

AMH 2010: Early American History
University of Florida
Department of History
Summer B 2019

Instructor: Kaitlyn Muchnok

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Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Keene Flint, Room 222

Class Meeting Times: Monday through Friday, 12:30p.m. to 1:45 p.m.

Section Number: 10232

Room: Keene Flint, Room 0111

Course Description: This survey course covers American history from European contact to Reconstruction's end with an emphasis on the political, intellectual, social, and cultural realms. Many people believe the study of history includes memorizing facts and dates. This information is very important, but it is not the discipline's primary goal. The purpose of studying history is to learn about the past, develop skills in critical thinking, analysis, interpretation of evidence, and academic writing. In general, historians ask specific questions about the past including: What happened? Why did it happen? Does it matter? How does our own personal bias shape our answers to these questions? Learning how to pursue the question-answer part of history will be a central goal of this course.

More specifically, this class will examine how the United States rapidly grew throughout a land occupied by Native Americans living in an agricultural, hunter-gather society into one of the most powerful, industrialized nations in the world. We will pay special attention to the historical themes and issues that remain relevant to today's world. These themes and issues include the meaning of equality, liberty, and freedom, the diversity of the American experience, the meaning of American citizenship, economic, social, and political power, how major conflicts arise, and the roles of race, class, gender, and ethnicity throughout the period. To answer these questions, students will analyze primary source evidence, engage critically with secondary sources written by historians, and work on developing their communication skills via class discussions and written assignments.

Questions we will explore include: Who "discovered" America? What is the proper role of government in economic and social life? What are the government's duties and responsibilities to citizens? What are citizens duties and responsibilities to one another? Who is a citizen? How did earlier generations respond to cultural and political conflicts that arose from the conditions of diversity? How does one's gender, race, ethnicity, religious background, and/or economic status affect their access to liberty, equality, power, and opportunity? Who built America?

Required Readings: The following textbooks are required for this course. I encourage you to buy used when possible. Amazon is a great resource for ordering much more affordable copies.

- *Women, Families, and Communities: Readings in American History*, Volume 1 to 1900, 2nd edition. Edited by Nancy Hewitt & Kristen DeLegard.
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave, Written by Himself*, 3rd edition. Edited by David W. Blight

- Free Online Textbook, “American Yawp,” <http://www.americanyawp.com/>
- Other assigned works will be available via the course E-learning page*

Course Assignments:

- **Participation** (250 points total, 125 points before the midterm/125 points after the midterm)
 - Students are expected to arrive to class on time, silence cell phones, and engage proactively with the course lectures and discussions. To get a high participation grade, students should comment, ask questions, or respond to fellow classmates during Friday’s discussion sections. To get the most points possible for participation students should try to speak at least once during every class period, unless that particular class is devoted exclusively to lecture. Please note that attendance, while important to the overall grade (see below for attendance policy), will not guarantee a high participation score. Participation not only includes class discussions, but also group discussions. Throughout the semester, students will be placed into small groups and asked to discuss specific questions related to the course material. This is an excellent opportunity for shy students to earn participation points.
- **3 Short Exams** (300 points total/100 points each)
 - Students will take three short exams that will either be in short answer form. For the short answer form, students will be expected to provide a 4-7 sentence definition of specific key terms discussed in class. It is important that students not only define the term, but also give it historical context and explain why it is important. To give historical context, students should identify the relative time period, event, issue, or person the term is associated with and discuss its impact on U.S. history.
- **2 Short Essays/Discussion Board Post** (200 points total)
 - Students will be expected to respond to two short essay questions posted on the course’s E-Learning page. The due dates for each of these assignments can be found below in the course schedule section. For each post, students will be asked to engage critically with the course material to explain their perspective. Students should assess the question, form an educated argument, and use evidence from both the primary sources and the secondary literature listed below. These posts should be thoughtful, well-articulated, and organized effectively.
- **Analytical Essay** (250 points total)
 - A 4-5 page analytical essay will be due on . The essay will be on David Blight’s edition of *The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Students should follow the assignment’s guidelines for completing their paper. These guidelines will be posted on the course’s E-Learning sight. All papers should contain a works cited page, follow MLA citation formatting, be doubled spaced, include page numbers, use 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is essential to your learning experience. Attendance will be taken every class meeting day. You are permitted **three** unexcused absences without penalty. As discussed above, Fridays are much more discussion based and require active student engagement and participation in class conversations and debates. Missing more than **two** Friday discussions

without an excusable reason will result in a serious deduction from your participation grade. In total, the fourth unexcused absence will result in a drop of your overall grade by half a letter grade (for example, instead of receiving a B+ you would receive a B). Each additional absence will result in an additional half letter decrease in your grade. Please note that if you plan on using an unexcused absence, you do not need to email me to let me know. However, if your absence fits with in the university's established acceptable excuses, please communicate with me via email to let me know you will miss class.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will receive a reduced grade. An assignment is considered late as soon as the designated time has passed. For example, if the paper is due at 12pm, the paper is considered late at 12:01 pm. The University policy on make-up assignments, lateness, and attendance issues can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Technology Policy: Please put your phone away at the beginning of each class period. During class, please temporarily disable your WiFi for the entirety of the course period. Getting on non-course related websites is not only a disservice to your own learning experience, but also a distraction to students around you and **especially** the instructor. During discussion days and group work, no laptops or phones are permitted on desks. If you need to take notes on the material, please print them out or hand write them for these days. You are also encouraged to bring your own copies of the required reading to class for that week. Feel free to take notes in the books or highlight relevant material to help trigger your memory for classroom discussion.

Communication Policy: Students should communicate with the instructor primarily through email, office hour visits, or appointments made by student requests. Please use kaitlynmuchnok@ufl.edu to contact me during regular business hours. I generally stop checking emails after 7:00pm so please make an effort to reach out to me earlier in the day with urgent questions and issues. Additionally, students must regularly check the course's E-Learning page for assignment updates, links to required readings, and course announcements.

Finally, throughout the course, discussion sections and lectures can include sensitive and controversial topics. It is expected that students come to class with an open mind, prepared to engage with complicated issues and listen to classmates' perspectives that may differ from their own. Thoughtful, honest, and evidence-based points of view are crucial for productive conversations and learning. To ensure that everyone feels respected, please refrain from personal attacks or offensive remarks. Keep in mind that a central goal of this class is to emphasize empathy in historical studies, or the ability to understand the feelings and perspective of others, without necessarily sharing their point of view.

UF Grading Scale: Grades will be assigned according to the follow university grading scale.

A	93-100		A-	90-92	
B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	68-69	D	66-67	D-	64-65
F	<64				

Academic Honesty: UF policy requires you to access and use your gatorlink account. Excuses regarding not reading emails will not be accepted. Additionally, academic dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, or submitting someone else's work without citing them will not be tolerated. UF's honor code can be found here: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>.

Disability Information: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting the accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Student Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations 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 as <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Lecture, Discussion, & Assignment Schedule:

*Please note that the below assigned readings do not include primary sources. These will be assigned week-by-week based on the pace of the class, participation, class interests/questions etc. Students will be told in advance when to check e-learning for assigned primary sources.

Week One

- July 1: Course Introduction & Syllabus Overview
- July 2-3: The "New" World
- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 1 "The New World" & Ch. 2 "Colliding Cultures."
 - Read WFC Chapter 1, "Jamestown: Pocahontas, Powhatan, and the Struggle for Virginia" by Camilla Townsend & Chapter 2 "Women and Families in Slavery and the Slave Trade" by Jennifer Morgan
- July 4 -5: Happy 4th of July!
- No Class!!

Week Two

- July 8-9: Creating Anglo-America
- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 3 "British North America"
 - Read Watch: Documentary "The Salem Witch Trials" (See E-Learning).
- July 10-12: Slavery, Freedom, & the Struggle for Empire
- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 4 "Colonial Society"

- Read: WFC, Ch. 5 “The Origins of Domestic Patriarchy: White Planter Families in the Eighteenth Century Chesapeake” by Allan Kulikoff
- **Exam One on July 12th**

Week Three

July 15-16:

Revolution!

- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 5 “The American Revolution”
- Read: WFC, Ch. 7 “The Day of Jubilee is Come: African American Women and the American Revolution” by Carol Berkin,

July 17-19:

A New Nation

- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 6. “A New Nation” & Ch. 7. “The Early Republic”
- Read: WFC, Ch. 9 “The Modernization of Greenleaf and Abigail Patch: Land, Family, and Marginality in the New Republic” by Paul E. Johnson
- Listen: Soundtrack to Hamilton!
- **Discussion Board Post 1 Due July 19**

Week Four

July 22-24

The Market Revolution & Democracy in America

- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 8 “The Market Revolution.”
- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 9, “Democracy in America.”
- Read: WFC “Women and Politics in the Era before Seneca Falls: Boston and New York City” by Anne M. Boylan
- Twitter War in Class!

July 25-26:

The Age of Reform

- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 10 “Religion & Reform”
- Read: David Blight, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas*
- **Exam Two on July 26**

Week Five:

July 29-30:

The Peculiar Institution

- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 11, “The Cotton Revolution.”
- Read: WFC “I Could Not Stay There: Enslaved Women, Truancy, and the Geography of Everyday Forms of Resistance in the Antebellum Plantation South” by Stephanie M. H. Camp.

- July 31- August 1: Manifest Destiny & Expansion/Division
- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 12, “Manifest Destiny”
 - Read: American Yawp, Ch. 13, “The Sectional Crisis”
 - Read: WFC “Cherokee Women & The Trail of Tears” by Theda Perdue
 - **Analytical Essay Due on July 31**

Week Six

- August 5-7: Civil War
- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 14 “The Civil War”
 - Read: WFC, Drew Gilpin Faust, “Trying to Do a Man’s Business: Slavery, Violence and Gender in the American Civil War” & “The Myth of the Kindly General Lee” by Adam Serwer (see E-Learning Page)
 - **Discussion Board Post Due August 5!**

- August 8-9 Reconstruction
- Read: American Yawp, Ch. 15 “Reconstruction” & Read: WFC
 - Read: “Marching Without a Lance: Giving Meaning to Freedom” by Jean Fagan Yellin.
 - Read: “The Costs of the Confederacy,” *Smithsonian Magazine*
 - <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/costs-confederacy-special-report-180970731/>
 - **Exam Three on August 8**