

University of Florida  
Department of History

**AMH 3581: American Lives: Diversity in American History- Fall 2025**  
**25535 Section 8SN0)**

**Keene-Flint 111- Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> Period (1:55-2:45 PM)**

**Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Periods (1:55-3:50 PM)**

**Final Paper Turn-In- Thursday December 11<sup>th</sup> through Canvas by 11:59 PM**

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Appointment either in person or by Zoom.

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**Course Content**

In this course, we will examine the diversity of the American people and its changes over time from first European contact to the present. In a course that spans over five hundred years, thousands of miles, and millions of lives, we have to be selective in our topics. Thus, although we will move chronologically through these time periods, we will concentrate on some particular themes and topics:

- The interaction between different ethnic groups in American history
- How race and the changing notions of how it is determined helped shape the contours of American history
- The understated importance of disability in American history
- The changing gender roles in American history
- Immigration patterns and their relationship to American history

**Classroom Policies**

Due to the increasingly technological nature of our society, I find it necessary to address the issues of cell phones in class. Please turn off all these electronic devices before coming to class, as they are disruptive to the learning environment and distracting to other students. Thank You.

I also need to address tardiness to class in a more formalized manner. Lateness is disruptive and distracting to a positive learning experience. Therefore, I urge you, as responsible adults, to arrive to class on time ready to learn, having done the reading assignments beforehand.

**“This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#).” (The direct link is <https://syllabus.ufl.edu/syllabus-policy/uf-syllabus-policy-links/>.)**

**These include**

- **Attendance and make-up policies**

- **Disability Resource Center information**
- **Assigning grade points**
- **Gator Evals**
- **Honesty policy**
- **In-class recording**
- **Academic and wellness resources**

## **Grading**

Your grade for this course will be determined in the following manner:

Reading Journals	20%	(2 of them at 10% apiece)
Short Papers	20%	(2 of them at 10% apiece)
Quizzes	20%	(2 of them at 10% apiece)
Class Participation	20%	
Final Paper	20%	

**\*\*Improvement made over the semester will be taken into consideration in assessing final grades.**

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale. There will be extra credit available- the assignment will be given after the midterm.

	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				

**Note:** A grade of C- is not a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen Ed, or College Basic distribution credit. For further information on UF's Grading Policy, see:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx#hgrades>  
<http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>

You will turn in reading journals twice during the semester. In those journals, you will summarize & comment on the readings you have done for the course. The two short papers (2-4 pages) will focus on the use of the Internet as a research tool. You will be evaluating websites for their content, validity, objectivity, and ease of use. You will be getting specific information about these assignments as the semester progresses. The quizzes are designed to keep you up to speed on class material- They will be composed of multiple choice questions and identifications. The final paper will be a critical reading of a book dealing with the topics discussed in class. You may choose one book from a list that will be given out early in the semester.

## **Objectives**

An underlying assumption of this course is that the analytical skills that you practice here will continue to be useful to you whether or not you ever take another history course. This course will provide practical advice on how students can steadily improve over the course of the semester, in particular in the skills of:

- Reading critically- the ability to read carefully and efficiently to understand the author's main points (and point of view) and to remember important information
- Writing clearly and logically- so as to convince readers of the validity of your interpretation

## **Weekly Topics and Reading Assignments**

### Weekly Assignments

It is of great importance that you complete the assigned readings each week, otherwise you run the risk of falling behind, getting lost, and having to catch up. Also, in order to participate in discussion – which will represent 20% of your final grade in the course – you need to have the assigned readings complete by the time class meets. The following five books are required reading; they can be purchased at the UF bookstore & textbook stores around town- They are also available for purchase on-line through vendors like Amazon-

The Making of African America. Ira Berlin. (2010) called **Making** in the syllabus  
A Disability History of the United States. Kim Nielsen (2012). Called **Disability** in the syllabus.

Why You Can't Teach United States History without American Indians. Susan Sleeper-Smith et al (2015). Called **Indians** in the syllabus.

Born for Liberty (reprint edition) Sara Evans (1997). Called **Born** in the syllabus.

Working Towards Whiteness: How America's Immigrants became White. David Roediger (2005). Called **Working** in the syllabus

You can access the full-text edition of the **Indian** book through UF at this link

[https://ufl-flvc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=L&vid=01FALSC\\_UFL:UFL&docId=alma99383126110406597](https://ufl-flvc.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/fulldisplay?context=L&vid=01FALSC_UFL:UFL&docId=alma99383126110406597)

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Students should note that the syllabus is a guideline and that there may be changes to the class schedule.

### Weekly Syllabus & Readings-

It is important that you keep up on the readings, as they will provide the basic knowledge for class lectures and discussions

#### **Week One- Week of August 21:**

- Many Americas- An introduction to the history of diversity in America

#### **Week Two- Week of August 25:**

- Original Americans- 500 Nations- We will look at Native Americans on the eve of contact with Europeans

Readings: **Disability-** Intro & Chapter One  
**Born-** Intro & Chapter One  
**Indians-** Intro & Chapters One & Two

**Week Three- Week of September 1:**

- Colonial America- Red, White, & Black- We will examine the interactions between Europeans, Native Americans, and African slaves brought to the New World during the colonial period

Readings: **Making-** Prologue & Chapter One  
**Disability-** Chapter Two  
**Born-** Chapter Two  
**Indians-** Chapter Three

**Week Four- Week of September 8:**

- Revolutionary America- Are All Men Created Equal? How did the American Revolution and the development of a new nation affect diverse peoples?

Readings: **Making-** Chapter Two  
**Disability-** Chapter Three  
**Born-** Chapter Three  
**Indians-** Chapter Four

**Week Five- Week September 15:**

- Antebellum America- Reform & Magnolias- How did slavery and reform movements affect diverse populations?

Readings: **Making-** Chapter Three  
**Disability-** Chapter Four  
**Born-** Chapter Four  
**Indians-** Chapters Five, Six, and Eight

**Week Six- Week of September 22:**

- Many Civil Wars & Reconstructing What? Examining the Civil War through the lens of race and disability & how did the nation come back together after 4 brutal years of war (or did it?)

**Paper One Due- in Canvas by 11:59 PM- Thursday September 25<sup>th</sup>**

Readings: **Born-** Chapter Five  
**Indians-** Chapter Nine

**Week Seven- Week of September 29:**

- A Gilded Age for Whom? How does industrialization and an increasingly powerful business elite affect diverse populations?

Readings: **Disability-** Chapter Five

**Working-** Chapter One  
**Indians-** Chapters Ten & Eleven  
**Born-** Chapter Six

**Week Eight- Week of October 6:**

- Where have we come so far?

**Quiz 1 - in Canvas by 11:59 PM- Thursday October 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Reading Journal One- due at beginning of class- Thursday October 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Week Nine- Week of October 13<sup>th</sup>:**

- The Progressive Impulse & the Great War- Does progressivism mean a “Square Deal” for all?

Readings: **Making-** Chapter Four  
**Disability-** Chapter Six  
**Born-** Chapter Seven  
**Working-** Chapter Two

**Week Ten- Week of October 20:**

- Closing the Door- Saving the State- The Booming 20s and the Great Depression- differing effects on diverse populations

Readings: **Disability-** Chapter Seven  
**Born-** Chapters Eight & Nine  
**Working-** Chapters Three, Four, and Five  
**Indians-** Chapter Twelve

**Week Eleven- Week of October 27:**

- The Good War and Good Times- World War II and the post-war high tide of liberalism- what did they mean for diversity?

Readings: **Born-** Chapters Ten and Eleven  
**Working-** Chapters Six and Seven

**Week Twelve- Week of November 3:**

- Revolution- The 1960s and the rights revolution(s) open up new doors for all (and present new problems)

Readings: **Disability-** Chapter Eight  
**Born-** Chapters Twelve and Thirteen  
**Indians-** Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen

**Week Thirteen- Week of November 10:**

*No Class- Tuesday November 11- Veterans' Day*

- Moving towards a quilt of Diversity- The issues of diversity in the modern world

**Paper Two Due- in Canvas by 11:59 PM- Thursday November 13<sup>th</sup>**

Readings: **Making-** Chapter Five  
**Born-** Chapter Fourteen  
**Indians-** Chapters Eighteen and Nineteen

**Week Fourteen- Week of November 17:**

- Whither American diversity in the Future? Are we headed to a fractured or an inclusive society?

Readings: **Making-** Epilogue  
**Disability-** Epilogue  
**Working-** Afterword  
**Indians-** Chapter Seventeen

*No classes the week of November 24- Thanksgiving holidays*

**Week Fifteen- Week of December 1:**

American Diversity in the Age of Trump & Biden & Trump again

Readings: To be announced

**Quiz 2- - in Canvas by 11:59 PM- Tuesday December 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Reading Journal Two- due at beginning of class- Tuesday December 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**Tuesday December 2<sup>nd</sup> will be the last day of class**

**There will be no class Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup>**

**FINAL PAPER: Thursday December 11<sup>th</sup> through Canvas by 11:59 PM**