carolina Regulators, “Shew Yourselves to be Freemen” (1769) on internet; J. Hector St. John Crèvecoeur, “What is an American?” (1770) on Canvas

18: Friday, February 19: Sections

Week 7:

19: Monday, February 22: War and Rebellion

Readings:
• Documents: Thomas Paine, Common Sense, Section I, Section II, Section III on internet; Ann Hulton, “Loyalist View of Colonial Unrest” (1774) on Canvas; Thomas Jefferson, “Declaration of Independence” (1776); Abigail and John Adams, “Remember the Ladies” (1776) on Canvas; Joseph Brant, “Mohawk Loyalty to Britain” (1776) on Canvas; John Dickinson, “A Speech Against Independence” (1776) on Canvas; Slave Petitions for Freedom during the Revolution (1774-79) on Canvas

20: Wednesday, February 24: Founding of a New Nation

Readings:
21: Friday, February 26: Sections

*First segment of paper due at the beginning of class*

Week 8:

22: Monday, February 29: “We the People”

Readings:
- Documents: Constitution (1787) on internet; Bill of Rights (1791) on internet; Elbridge Gerry, “The Danger of the Levilling Spirit” (1787); George Clinton, “To The Citizens of the State of New York,” (1787); James Madison, “The Federalist, No. 10,” on Canvas

23: Wednesday, March 2: Competing Visions for the Early Republic

Readings:
- Drew R. McCoy, “The Fears of the Jeffersonian Republicans” on Canvas; Linda Kerber, “The Fears of the Federalists” on Canvas
- Documents: Governor Thomas Mifflin, “Proclamation on Unlawful Combinations,” 1794; Judge Alexander Addison, “On the Whiskey Rebellion” (1794) on Canvas

24: Friday, March 4: *Mid-Term Exam*

Week 9: Spring Break – Class Canceled

Week 10:

25: Monday, March 14: American Expansion and Indian Removal

Readings:
- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *Kingdom of Matthias*, pp. 3-48
- Document: Tecumseh’s Plea to the Choctaws and the Chickasaws on Canvas; James Tallmadge, “Denunciation of Slavery in Missouri” (1819) on Canvas

26: Wednesday, March 16: Market Revolution

Readings:
- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *Kingdom of Matthias*, pp. 49-90
- Documents: James Flint, “Panic of 1819” (1822) on Canvas; David Crockett, “Advice to Politicians” (1833) on Canvas
27: Friday, March 18: Sections

Week 11:

28: Monday, March 21: Northern Working Class

Readings:
- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, Kingdom of Matthias, pp. 91-164
- Documents: B. Julianna, “Factory Life as it Is” (1845) on Canvas; “Accounts of Urban Riots” (1835) on Canvas; William Sanger, “New York Prostitutes” (1858) on Canvas

29: Wednesday, March 23: Northern Middle Class

Readings:
- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, Kingdom of Matthias, pp. 164-180
- Documents: Excerpt from David Walker’s Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World (1829) on Canvas and William Lloyd Garrison’s “On the Constitution and the Union” on the internet

30: Friday, March 25: Spring Holiday – Sections Canceled

Week 12:

31: Monday, March 28: Creating the “Old South”

Readings:
- Documents: Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, from Georgia Scenes on Canvas; Daniel R. Hundley, from Social Relations from Our Southern States on Canvas; Mary Boykin Chesnut, from The Private Mary Chesnut on Canvas; Reverend Thornton Stringfellow, A Brief Examination of the Scripture Testimony of the Institution of Slavery, 1841, on Canvas

32: Wednesday, March 30: Life in the “Quarters”

Readings:
- Brenda Stevenson, “Distress and Discord in Virginia Slave Families, 1830-60,” in In Joy and In Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South, 1830-60, pp. 103-124 on Canvas
- Documents: Harriet Jacobs, from Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl on Canvas; Frederick Douglass, from Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass on Canvas

33: Friday, April 1: Sections

Week 13:
34: Monday, April 4: Manifest Destiny and the Mexican-American War

Readings:
- Susan Lee Johnson, “‘Domestic’ Life in the Diggings: The Southern Mines in the California Gold Rush,” in Matsumoto and Allmendinger, eds., Over the Edge: Remapping the American West, pp. 107-132 on Canvas
- Document: John O’Sullivan, “Annexation,” The United States Magazine and Democratic Review 17 on internet

*Final version of paper due at the beginning of class*

35: Wednesday, April 6: Political Crises of the 1850s

Readings:
- Documents: Secession Era Editorials Project on Canvas; George Fitzhugh, Cannibals All! or Slaves Without Masters (1857) on Canvas; James D. B. DeBow, “The Interest in Slavery of the Southern Non-Slaveholder” on Canvas; Frederick Law Olmsted, The Cotton Kingdom (1861) on Canvas; and Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” (1852) on Canvas

36: Friday, April 8: Sections

Week 14:

37: Monday, April 11: Secession and the Descent to War

Readings:
- Documents: South Carolina’s “Declaration of Causes” (December 24, 1860); Mississippi’s “Declaration of Causes” (January 9, 1861); Georgia’s “Declaration of Causes” (January 19, 1861) on Canvas

38: Wednesday, April 13: On the Frontline

Readings:

39: Friday, April 15: Sections

Week 15:

40: Monday, April 18: On the Homefront

Readings:
41: Wednesday, April 20: War’s End

Readings:
- Documents: Spotswood Rice to “My Children” (1864) and Spotswood Rice to Kittey Diggs (1864) on internet

42: Friday, April 22: Sections

Week 16:

43: Monday, April 25: The Rise and Fall of Reconstruction

Readings:

44: Tuesday, April 26: Sections

Final Exam
Wednesday, May 4, 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Endnotes: