

AMH 2010: United States History to 1877

Instructor: Joseph Angelillo

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Class times: Monday, Wednesday, Friday, period 6 (12:50-1:40 PM)

Location: Keene-Flint Hall, room 105

Course Description

What is history? What is truth? What is interpretation? Why does any of that matter?

In this course, we will confront these fundamental questions through the lens of United States history. Specifically, we will evaluate the history of the United States through the Reconstruction era from political, legal, social, and economic perspectives. In doing so, we shall ponder fundamental questions regarding the nature of the Constitution, the meaning of freedom, the place of slavery in the country's history, and the expansion of American empire. We shall not undertake these endeavors merely to memorize names and dates, however. Instead, by constantly questioning our history and how it has been written, students will learn to think like historians. We will analyze change over time, refine our ability to use sources to analyze the past, and sharpen our historical writing. Ultimately, we shall (in the words of the historian Richard Hofstadter) be "playful and pious": willing to question our perception of "truth," devoted to exploring a variety of options for what is "true," yet – in the end – bound by evidence when determining "truth."

This means that we will ask hard questions about controversial topics. We do this to weigh the explanatory power of different stories, so we can get closer to the truth.

Learning Outcomes

In this class, students will:

- Consider how historians go about their work. In other words, students will consider how historians use evidence to construct stories that seek to explain past events.
- Analyze the evolution of democracy in the United States, tracking its moments of growth and decline. Students will also consider the intellectual basis for these moments.

- Analyze the evolution of race and gender in the United States, and how these concepts connected to democracy and chattel slavery.

Course Format

This is an in-person class, which meets in Keene-Flint Hall, room 105. On Mondays and Wednesdays, we will meet for lecture. On Fridays, we will meet to discuss primary sources and/or other assigned readings. Communication will primarily take place through Canvas messages and email. I will host office hours every week, day and time TBA. These office hours are an opportunity to ask questions about the course or just to chat. You will have the opportunity to read three books during this class. All can be purchased at the bookstore or from online retailers. If purchasing online, be sure to purchase the correct edition.

Required Texts

- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*, **Dover Publications edition**
- Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Swindler Sachem: The American Indian Who Sold His Birthright, Dropped Out of Harvard, and Conned the King of England*
- Rosemarie Zagari, *Revolutionary Backlash: Women and Politics in the Early American Republic*
- *The American Yawp* **primary source reader (AY in schedule)**
 - o *The American Yawp* is free and online. Access via: <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader.html>
 - o *The American Yawp* also offers a free online textbook. Reading the textbook is not required. Reading the assigned primary sources IS required.
- Other readings found on Canvas

Graded Assignments

- Attendance and participation (20%)
- Quizzes/In-class assessments (20%)
- Essays (25%)
 - o Article review (12.5%)

- Primary source analysis (12.5%)
- Midterm exam (15%)
- Final exam (20%)

Assignment Descriptions

Attendance/Participation: Students are expected to attend all sessions with the readings complete. Students are allowed three (3) unexcused absences without an impact on their final grade. Any further absences will result in a 1/3 grade deduction from the final participation grade per unexcused absence (A becomes A-, B+ becomes B). Students are expected to actively participate in class discussions. The definition of “active participation” is flexible.

Quizzes/In-Class assessments: There will be two types of in-person quizzes this semester. The first is pop quizzes, administered throughout the semester. These will be multiple choice or fill in the blank. They cannot be made up in the event of unexcused absence. The second is in-class assessments. These will be brief, open-ended writing exercises. The lowest score amongst all quizzes will be dropped.

Article review: Students will complete an article review on two newspaper op-eds by historians David Waldstreicher and Sean Wilentz. Students should go beyond summarizing the articles. Rather, students will identify the arguments of the articles, the important points of analysis, and decide which is more convincing. This should be done in 1000 words.

Midterm exam: The midterm examination will be an in-person, closed-note essay exam in a Blue Book. Students will receive two questions in advance, but only one will be on the actual exam. Students will have the Friday class period on March 8 to complete it.

Primary source analysis: Students will submit a primary source analysis on two sources from the 1830s debate on Black suffrage. This analysis should analyze the core arguments of the sources and engage with a question about U.S. democracy. This should be done in 1000 words.

Final exam: The final examination will cover concern all material since the Midterm. Students will have two options for the final exam. They make take an in-person, closed note-essay exam in a Blue Book. This will be held on April 30 from 3-5 PM. As an alternative,

students may opt for an in-person oral examination. This may be done at any point during finals week.

Grading/GPA Scale

Letter Grade	Number Grade	Corresponding GPA
A	100-90	4.0
B+	89-87	3.33
B	86-84	3.0
B-	83-80	2.67
C+	79-77	2.33
C	76-74	2.0
C-	73-70	1.67
D+	69-67	1.33
D	66-64	1.0
D-	63-60	0.67
F	Below 60	0.0

Submission and Late Work Policy

All out of class assignments are due at 11:59 PM on the due date. They should be submitted on Canvas. Late assignments will be penalized 1/3 grade (A becomes A-, B+ becomes B) every day that they are missing. In other words, if an assignment is due Thursday but is submitted on Friday, the maximum possible grade for that assignment will be an A-. If it is submitted Saturday, the maximum drops further to B+. HOWEVER, I understand that life happens, and I am happy to discuss late work or extensions on a case-by-case basis.

Disabilities and Accommodations

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

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and other forms of cheating constitute academic dishonesty and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism can be defined as deploying the thoughts, ideas, and writings of another – including AI – as your own, without proper citation. Any student caught plagiarizing or cheating will, at minimum, receive a grade of 0 on the assignment and be required to repeat the assignment for no credit. Failing to repeat the assignment will result in further penalty. I reserve the right to alter this policy as I see fit. Plagiarism and cheating are easy to catch and ethically wrong, so avoid them at all costs.

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. 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/>.

Course schedule

Week 1, January 8-12: Introduction to course

- Monday: Goals for the course
- Lectures: Indigenous America

Week 2, January 15-19: Who discovered America?

- **NO CLASS MONDAY. MLK Day Holiday**
- Lectures: Early Colonization
- Friday discussion:
 - o From *AY* Chapter 1: Indigenous America
 - “Journal of Christopher Columbus, 1492.”
 - “Bartolomé de las Casas describes the exploitation of Indigenous people, 1542.”
 - “Thomas Morton Reflects on Native Americans in New England, 1637.”
 - o From *AY* Chapter 2: Colliding Cultures
 - “Richard Hakluyt Makes the Case for English Colonization, 1584.”

Week 3, January 22-January 26: What is Slavery?

- Lectures: Slavery and enslavement in the Atlantic world
- Friday discussion:
 - o Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Swindler Sachem*, Introduction-Chapter 2

Week 4, January 29-February 2: How did the Indians lose their Land?

- Lectures: The Seventeenth Century and King Phillip’s War
- Friday discussion
 - o Jenny Hale Pulsipher, *Swindler Sachem*, Chapter 7-8

Week 5, February 5-9: Colonial Upheavals?

- Lectures: The Eighteenth Century, the Enlightenment, and the Seven Year’s War
- Friday discussion
 - o Rosemarie Zagari, *Revolutionary Backlash* intro and chapter one

Week 6, February 12-16: How revolutionary was the Revolution?

- Lectures: The crisis of authority and the violence of war
- Friday discussion:
 - o Declaration of Independence (1776)

Week 7, February 19-23: What do we make of the Constitution?

- **Article review due**
- Lectures: The 1780s and the Convention
- Friday discussion:
 - o U.S. Constitution (1787)
 - o David Waldstreicher, “Why the Constitution was Indeed Pro-Slavery.”
 - o Sean Wilentz, “Constitutionally, Slavery Is No National Institution.”

Week 8, February 26-March 1: How revolutionary was the Early Republic?

- Lectures: The First Party System, Expansion, and War (again)
- Friday discussion:
 - o Rosemarie Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash* chapter three

Week 9, March 4-March 8: How did Money Change?

- Lectures: The Transportation and Market Revolutions
- **Midterm on Friday in class**

Spring Break, March 11-15

- **NO CLASS**

Week 10, March 18-22: What do we make of Andrew Jackson?

- Lectures: Jacksonian America and a New Defense of Slavery
- Friday discussion
 - o Rosemarie Zagarri, *Revolutionary Backlash* chapter five

Week 11, March 25-29: A Country at Odds?

- **Primary source analysis due Tuesday at 11:59 PM**
- Lectures: The Age of Reform
- Friday discussion:
 - o Fredrick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave*

Week 12, April 1-5: Is America an Empire?

- Lectures: The War in Mexico
- Friday discussion:
 - o From *AY* Chapter 12
 - “John O’Sullivan declares America’s Manifest Destiny, 1845.”
 - “Diary of a Woman migrating to Oregon, 1853.”
 - “Pun Chi complains of racist abuse, 1860.”
 - “Wyandotte woman describes tensions over slavery, 1849.”

Week 13, April 8-12: Why did the South Secede?

- Lectures: The Sectional Crisis and the 1850s
- Friday discussion:
 - o On Canvas:
 - Excerpt from the *Dred Scott* decision (1857)
 - Mississippi Declaration of Causes (1861)
 - o From *AY* Chapter 14:
 - “Alexander Stephens on Slavery and the Confederate Constitution, 1861.”

Week 14, April 15-19: Why did the North try to stop the South?

- Lectures: The Civil War and emancipation

- Friday discussion:
 - o On Canvas:
 - Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address (1861)
 - Jordon Anderson's "Letter from a Freedman to his old Master." (1865)
 - o From *AY* Chapter 14:
 - "General Benjamin F. Butler reacts to self-emancipation, 1861."
 - "Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, 1865."

Week 15, April 22-24: Did Reconstruction Fail?

- Lecture: Reunion and Revolution

Final exam: April 30, 3-5 PM