

AMH 4130: Era of the American Revolution

Spring 2023

MWF Per. 4 (10:40 – 11:30 a.m.)

Keene-Flint 119

Instructor: Prof. Jon Sensbach, Dept. of History, jsensbach@ufl.edu

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Office: 025 Keene-Flint, office hours Wed. 9-10 a.m., 2-4 p.m., and by apt

This course will explore political, social, and military developments in the era of the American Revolution. Through a combination of secondary and primary readings we will examine the contest for power between Britain and the colonies and within the colonies themselves as they moved toward independence and into nationhood. The course will examine traditional views of the Revolution as well as more recent interpretations that stress such issues as class conflict, the role of women, African Americans, and Indians, and the importance of the Revolution in generating worldwide political and social change. Approximately one-third of the semester will be spent discussing the causes of the Revolution; one-third on the war for independence; and one-third on the struggle for control in the new nation through the era of Constitution-making and the late eighteenth century.



Course Format

Required readings:

Robert G. Parkinson, *Thirteen Clocks: How Race United the Colonies and Made the Declaration of Independence* (North Carolina, 2021).

Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (Hill & Wang, 2007).

Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America* (Penguin, 2005).

James Kirby Martin, ed., *Ordinary Courage: The Revolutionary War Adventures of Joseph Plumb Martin* (Wiley-Blackwell, 4th ed., 2012).

Serena Zabin, *The Boston Massacre: A Family History* (Houghton Mifflin, 2020).

Requirements

1. Four papers (12- pt., double-spaced) totaling about 18-20 pages. The assignments will be distributed well in advance of each deadline.

- a. A 3-page paper on *The Boston Massacre*, due **Fri., Feb. 3**
- b. A 5-page midterm paper, due **Fri., March 3**
- c. A 4-page paper on *Ordinary Courage*, due **Fri., March 24**
- d. A 6-page final essay (in lieu of a final exam), due **Tue, May 2**

2. Two short in-class tests on the assigned readings. A set of study questions will be distributed before each test.

- a. *Thirteen Clocks*, **Fri., Feb. 17**
- b. *Unruly Americans*, **Mon., April 10**

3. Class participation. Students will be expected to keep up with reading assignments, which average about 75 pages per week. There will be several discussions of the readings and other topics, and at least some participation in these during the semester is expected.

4. Attendance policy. Besides excused absences for medical reasons, family emergencies, religious holidays and other contingencies, everyone is allowed two unexcused absences. Each subsequent absence will result in a drop of half a letter grade in the final average for the term (students who are forced to miss more classes because of serious or chronic medical problems or family emergencies should consult with the instructor).

Your final grade (based on a 10-point scale) will be determined as follows:

6-page final paper	25%
5-page midterm paper	20%
4-page paper	15%
3-page paper	15%
2 reading tests	20% (10 ea)
Class participation	5%

Attribution of written work. In writing papers, be certain to give proper credit whenever you use words, phrases, ideas, arguments, and conclusions drawn from someone else's work. Failure to give credit by quoting and/or footnoting is plagiarism and is unacceptable. Please review the University's honesty policy at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm>.

Technology in the classroom. Please refrain from using devices for purposes unrelated to class.

Disability accommodation. Students with disabilities requesting accommodation 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 early in the semester.

Evaluations. Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to do so is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.



Schedule

Week 1. Jan. 9-13. Introduction: Whose Revolution?

Week 2. (MLK Jan. 16). Jan. 18-20. The Colonial World on the Eve of Revolution

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap. 1

Week 3. Jan. 23-27. Reform and Resistance

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap. 2

Week 4. Jan. 30 – Feb. 3. Anatomy of Resistance

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap. 3,

3-page paper on Boston Massacre due Friday, Feb. 3.

Week 5. Feb. 6-10. Toward Independence

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap. 4

Week 6. Feb. 13-17. Revolutionary Paradox: Slavery, Native American Sovereignty and American Independence

Reading: Parkinson, *Thirteen Clocks*

In-class test on *Thirteen Clocks*, Friday, Feb. 17.

Week 7. Feb. 20-24. A People's War for Independence

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap. 5

Week 8. Feb. 27 – March 3. **Midterm essay due Fri., March 3**

Week 9. March 6-10. Who Shall Rule at Home?

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap 6

Spring Break, March 13-17

Week 10. March 20-24. Shifting Fortunes of Battle

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap. 7

Four-page paper on *Ordinary Courage* due **Fri. March 24**

Week 11. March 27-31. Defining the New Nation

Week 12. April 3-7. Era of the Constitution

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, chap. 8

Week 13. April 10-14. WWE Cage Match: Hamilton v. Jefferson

In-class test on Holton, *Unruly Americans*, Mon. April 10

Week 14. April 17-21. Reverberations of Revolution.

Reading: Nash, *Unknown American Revolution*, Epilogue

Week 15. April 24-26.

Final Essay due by 5 p.m. May 2

