

**AMH 2010: Early American History**  
**University of Florida**  
**Department of History**  
**Fall 2018**

**Instructor:** Kaitlyn Muchnok

**Email:** [kaitlynmuchnok@ufl.edu](mailto:kaitlynmuchnok@ufl.edu)

**Office Hours:** Mondays & Wednesdays 2:00-3:00pm & by appointment. Keene-Flint Room 9

**Class Meeting Times:** Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays, 11:45am to 12:35pm (5<sup>th</sup> Period)

**Section Number:** 21562

**Room:** Turlington 2350

**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: Was the "New World" really "new?" How did relations between Native Peoples and European settlers change over time? Was the American Revolution really "revolutionary?" What was the 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? Why is this period of American history important?

**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, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Edited by Nancy Hewitt & Kristen DeLegard.

- *For the Record: A Documentary History of America*, Volume 1, 6<sup>th</sup> edition. Edited by David E. Shi & Holly A. Mayer.
- *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave, Written by Himself*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Edited by David W. Blight
- Optional Suggested Free Online Textbook, “American Yawp,” <http://www.americanyawp.com/>
- Other assigned works will be available via the course E-learning page\*

**Course Assignments:** Each of the five bulleted assignments listed below are worth a total of 200 points, or 20 % of your final grade for the course. See below for a detailed point break down.

- **Participation** (200 points total, 100 points before the midterm/100 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. While we will not have weekly quizzes, it is expected that students demonstrate they’ve done the required weekly readings through their engagement in discussion.
- **4 Discussion Posts/Short Essays** (200 points total/50 points each)
  - Throughout the semester, students will be expected to respond to four 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 reading 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.
- **Midterm Exam** (200 points total)
  - The midterm will take place on Monday, October 8<sup>th</sup>. You will need to bring a bluebook to class the day of the exam. The midterm will have a short answer section and an essay section. Students will choose which questions to answer within each section.
- **Analytical Essay** (200 points total)
  - A 4-5 page analytical essay will be due on Wednesday, November 14<sup>th</sup> before 11:45 am. 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 at least 2 weeks before the essay’s due date. All papers should contain a work’s cited page, follow MLA citation formatting, be doubled spaced, include page numbers, use 12 pt. Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins.
- **Final Exam** (200 points total)
  - The final exam will take place on Wednesday December 12<sup>th</sup> from 10:00am - 12:00pm. You will need to bring a bluebook to class the day of the exam. The final will be the same format as the midterm, with a short answer and essay section. Students will choose which questions to respond to in each section.

**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. You are permitted to use your laptop during Monday & Wednesday's class meetings to take notes. During these days, 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. On Fridays, 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 on Fridays. 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](mailto: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/](http://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:**

#### **Week One: Introduction to Academic History**

August 22: Course Introduction & Syllabus Overview  
 August 24: Read: Jacoba Urist, “Who Should Decide How Students Learn About America’s Past?” and Lillian Guerra (UF History Professor), “Why I am a Historian.”

#### **Week Two: The “New” World**

August 27-29: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 1 “The New World” & Ch. 2 “Colliding Cultures.”  
 August 31: 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 FTR pg. 14-29.

#### **Week Three: Creating Anglo-America**

September 3: LABOR DAY, NO CLASS  
 September 5: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 3 “British North America”

September 7: Read: FTR pg. 45-63 & 70-76 and Watch: Documentary “The Salem Witch Trials” (See E-Learning).  
**DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE @ 11:45 am on E-Learning**

**Week Four: Slavery, Freedom, and The Struggle for Empire**

September 10 & 12: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 4 “Colonial Society”  
September 14: Read: WFC, Ch. 5 “The Origins of Domestic Patriarchy: White Planter Families in the Eighteenth Century Chesapeake” by Allan Kulikoff & FTR pg. 80 – 108.

**Week Five: Revolution!**

September 17 & 19: Recommended American Yawp, Ch. 5 “The American Revolution”  
September 21: Read: WFC, Ch. 7 “The Day of Jubilee is Come: African American Women and the American Revolution” by Carol Berkin & Listen to Act I of *Hamilton* the musical (See course E-Learning Page)

**Week Six: Founding a New Nation**

September 24 & 26: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 6. “A New Nation”  
September 28: Read: WFC, Ch. 9 “The Modernization of Greenleaf and Abigail Patch: Land, Family, and Marginality in the New Republic” by Paul E. Johnson & FRT pg. 143-168.  
**DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE @ 11:45 am on E-Learning**

**Week Seven: Securing the Republic**

October 1 & 3: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 7 “The Early Republic.”  
October 5: Read: FTR Ch. 7 “The Early Republic, 1800-1815” & Study for midterm!

**Week Eight: The Market Revolution**

October 8: **Midterm Examination!**  
October 10: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 8 “The Market Revolution.”  
October 12: Read: WFC “Sex, Gender, Culture and a Great Event: The California Gold Rush” by Albert L Hurtado & FTR pg. 212-230

**Week Nine: Democracy in America**

October 15 & 17: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 9, “Democracy in America.”  
October 19: Read: WFC “Women and Politics in the Era before Seneca Falls: Boston and New York City” by Anne M. Boylan & 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. Listen to Pod-cast on slavery (See course E-learning page)  
**DISCUSSION BOARD POST DUE @ 11:45 am on E-Learning**

**Week Ten: Manifest Destiny**

October 22 & 24: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 12, “Manifest Destiny”

October 26: Read: WFC “Cherokee Women & The Trail of Tears” by Theda Perdue and FTR pg. 255-261 & 278-285

**Week Eleven: The Peculiar Institution**

October 29 & 31: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 11, “The Cotton Revolution.”

Read: David Blight, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas*  
November 2: HOMECOMING, NO CLASS

**Week Twelve: The Age of Reform**

November 5 & 7: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 10, “Religion & Reform”

Read: David Blight, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglas*  
November 9: NO CLASS, Work on Essay

**Week Thirteen: Expansion & Division**

November 12: VETERAN’S DAY, NO CLASS

November 14: ESSAY DUE in class & on E-learning by 11:45 am

November 16: Read: FTR pg. 348-362, 373-399

**Week Fourteen: Civil War Part I**

November 19: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 13, “The Sectional Crisis”

November 21 & 23: THANKSGIVING BREAK, NO CLASS

**Week Fifteen: Civil War Part II**

November 26 & 28: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 14 “The Civil War”

November 30: 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 @ 11:45 am on E-Learning**

**Week Sixteen: Reconstruction**

December 3 & 5: Recommended: American Yawp, Ch. 15 “Reconstruction” & Read: WFC “Marching Without a Lance: Giving Meaning to Freedom” by Jean Fagan Yellin.

December 7: NO CLASS, STUDY FOR FINAL!

**Final Exam: December 12<sup>th</sup> 10 am- 12 pm in our regular classroom!**