

American History to 1877

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Period 7, Thursday Period
7-8, Keene-Flint 117

Office hours go
here!

This course will introduce students to the central themes of early American history, with a special emphasis on the development of concepts that continue to define the lives of Americans in the twenty-first century: race relations, colonization, land use, and capitalism. Students who successfully complete this course are adept at analyzing documents, understand field-specific ideas that make analysis possible, and can identify the power of the individual in American history.

Texts for this class:

Brands et. al., *American Stories: A History of the United States Volume I*, 3rd Edition

Saunt, *West of the Revolution: An Uncommon History of 1776*

Tomek, *Pennsylvania Hall: A "Legal Lynching" in the Shadow of the Liberty Bell*

This class adheres to university policies on academic honesty, plagiarism, and accommodation:

1. **Academic Honesty:** Academic integrity is a fundamental value at the University of Florida. It must be at the heart of all our endeavors and must guide our actions every day as students and as members of the faculty, administration, and staff. Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity free from fraud and deception and is an educational objective of this institution. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating of information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students.
2. **Plagiarism:** It is plagiarism if you present the ideas or words of someone else as your own. You are responsible for understanding the University's definitions of plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Please read the Student Honor Code and ask me if you have any questions. Keep in mind that plagiarism is a serious violation of the student academic honor code and university policy recommends that, at a minimum, instructors should impose a course grade penalty and report any suspected academic dishonesty to the Office of the Dean of Students.
3. **Accommodation for Disabilities:** We are more than happy to work with anyone who needs extra help on a project or assignment. In line with university policy, students requesting accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the professor. Please provide documentation as soon as possible (i.e., in the first two weeks) for me. Always let me know if you have any questions.
4. **Late/Absent Policy:** A late paper or assignment cannot receive a higher grade than the lowest grade given to a paper or assignment turned in on time. Excessive tardiness and/or absence unacceptable and will result in a lower participation grade. People on their cell phones or laptops are not actually "here" and will be counted absent.
5. **Course Evaluations:** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

In the beginning there was no fire, and the world was cold, until the Thunders, who lived up in Galun lati, sent their lightning and put fire into the bottom of a hollow sycamore tree.

-Swimmer, Cherokee

"Law is whatever is boldly asserted and plausibly maintained."

-Aaron Burr

Grading Scale:

Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33

20% Midterm: You need to show up for the midterm or you will fail the class.

25% Final: The final exam is scheduled for Thursday, December 17 at 3:00 PM in our classroom. You need to show up for the final or you will fail the class.

25% Class Participation: This is a small class, so participation from everyone is necessary for successful discussion periods. Admittedly, this grade is subjective and it is not an easy A component of your grade. Therefore, be respectful and thoughtful with your comments. Your contributions to discussion should demonstrate that you read for class and that you take the points of your colleagues into account. You are encouraged to come to office hours for further discussion or with any questions or concerns.

20% Papers: There are two papers assigned (20% each), each on a book germane to the time period we are studying. Prompts will be handed out at least two weeks ahead of time. Each paper should be 3 to 5 pages, TNR 12-point font, double-spaced, and 1" margins. Your name and title should be in the header. Your papers should balance fact and analysis, without resulting in either summary or op-ed. Accordingly, you should cite facts and ideas that are not yours. Please use Chicago-style footnotes. (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html) As a side note, your second paper is expected to improve on your first paper. Talk to me about any questions.

10% Pop quizzes (4): Pop quizzes will either be multiple choice, short answer, or a combination. Questions will be drawn from the textbook or primary source readings, or I will give out a primary source for you to analyze. There is no make-up for pop quizzes, but there will be five and I will drop the lowest of each.

Schedule:

All readings are due the Thursday of the week for which they are listed.

August 25

Week 1: "Ours:" The continent before Europeans

How are Native American societies different from European societies? How does Indian history change throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? How do Indian peoples alter their lives in order to survive?

Read Chapter 1, pages 7-25

Primary source: Archaeological Field Notes from Werowocomoco

September 1

Week 2: Early Settlement Patterns and Ways of Thinking

Some of the early English settlers and settlement promoters saw "the New World" as a blank canvas. Why did land and labor exploitation unfold the way it did? Are Anglo-American societies unique, or a transplant of their European counterpart?

Chapter 2, 29-44, 49-53

Primary Source: Salem Witch Trial Transcripts (Blackboard)

*I am glad
Hon'd madam,
that you think
my writing is
better than it
used to be--you
see it is mended
just here.*

*-Anne Green Winslow,
letter to her
mother, Boston,
1770, age 11*

*The Tlascallans, who, as
well as the others, dis-
played to the inhabitants
of the city the bodies of
their countrymen cut into
pieces, exclaiming at the
same time, that they
would have them for
supper that night and for
breakfast the next day, as
was in fact the case."*

-Hernan Cortes,

Tenochtitlan, 1521

**"Were you
not afraid to
come into
my father's
country?"
Pocahontas to
John Smith,
England, 1617**

September 8

Week 3: Inequality Takes Root

Simply documenting changes over time in legal constructs and semantics prove that race and gender are social constructs. How did they come to benefit some and oppress others? Is oppression of others a conscious choice?

Chapter 3, 55-75

West of the Revolution, 1-115

September 15

Week 4: Anglo-American Life, and Under It

Eighteenth-century merchants and thinkers quickened the exchange of goods, ideas, and people across the Atlantic. Who benefits from the relationship between England and her colonies? Who has the power to benefit from consumerism and the Enlightenment, or alter these new patterns?

Chapter 4

West of the Revolution, 115-end

Primary Source: The Diary of William Byrd (Blackboard)

Phillis Wheatley, "To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth." (Blackboard)

September 22

Week 5: The American Revolution

The English colonists required English goods and British protection from foreign and domestic enemies. Why did 13 provincial governments choose to break away? Why did some choose to break away, and not others?

Chapter 5, 103-120

Primary source: Pick a Revolutionary War pension applicant from revwarapps.org. Be prepared to discuss: how old was he when he joined? How far did he travel from home? Did he see combat? What is his economic status at the time of application? How does he portray himself?

September 29

PAPER DUE October 1

Week 6: What are the United States?

The planters, merchants, and lawyers at the Constitutional Conventions were handed the opportunity to create a government. Why did they choose the Articles of Confederation? Why didn't it work?

Chapter 6, 141-155

October 6

Week 7: The United States and Their Discontents

The Revolution is over and the Constitution is signed, but there were still many different hopes for the future of the "United States." Do they come into alignment? What is sacrificed in order to keep the country from breaking apart?

Chapter 7

October 13

MIDTERM Tuesday, October 13

Week 8: Jeffersonian America

Virginian Presidents Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe oversaw domestic peace, the development of the two-party system and interest in westward expansion. How did these administrations deal with difficult problems like slavery and Native American land ownership? How much power was vested in the idealized "yeoman?"

Chapter 8, 181-195

I Anna Barnhouse of
Martin's Hundred,
Widow, have given
Mihill Gowen, negro,
at this time servant
to Robert Stafford, a
male child born 25
Aug. 1655 of the
body of my negro
Prossa being baptized
by Mr. Edward John-
son 25 Sept. 1655 &
named William & I
bind myself never to
trouble Mihill Gowen
or his son William or
demand any service
of them, 16 Sept.
1657.

"he never left the
service during the
whole time, but
faithfully served
his country for
very little pay,
he further show
that he is now
sixty-five years
of age & very poor
and helpless and
has no friends
able to support
him."
-Petition of Dan-
iel Beem, Revolu-
tionary War sol-
dier, South Caro-
lina, 1829

October 20

Week 9: Nationalism and Good Feelings

Confidence in American geographic and economic expansion marked the Era of Good Feelings. Why did it go away?

Chapter 9

Washington Irving, "Sleepy Hollow" (Blackboard)

October 27

Week 10: Deforesting Sleepy Hollow

Andrew Jackson, despite his large personality, put out several fires during his administration. How did he change American politics and the economy?

Chapter 10, 227-243

Scholarly Article: Elliott J. Gorn, "Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch:" The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry American Historical Review (1985) (Blackboard)

November 3

Week 11: Slavery

Chapter 11

Confession of Nat Turner (Blackboard)

November 10

Week 12: American Imperialism

Annexation and immigration changed the shape of the United States. What is the relationship between the expansion west and wage laborers in the east?

Chapter 13

Pennsylvania Hall, pages 1-82

Primary Source: Correspondence between UVA students and Florida Governor Thomas Brown, February 25, 1853 (Blackboard)

November 17

Week 13: American Imperialism and Slavery

Chapter 14

The dizzying number of Congressional compromises and debates over the meaning of slavery represent the scramble to patch up a deep sectional divide. Was there any way to avoid the Civil War? How did slavery become so legally, morally, economically, religiously, and culturally divisive?

Pennsylvania Hall, pages 83-end

November 24 [Thanksgiving: November 26]

Week 14: Discussion of Pennsylvania Hall

December 1

Week 15: The Civil War

On its sesquicentennial, the meaning behind the Civil War is still hotly debated. Why? What about the Civil War was so revolutionary?

Chapter 15

Primary Source: Library of Congress Civil War Photograph Collection (link in Blackboard)

December 8

Week 16: Aftermath of the Slavery and Radical Reconstruction

Why do we end this class with Reconstruction? Was it a success or a failure? Why?

Chapter 16

IT IS THE OPINION
OF THE COURT
THAT THE SAID
SLAVE KING IS
GUILTY OF INSUR-
RECTION AND FOR
THE SAME THAT HE
BE HANGED BY THE
NECK UNTIL HE BE
DEAD...THE COURT
VALUED THE SAID
SLAVE TO EIGHTY
POUNDS.
-COURT OF OYER
AND TERMINER,
RICHMOND, VIRGIN-
IA, OCTOBER 3, 1800.

She died amidst
friends in the wil-
derness, far from
the consolations of
religious guides,
or those who could
direct her to a
Saviour. Her last
words were, "I am
gone before." I am
informed that all
present took her by
the hand and bid
her adieu! She died
of the Pleurisy.
-Obituary for Oo-
Day-Yee, Cherokee
woman, Savannah,
GA, 1828.

*And bayonets in sunlight
gleam,
And bands brave music pour--
We are coming Father Abra-
ham,
Three hundred thousand more.*

*-Baltimore M.D. pro-Union
song, c. 1864*

