

**HIST 2111: United States History I: to 1865**  
**Spring 2015**  
**University of West Georgia**  
**MW 5:30-6:50 (Sec. 03)**  
**TLC 1203**

Instructor: Richard Primuth  
Office: TLC 3103  
Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30, 5-5:30 pm; by Appt.  
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*To be ignorant of the past is to be forever a child - Cicero*

*The truth is rarely pure and never simple- Oscar Wilde*

**Course Description:** This course is a broad survey of the growth and change within the United States from its earliest settlements through the Civil War. Through lectures, readings, discussions and other activities we will examine political, cultural, and social themes in this nation's early history. We begin with America's pre-Columbian civilizations, conflict and colonization, Colonial America, move into the founding of a nation, the growth of democracy and end with the American Civil War. We will delve into such issues as race and slavery, women's rights, and popular culture. The course is fairly light in reading, but emphasizes development of writing skills. Critical thinking and good analytical skills are essential in today's workplace, and sharpening those skills will be a centerpiece of this course.

**Course Objectives:** In addition to gaining a basic understanding of themes, issues and events in American history to 1865, students will develop critical reading, writing, and thinking skills. Students will come out of the course with a broader understanding of the United States' place within a global context, the nations' diversity and the significance to their own lives.

**Required Texts:** (two)

*America: A Concise History*, Vol. 1: To 1877 (6th edition), by James A. Henretta and Rebecca Edwards

*Welfare Reform in the Early Republic, A Brief History with Documents* by Seth Rockman

**Course Requirements:**

**Movie Review:** You will need to write a 1 and a half to 2 page review of a movie dealing with any topic in American history **before** 1865. After a very short introduction and summary of the movie (1-2 sentences is plenty) the paper should concentrate on the film's strengths or weaknesses. Was it accurate? Why or why not? The paper needs an introduction, argument with supporting evidence and a conclusion. Movie suggestions include (but are certainly not limited to): *12 Years a Slave*, *The Mission*, *Amistad*, *Glory*, *The Crucible*, *Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter*, *Gangs of New York*, *Gone with the Wind*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *1492:*

*Conquest of Paradise, The Patriot, Black Robe, The Alamo, The Conspirator, 1776, A Woman Called Moses, Drums Along the Mohawk, Geronimo, The New World, Lincoln.* No cartoons or documentaries. (Due Jan. 28)

**Book essay:** Read and be ready to discuss the Rockman book on November 19. On that day there will also be a short essay (2-3 pages) due. You will need to develop an argument and use examples (at least three direct quotes) from the documents to bolster that argument. More details to follow. (Due March 25)

**Exams:** There will be three non-cumulative exams given in the course. These exams will be a mix of short identifications and essay questions. **You will need to bring your own blue books** which can be purchased throughout campus. (Feb. 11, March 11, April 22)

**Class Participation:** This will be taken into account when determining your grade and includes attendance and participation in class discussions.

**Extra Credit:** You may write a short (2-3 pages) review of a visit during the semester to a history museum, exhibit or site for extra credit. This needs to be a critical essay. Did the site or exhibit seem to have an overall theme or message? Were there historical inaccuracies? What was done well and what was done poorly? Please include a copy of your ticket or pass with a date attached to this paper. Suggested sites include The Center for Civil and Human Rights in Atlanta, Atlanta History Center, Etowah Indian Mounds State Historic Site, Andersonville, West Georgia Museum of Tallapoosa, Allatoona Pass Battlefield, Pickett's Mill Battlefield, New Echota State Historic Site, MLK National Historic Site, Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History, Kennesaw National Battlefield, and the Tubman African American Museum in Macon. (Due anytime through end of semester)

**Grading:**

Movie Review: 15%

Book Essay: 20%

Exam 1: 20%

Exam 2: 20%

Exam 3: 25%

Extra Credit: up to 5%

**Grading Scale:**

90% + A

80% + B

70% + C

60% + D

59% - F

**Writing Assistance:** This course has several writing assignments constituting a large portion of your possible grade. If you are struggling (writing does not come easily to most people) seek help sooner rather than later. Suggestions include:

- The UWG Library website ( includes citation and style guides, as well as important history databases such as America: History & Life)
- The Writing Center (TLC 1201)
- College writing skills books (many of these are quite good and can be found online for less than \$1.00)
- Peers (having another pair of eyes proof your work is always a good idea)
- Class Instructor ( I am happy to give any help that I can)

**Class Rules:**

- Turn cell phones off during class; this is common courtesy
- No food in class, beverages are fine

- Attendance is expected, and please be on time
- This is an academic environment, show respect for others
- Academic honesty is expected. Do not submit the work of others as your own. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and is not tolerated at this university. For details see the Student Handbook, appendix A and the history department statement on plagiarism: <http://www.westga.edu/~history/statementonplagiarism.pdf>

### **Tentative Course Outline:**

Week 1 (January 5-7): Course Introduction/ Early North America (to 1500)

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 1

Week 2 (January 12-14): Worlds Collide

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 2

Week 3 (January 21): Establishing Colonies

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 3; Women in Huron Society (on CourseDen)

Week 4 (January 26-28): Colonial America

Read: Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 4

Due: Movie Review (Jan. 28)

Week 5 (February 2-4): The Approaching War for Independence

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 5

Week 6 (February 9-11): American Revolution

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 6; Declaration of Independence (in text)

Exam 1: Feb. 11

Week 7 (February 16-18): The Early Republic

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 7; Constitution of the United States and Amendments (in text)

Week 8 (February 23-25): Jacksonian America/Growth of Democracy

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapters 8 and 10; Black Hawk Surrender Speech (on CourseDen)

Week 9 (March 2-4): Economic Transformation/Market Revolution

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 9

Week 10 (March 9-11): Slavery & the South

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 12

Exam 2: March 11

Week 11 (March 23-25): The Industrial North/Reform Movements

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 11; Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions (on CourseDen); Rockman papers due March 25

Week 12 (March 30 and April 1): American Expansion

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 13 Across the Plains in 1844 (on CourseDen)

Week 13 (April 6-8): The Coming Crisis

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 13 (p. 392-415)

Week 14 (April 13-15): The Civil War

Read: Henretta & Edwards, chapter 14; Civil War letters (on CourseDen)

Final Exam: April 20 (Mon.): 5-7:30

Additional information on:

Americans with Disabilities Act

UWG Email Policy

University of West Georgia Honor Code

Credit Hour Policy

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf)