

History 211: United States History to 1865

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Course Overview

This course surveys the social, cultural, and political history of the United States from the beginnings of European colonization of America to the end of the American Civil War. Because of its broad historical sweep, the variety of topics covered in this course make no claim to be comprehensive. The course will examine leaders as well as ordinary people demonstrating the importance of top down and bottom up history.

This course also serves as an introduction to the discipline of history as a field. Students will be trained *to think as historians* by analyzing evidence and learning to ask questions that help understand the historical context. Students will learn how to read, use, and evaluate a wide range of primary historical sources including memoirs, novels, letters, speeches, political cartoons, and oral interviews. They will identify different methods of historical inquiry and gain an appreciation for how history structures our daily lives.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Command a thorough knowledge of early American and U.S. history that encompasses divergent perspectives and complex events and processes.
2. Read and interpret a variety of primary sources, performing single source analysis of a primary source, or corroborating it with another source.
3. Analyze secondary sources and form an educated opinion and argument about the author's ideas, methods, and overall effectiveness.
4. Research effectively for scholarly book reviews in electronic databases and determine proper and improper sources of information.

Fulfill General Education requirements: Historical Perspectives (GHP). At the completion of this course, student should be able to:

1. Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize both primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
2. Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally, and in writing.

Required Readings – All are available at the UNCG bookstore.

Brown and Shannon, eds. *Going to the Source: The Bedford Reader in American History Vol. 1: To 1877*, 4th edition.

The following book is available as a free ebook through the library

Johnson and Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias*

*****In addition to these readings, I will have you look at documents I have uploaded to Canvas.*****

Required Videos

Each week there will be several required videos, mostly from the *Crash Course U.S.* and *Crash Course World* history programs hosted by John Green. For the purposes of this class, the *Crash Course* videos serve as the lecture and make up the bulk of the historical content you will learn. The quizzes and some of the reflection/response questions will relate directly to information taken from these videos.

I am also assigning two PBS documentaries.

Course Policies

Electronic Devices: Naturally, as this is an online course, you are expected to use electronic devices. Be sure that you are able to have regular access to the internet and Canvas. If you are on campus, remember that the library has computers available to you should there be issues or problems with connectivity.

Attendance: If you drop the course it is **your responsibility** to make sure you have been removed by the Registrar, otherwise I will continue to mark you absent.

Late Assignments: Quizzes and Reflection/Response posts **may not** be made up if missed. Other assignments – weekly assignments, tests, and the book review – may be turned in late with a penalty. **All late assignments will be docked %10 for every day it is late. After 7 days I will no longer accept late assignments.**

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.

Percentage Breakdown:

Reflection/responses Questions (8) - 10%

Weekly Skill Assignments - 20%

Weekly Content Quizzes - 5%

Tests (3) = 15% each = - 45%

Book Reviews (1) - 20%

-100%

Course Layout: The semester will have six distinct sections that revolve around a specific theme or period in history: Introductory Week, Colonial Era, Revolutionary Era, New Republic Era, Antebellum Era, and Wrap Up. The main units that will form the bulk of this course will be the Colonial through Antebellum eras.

Since this course is meant to train you in historical thinking as well as provide a basic foundation of early American history, the tests and assignments will be diverse. In our Introductory Week we will learn about the profession, what makes history “history,” different sources of evidence, and how perspective matters. As we enter our main units, you will learn historical content, aka facts, dates, events, people, etc., and you will learn and practice key historical skills that are transferable to many different disciplines and fields.

Course work will include short weekly assignments, reflection/response questions, quizzes, three tests, and a book review assignment. All course work is due Friday by 6pm unless otherwise stated.

Weekly Skill Assignment: Most weeks, especially early in the semester, I will assign a short assignment to help you learn a specific historical skill. Students will watch the necessary tutorial video, and/or read any accompanying notes or sections from their book, and perform the task themselves. These assignments will be graded and given feedback. The three larger tests will be made up of similar types of questions as these weekly assignments.

Reflection/Response Questions: Each week I will post a question to encourage thinking on the nature of history and the skills we are learning. Often these questions will be an expanded variant of the week's inquiry question.

Students will make an initial post for themselves, roughly 300 words in length, and must respond to two other posts. These posts should be written professionally, but are meant to be informal ways for us to communicate our thoughts on the subject material, pose questions, or deepen our understanding of history.

Students **must complete eight** Reflection/Response Questions, and must do **at least one in each unit**. The reflection/response questions for **weeks 1, 7, and 16 are mandatory and cannot be made up through other posts.**

Your initial, or main post, must be completed by Thursday at 6pm, and your follow-up posts by Friday at 6pm.

Quizzes: Students will be given short (5-15 question) multiple-choice quizzes related to assigned videos and/or readings. These quizzes will be available on Canvas starting Saturday morning and will close Friday at 11:59pm. **There will be a mandatory syllabus quiz due by the second week of class. Failure to complete the mandatory syllabus quiz by this time will result in a %10 penalty assessed to your first test.**

Tests: Students will be given three tests. These will vary in their design, but will include combinations of short and extended responses, document analysis, and occasionally multiple choice/true and false questions. Students will be able to access these tests on Saturdays starting at midnight, and they will be available until Friday at 6:00pm. Tests can be worked on sporadically over this period. You may open the test and do a small section, close it and come back later. You do not need to do these tests in one sitting, but you can if you choose.

These tests will be **open book and open note**. You are **required to type** your responses in a neat, clear, and professional manner. Spelling and grammar should be appropriate; contractions should not be used, etc. As you are being given nearly six days to take these assessments you should make every effort to see that they are well-polished.

Book Reviews: Part of learning the art of history includes evaluating the work of professional historians. You will read *The Kingdom of Mathias* and compose a 500-700 word book review on the text. Additional directions, requirements, and learning aids will be forthcoming.

Contact

Sending me a message through Canvas is the best way to reach me. Although I check my mailbox often, you should allow 48 hours for a response. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, you should assume that I did not receive your message and try again. If you cannot access Canvas, or you believe your messages are not getting through, you may e-mail me directly at mdhintz@uncg.edu.

I will respond to messages, and send messages periodically, through Canvas, so check your account often. Remember to observe basic etiquette when sending messages: clearly state the purpose of the message in the Subject line, Hello, Good day, Dear, or Mr. Hintz, are appropriate salutations, and make sure you write clearly with good grammar, as if you are writing a letter or filling out a job application.

Resources for Students with Disabilities

Students with recognized disabilities should register with the Office of Accessibility Resources & Services (OARS). OARS is located on the second floor of the Elliott University Center (EUC) in Suite 215 and maintains a webpage at <http://ods.uncg.edu/>. The mission of OARS is to provide, coordinate, and advocate for services which enable undergraduate and graduate students with disabilities to receive equal access to a college education and to all aspects of university life.

Course Schedule

Week 1. Introduction to the Profession (1/17-1/22)

Inquiry Question: What do historians do? Why do we study history?

Reading: Introductory Lecture Notes

Video: *John Fea Office Hours Episodes I and II*

Assignment: Reflection/response post (1/20), Quiz, Syllabus Quiz due on the 24th at 11:59pm.

Unit I. – COLONIAL ERA

Week 2. Pre-Contact and European Colonization (1/21-1/27)

Inquiry Question: Where and when does American history begin?

Reading: *Going to the Source*, Chapter 1, Maps on outward migration to the Americas, Notes on Image sourcing.

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History Episodes #1, #2, Crash Course World History Episode #23*

Assignment: Reflection/response question, Image Analysis assignment, Quiz

Week 3. Transatlantic Slave Trade (1/28-2/3)

Inquiry Question: What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of slave narratives?

Reading: *Interesting Narrative of Olaudah Equiano*, Chapters I, II, "The True Story of Equiano" article in *The Nation*, and Primary Sourcing notes.

Video: *Crash Course World History Episode #24, PBS: Africans in America: America's Journey through Slavery, Part I* (first 57 minutes only).

Assignment: Reflection/response question, Primary Source analysis assignment, Quiz

Week 4. Anglo-America (2/4-2/10)

Inquiry Question: Is there a common colonial identity in Anglo-North America?

Reading: *Going to the Source*, Chapters 3, notes on Comparative Source analysis.

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History Episodes #3 and #4*

Assignments: Reflection/response question, Comparative Source assignment, Quiz

Unit II. – REVOLUTIONARY AMERICA

Week 5. Independence (2/11-2/17)

Inquiry Question: Why did some oppose or favor the Revolution? How revolutionary was the outcome of the war?

Reading: John Dickinson: A Speech Against Independence, Charles Inglis: The True Interest of America Impartially Stated, Patrick Henry's Speech, Abigail and John Adams Converse on Women's Rights, Declaration of Independence.

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History, Episode #5, Crash Course World History, Episode #28. Crash Course U.S. History, Episode #7, Clip from HBO's John Adams debating Olive Branch petition between Adams and John Dickinson.*

Assignment: Reflections/response post, Quiz, **Test #1 due on the 18th at 6pm**

Week 6. Founding a Nation (2/18-2/24)

Inquiry Question: What can the debates surrounding the Constitution tell us about early Americans' view of government?

Reading: *Going to the Source*, Chapter 6, Notes on Constructing a Paraphrase

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History Episodes #8 and #9*

Assignment: Reflection/response post, Paraphrase assignment, Quiz

Week 7. Information Literacy (2/25-3/3)

Inquiry Question: How can we tell the difference between good and bad sources of information? What should we be aware of when conducting research?

Reading: Instructor notes for the week, Article from the Washington Post, "Virginia 4th-grade textbook criticized over claims on black Confederate soldiers," article from The Guardian, "Controversial Thomas Jefferson book pulled over complaints of inaccuracies," an article from The Chronicle of Higher Education, "At Sea in a Deluge of Data," and Kathy Schrock's "The ABC's of Website Evaluation." - **All of these articles are available in the Canvas module.**

Video: No Video this week

Assignment: Reflection/response post, website evaluation assignment

Unit III. – THE NEW REPUBLIC

Week 8. The Age of Jefferson (3/4-3/10)

Inquiry Question: Why is it important to read books by historians rather than just looking at primary sources?

Reading: Begin reading *The Kingdom of Matthias*

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History Episodes #10 and #12*

Assignment: Reflection/response post, Quiz, **Test #2 due on the 10th at 6pm**

Week 9. Spring Break. Continue reading *The Kingdom of Matthias* (3/11-3/19)

Week 10. The Slave Question and Research Methods (3/20-3/25)

Inquiry Question: What kinds of information can be extracted from slave narratives when they are put in conversation with each other?

Reading: *Going to the Source*, Chapter 10., continue reading *The Kingdom of Matthias*, Notes on UNCG databases and scholarly book reviews, sample book review packet on Canvas.

Video: *Crash Course History Episode #13*

Assignment: Reflection/response post, Quiz, database/book review evaluation assignment

Week 11. Religion, Politics, and Economics (3/25-3/31)

Inquiry Question: How does religion and economics impact American culture in the early 19th century?

Reading: Continue reading *The Kingdom of Matthias*, Notes on proper paper formatting and book review instructions.

Video: PBS Documentary *God In America – A New Eden* (in Canvas module, 56 minutes), *Crash Course U.S. History Episode #15*

Assignment: Reflection/response post, Quiz, submit outside book reviews for *The Kingdom of Matthias*

Week 12. The Age of Jackson (4/1-4/7)

Inquiry Question: Consider the videos from Weeks 8 through 12, what features distinguish politics in the Age of Jackson from those in the Age of Jefferson and years prior?

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History Episode #14*

Assignment: Reflection/response post, Quiz, **Scholarly Book Review on *The Kingdom of Matthias* due on the 24th at 6pm.**

Unit IV. THE ANTEBELLUM ERA & THE CIVIL WAR

Week 13. Manifest Destiny and Violence in the West (4/8-4/14)

Inquiry Question: How does the war with Mexico impact social, cultural, and political issues in the U.S.? On what grounds do some support or oppose the acquisition of new territories from Mexico?

Reading: PBS Page on James K. Polk, Speech by John C. Calhoun, Article by John O'Sullivan

Video: *Crash Course of U.S. History Episode #17*

Assignment: Reflection/response post, Quiz

Week 14. Secession, War, and Emancipation (4/15-4/21)

Inquiry Question: How and why does the South justify secession from the Union?

Reading: Notes on the Compromise of 1850, Secessionist Document packet located in Canvas.

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History Episodes #18 & #20, John Brown's Last Speech Clip*

Assignment: Reflection/response post, Quiz

Week 15. Looking at Secession and the War Today (4/22-4/28)

Inquiry Question: In what ways does the war still linger?

Reading: Article in the Washington Post, "Texas officials: Schools should teach that slavery was 'side issue' to Civil War," and the article in NPR, "How Textbooks Can Teach Different Versions Of History." The NPR story includes an audio file.

Audio: BackStory Podcast: *Confederate Symbols in America*

Video: *Crash Course U.S. History Episode #21*

Assignment: Reflect/response post, Quiz

Week 16. Concluding Week (4/29-5/2)

Inquiry Question: How can the past be useful to the present? Is the past a "foreign country?"

Video: *John Fea Office Hours, Episodes III and IV*

Assignments: Reflection/response post, Quiz

Test #3 Due (TBA)