

AMH 2010: U.S. History to 1877

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Office Hours: Monday, 9-11 a.m., or by appointment

Zoom Link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96516670891>

Course Introduction and Objectives

This course is a survey of United States History from the point of European contact through Reconstruction. We will be dealing with several major themes in US history, such as the interactions with Native American, African, and European peoples, the creation of a new nation, and the development of American society during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Upon completing this course, students should be familiar with the broad contours of US History through the Reconstruction Era. In addition to learning US history, students will gain a firsthand perspective on the craft of history by engaging with primary and secondary source materials. This course will help students hone their writing and analytical abilities, which should offer long-term value regardless of their chosen fields or career paths.

This is an online course with no synchronous meetings. This means that there is no set schedule for the course, but students will be expected to complete all the assignments on time and will be held accountable for meeting the deadlines for each assignment—this includes not only the quizzes and exams, but also the readings (with annotations), which are particularly important in a class that does not have lectures or in-class discussions. The weekly modules are set up to help you stay on track, but it is your responsibility to keep up with the course on Canvas.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon the successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Explain why European, Native American, and African cultures came into contact in the 15th and 16th centuries.
- Show why contact between Native American and European peoples had both short and long-term implications for both worlds.
- Summarize the different motives and objectives for the European colonization of North America.
- Describe how British American colonists adopted both free and enslaved labor in building an economy.
- Explain how the British American colonies developed a political, social, and cultural identity.

- Discuss why some British American colonists sought to form an independent, republican state.
- Describe how the principles of republican government were put into place in the United States.
- Discuss why the United States expanded economically and geographically, and how both free and enslaved labor played a role in that expansion.
- Analyze why the expansion of slavery became an issue of political contention in the 1840s and 1850s.
- Explain why political compromise failed in 1861, which resulted in war.
- Summarize how the Civil War triggered massive changes in American society, including but not limited to the end of slavery.
- Explain how the home and battle fronts of the Civil War were linked and why that was significant.
- Describe the challenges facing Americans in both the North and South during Reconstruction.
- Analyze the mixed record of Reconstruction in the American South.

Required Texts

This course does not require students to purchase any books. The primary text you will be working with is [The American YAWP](#), a free online textbook to American history. Additional materials will be short, primary-source documents that are selected to encourage you to think critically about history and how we analyze documentary sources. Your discussion grades will be based on the annotations you provide for each of the assigned texts, and you will have a weekly quiz on the readings. Knowledge of the materials will also be important for your performance in the exams, so keeping up with the readings is imperative to passing this class.

Assignments and Grading

Fifty percent of your grade in this course will be decided by your completion of the weekly modules and your engagement with the assigned texts, as indicated by your performance on the weekly quizzes and discussions. The quizzes will consist of only five questions designed to verify your completion of the readings, and the discussions require you to annotate the assigned texts, including both the textbook chapter and the primary-source documents. As long as you keep up with the requirements in the course, these assignments should provide an easy way to boost your grade in the class.

The other fifty percent of the course will be determined by your performance on the three essays. Each essay will cover five weeks of course material. You will choose **one** of two prompts provided to write a *complete* essay on—including an introduction with a clear thesis statement, multiple body paragraphs, and a conclusion. These will be out-of-class essays that you should write within the five-day window. You can find the university's policy for course participation and make-up exams [here](#).

Here is the grading scale used for the course:

Component	% of Final Grade	Grade Value
Quizzes	15%	A=4.0
Course Readings	35%	A-=3.67
Essays	50%	B+=3.33
		B=3.0
		B-=2.67
		C+=2.33
		C=2.0
		C-=1.67
		D+=1.33
		D=1.0
		D-=0.67
		E=0.00

Course Schedule

Weekly modules will become available every Monday, with assignments due by midnight on Thursday and Sunday. After every five modules, there will be an exam covering only the material within those modules (none of the exams will be comprehensive). The course schedule is as follows:

Module 1: First Contacts

Module 2: Early Colonization

Module 3: The American Colonies

Module 4: Colonial Life

Module 5: The British Empire in Crisis

Essay 1: Colonial America (Due October 6)

Module 6: Resistance to Revolution

Module 7: Challenges to the Republic

Module 8: The New Nation at Work

Module 9: American Culture Across a Continent

Module 10: American Politics in Crisis

Exam 2: The New Republic (Due November 10)

Module 11: Why Secession?

Module 12: Civil War

Module 13: From War to Revolution?

Module 14: The Many Meanings of Emancipation

Module 15: The Problem of Reconstruction

Exam 3: The Civil War (Due December 15)

Academic Honesty Policy

Your exams will be turned in via the Canvas e-learning website and monitored with the Turnitin Ant-Plagiarism Service. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course.** If you turn in the work of others, you will fail that assignment and risk expulsion from the University of Florida. I take academic honesty very seriously, and all UF students are expected to conform to UF's honesty policy ([which you can find here](#)), so do not expect leniency if caught cheating. The potential rewards from plagiarism simply do not justify the risks.

Course Feedback

Students are expected to provide feedback for the courses they take. These evaluations are conducted online (link [here](#)) and are open during the last two weeks of the semester. Summary results of these evaluations are also available to students through the same link.