

History 2111: American History to 1865 Fall 2015 100% Online Course

Instructor: Dr. Colleen A. Vasconcellos
Graduate Assistant: Ms. Lacey Lawrence

Contact Info

Email: cvasconc@westga.edu or in CourseDen (no preference)

Phone: 678-839-6032

(Please note that I will only be available via phone on Thursdays from 2-3:30pm, and email correspondence is preferred. In the event of an emergency, emailing me at cvasconc@westga.edu is your best bet, as I will receive your email immediately through the gmail app on my phone and can respond to you ASAP.)

Office Hours

Face2Face Office Hours in TLC 3208: Thursdays 2p-3:30p

Virtual Office Hours: M and W 1-5pm, and by appointment

(Please note that Virtual Office Hours will take place through the Blackboard Collaborate link located in the "Start Here" Content Module of CourseDen. Just click on the link, choose "Virtual Office Hours" and you will enter a room where we can engage in live chat or videoconferencing.)

Course Objectives

This semester, we will explore the major social, cultural, political, and economic themes in American history to 1865. This class puts less emphasis on dates and figures and more focus on change over time, the cause and effects of those changes, and specifically why those changes took place. Topics include but are not restricted to colonization, expansion, warfare, slavery and the slave trade, emancipation, immigration, gender, industrialization, and the changing role of the United States in foreign affairs. In order to examine American History from a well-rounded point of view, much of this class will take an Atlantic perspective in order to fully understand the peoples, events, and cultures that influenced and impacted this part of America's past.

This course is a 100% online course using CourseDen and your computer as the delivery medium. You are not required to attend class face to face. The midterm and final exams will both be taken online, and there will be no proctored exams for this course.

Learning Outcomes

- Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the political, social, economic, or cultural dimensions of American history.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to think historically through their understanding of the political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions of United States history; comprehension of causal relationships and patterns of change and continuity over time; or awareness of the social significance of ethnicity, gender, race, and class in historical events and study.
- Students will also demonstrate an understanding of the social, cultural, or political development of the people and institutions of the United States.

Course Readings: See CourseDen for details.

Special Note

Students, please carefully review the following information at this link:

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf

This link contains important material pertaining to your rights and responsibilities in this class. Because these statements are updated as federal, state, university, and accreditation standards change, you should review the information each semester.

Course Requirements and Evaluation

COMPUTER ACCESS

It is highly recommended that you have regular (daily) computer access, preferably a home computer with broadband Internet access. This course can be completed using public computers at UWG or other public access areas. However, be aware that using public computers may create a hardship. All course requirements remain the same whether your computer access is public or private (home).

TECHNICAL SKILL REQUIREMENTS

You should be comfortable with the following:

- using a word processor (changing font, spell check)
- using presentation software (i.e. PowerPoint)
- using email for communication
- sending an email attachment
- navigating the Internet
- installing software on your computer in the event that you do not have PowerPoint

Online Help

- Have questions about our classroom navigation? Email me
- Have questions about getting into CourseDen? Contact the helpdesk:

UWG|Online HelpDesk (M-F 8-5pm) Phone: 678-839-6248

Their Email: online@westga.edu

24/7 HelpDesk <https://D2LHelp.view.usg.edu>

COURSE EVALUATION AND GRADE DISTRIBUTION

The course will be evaluated on a 10-pt scale:

A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=59-0.

Emphasis will be on clarity of ideas, reading, writing, analytical and critical thinking skills, class participation, and overall presentation. Participation in class discussions and lectures is encouraged and will form a component of the written assignment grades. There will be no extra credit offered in this class, so don't ask. Grade calculations are as follows:

Exams 50 %

Colony Project 15%

Reaction Papers 15%

Class Participation 20%

Exams: 50%

You will have **two essay exams over the course of the term, with each exam consisting of 25% of your final grade or a total of 50% combined**. Each exam will take place over one week's time, and you won't have any other assignment due during that week. If you fail to submit an exam into the appropriate CourseDen Dropbox for any reason, unless those that are properly documented, you will receive a 0 for that exam. For those of you who miss an exam for properly documented reasons, you should make arrangements with me as soon as possible for a make-up exam. Failure to turn in that make-up exam within one week's time of it being scheduled will result in a 0. If you come to me at the end of the semester and have not made up an exam and request a make-up for a previously missed exam, the answer will be NO. **Please note that the plagiarism detector will be turned on for your midterm and final exam.** Although this exam is essentially a 'take-home' exam, you will still be expected to treat it as if it were an exam being taken in a face to face classroom. **Plagiarism of any kind will result in an F for the assignment and the class.** Please see CourseDen for more information.

Reaction Papers 15%

You will all write **three short position papers** over the course of the semester based on the readings found in the Supplemental Readings folder in the Content Module. All three Reaction Papers will be averaged together to fulfill this percentage of your final grade. Please see the Reaction Paper Guidelines in CourseDen for more information on what is required of these papers. All responses will be due before the start of class on the date that they are due, and should be submitted in the appropriate CourseDen Dropbox. One letter grade will be deducted from your grade for every day that your paper is late. Be prepared to discuss your papers in class that day as well. Reaction papers will comprise 15% of your grade, while the in-class discussions relating to those papers will be counted towards your online class participation grade. Please see CourseDen for more information.

Colony to Statehood Online Project 15%

At the start of the semester **you will create a colony that will eventually become a state** in any online format that you like. The object of the project is to lead your colony/state in the way that you find best as it relates to the material and events that we discuss throughout the semester in class and online. Periodically, over the course of the semester, I will issue certain prompts in relation to material we are discussing and reading in class, and you will be charged with discussing how your colony/state reacts. As governor of your colony/state, it is up to you to decide how your constituency will handle things as they arise. Your responses must demonstrate that you have read and understood the material for that week. Therefore, you must offer specifics that that week's material in your responses. Please see the project description in CourseDen for more details. All responses will be due by midnight EST on the date that they are due. Failure to turn in your response by the due date will result in a 0. Late responses will not be accepted. You will submit links to your colonies/states in the Discussion Forums. Please see CourseDen for more information.

Class Participation 15%

Each week, you will have one discussion activity based on that week's course material. Each week, you will receive a separate grade for that discussion, which will be applied to your class participation grade. Discussion activity assignments are community discussions about specific

topics that include individual postings made by you and responses to other student postings. Postings should relate directly to the topic. **Discussion postings have two deadlines: one for the initial posting and one for your response posting.** Please make sure that you plan accordingly. Additional details will be provided in each assignment. Each Online Class Discussion will be graded as follows:

90: completed assignment as described with no additional comments
80: completed majority of the assignment but did not complete it 100%
70: attempted 50% of the assignment
60: posted initial comment but did not comment on classmates' posts
0: did not attempt assignment

You will receive one additional point for every comment made beyond the assignment requirements.

For example, if you make your initial post, comment on 2 classmates' posts, and respond to a commenter on your original post, that qualifies as the bare minimum required of you and your class participation grade for that assignment will be a 90. Students who participate more than the minimum required will receive additional points. For example, let's say you make your initial post, but comment on 5 classmates' posts, and respond to two separate commenters on your original post. You will receive a 94 for that assignment. (3 additional points for 3 separate comments on classmates' posts and 1 additional point for your second response to a comment made to your original post).

Comments made after posting deadlines will not be counted, and comments not fulfilling comment requirements will not be counted either. See CourseDen for more information on Class Participation Guidelines and Grading in the Content Module.

A Note about Submitting Assignments to CourseDen

ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

All submitted assignments will have the following format:

- MS Word
- standard 1" margins
- double-spaced text
- NO double-spacing between paragraphs
- size 12 font, Times New Roman, black text
- parenthetical references of (pg) for all paraphrased or directly quoted information (do not use additional sources outside of your textbook for any assignment)

SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS LATE OR OUTSIDE COURSE DEN

I will not accept assignments by email, so please do not send them to me there unless you have received permission from me to do so. Late assignments submitted after the due date will not be accepted unless you have a properly documented excuse. Late assignments submitted without proper documentation will receive a 0. Please note that this rule is absolute. You have known

about these assignments all semester, and have had plenty of time to complete them and upload them into their corresponding dropbox. Unless you have a properly documented excuse, there is no reason why you cannot get your work in on time.

THE RETURN OF GRADED WORK: Assignment grades will be posted within a week of the due date.

EXTRA CREDIT: There is no extra credit offered in this class.

IN THE EVENT OF TECHNICAL DIFFICULTIES

It is **your responsibility** to see that your assignments have posted to CourseDen properly. Please check to make sure that your assignment was uploaded correctly and appears in the appropriate Dropbox. If it does not appear, I cannot grade it, and I will not be asking you where it is. Instead, I will assume that you did not do the assignment on time and will grade your assignment accordingly. In other words, your assignment will be considered late once the submission deadline has passed. Please make sure that your link works properly, because I will not be contacting you to resubmit a working link.

In the event that you are having computer/wifi difficulties, please find an alternative source. **Please do not wait until the last minute to submit assignments.** You are submitting items over the Internet, and sometimes the Internet Gods get angry and withhold access. There are many things that can go wrong in the path between your computer and CourseDen. Technical problems related to computer connections or equipment cannot be used as an excuse for failure to complete assignments or to participate online.

It is your responsibility to locate the computer hardware, software and Internet connections necessary to stay connected and current with your course work online. Please be aware of alternate Internet connections and computers available through college computer labs, college Learning Resource Centers (libraries), the public library, and any friends, relatives, or neighbors and access them if my personal computer equipment is not working.

A Note about Academic Honesty:

I will not tolerate cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty in this class, and **any student found guilty of plagiarism will automatically receive a failing grade for the course.** Any assignments given in class must be written in your own words, and will not consist of information found on the internet or from any outside source unless cited. This includes paraphrasing, which may not be taking a passage word for word, but certainly does not give credit to ideas and/or information.

All assignments will be turned into CourseDen and will be monitored by the Turnitin.com feature in CourseDen, which gives me the percentage of the paper that has been plagiarized as well as from where the offending passage was taken. If you plagiarize, you will automatically fail the course. Your name will be forwarded to through the appropriate channels, and I will recommend that UWG administration take action. Plagiarism is a serious offense and it can lead

to your expulsion and/or suspension from the University. **In short, don't do it.** See CourseDen for details on what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it in the Content Module.

Tentative Course Outline and Readings Assignments

Please note that all weekly readings can be found in either the Supplemental Readings Module or the weekly content folders found in the Content Module in Courseden.

Week 1: August 24-28—Introduction to the Course

Your To Do List for Week 1

- Click on the Take a tour of our course link in the Course Overview section of the Content Module in CourseDen and acquaint yourself with each of the modules.
- Introduce yourself to the class! Stop by the discussion forum and tell us a little about yourself. Don't be shy! See Discussion Forums for details.
- Complete the Student Contract in the Quizzes Module. This is the only quiz you will have this semester, and this quiz will count towards your class participation grade. **Failure to take this quiz by midnight EST, Saturday, August 29 will result in the deduction of 10 points from your first graded assignment.**
- Stop by the Colony to Statehood Project Module, and familiarize yourself with this semester long project. Begin creating your colony this week. See Colony to Statehood Project Module for Details.

Week 2: August 31- September 4—Crafting a Colonial Empire

This week we will be examining the early beginnings of the American colonies from first contact with pre-Colombian civilizations through settlement of the original 13 colonies

Your To Do List for Week 2

- **Read:** Sass pp 6-16; Gonick pp 7-30; Week 2's Putting It All Into Perspective page; and the Excerpt of Christopher Columbus's Journal (1492)
- **Watch:** Check out the 2 Crash Course in American History videos in the Week 2 Module.
- **Discuss:** Discussion activity on the selected excerpt of Columbus's journal (1492). See Discussion Forum for further details.
- **Colony to Statehood Project:** Take this week to finish getting your colony set up in whatever platform you choose. Submit a working link for your first entry to the Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum no later than midnight EST, Friday, September 4. See Colony to State Online Project Guidelines in the Colony to State Project Module as well as the Prompt 1 guidelines in the Discussion Forum for Details.

Week 3: September 7-11—The African Diaspora and the American Colonies

During Week 3, we take a look at the trans-Atlantic slave trade and the beginnings of North American chattel slavery.

Your To Do List for Week 3

- **Read:** Sass pp 17-22, the sources linked on the Children and the Slave Trade Website, and Week 3's Putting It All Into Perspective page
- **Watch:** Check out the Crash Course in American History video in the Week 3 Module

- **Discuss:** Visit the Children in the Slave Trade website, read the introduction on the site's main page, as well as each of the sources linked on the page. Choose 2 sources from the site and then discuss them in the Week 3 Discussion Forum. See the Discussion Forum for details.

Week 4: September 14-18—The Road to Revolution

As we make our way to the American Revolution, week 4 focuses on the events that led up to that revolution through the year 1774.

Your To Do List for Week 4

- **Read:** Sass pp 38-42, Gonick pp 57-76, Week 4's Putting It into Perspective Page, and Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776)
- **Watch:** Check out the two Crash Course in American History videos in the Week 4 Module
- **Discuss:** Online Activity on Paine's *Common Sense*. See Discussion Forum for details.
- **Colony to Statehood Project:** Write a letter to the King outlining three grievances that you would like to bring to his attention. Submit a working link for your second entry to the Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum no later than midnight EST, Friday, September 18. See Colony to Statehood Project Module and Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum for Details.

Week 5: September 21-25—The American Revolution

This week we rebel against the monarchy, declare our independence, and kick a little British butt. No taxation without representation! Team USA!

Your To Do List for Week 5

- **Read:** Sass pp 42-48, Gonick pp 77-91, Week 5's Putting it into Perspective Page, and "Was the American Revolution Largely a Product of Market-Driven Consumer Forces?"
- **Watch:** Check out the two Crash Course in American History videos in the Week 5 Module
- **Write:** Reaction Paper 1: Was the American Revolution Largely a Product of Market-Driven Consumer Forces?" This week we discuss whether the American Revolution really did have its roots in "No Taxation Without Representation." Read the selection that is available for you in the Supplemental Readings Module, write a 1-2 page paper discussing the piece and its arguments, and submit your paper in the assignment dropbox by midnight EST, Tuesday, September 22. See the Reaction Paper Guidelines in CourseDen for more information on how to write this paper.
- **Discuss:** Once you have written the paper, stop by the Discussion Forum in CourseDen and tell us what you think. Be sure and comment on two classmates' posts and reply to at least one comment left on your initial post.

Week 6: September 28-October 2—Federalism in Post War America

What does it mean to be the United States of America? We find out during Week 6, as we navigate through our first decades as a newly formed sovereign nation.

Your To Do List for Week 6

- **Read:** Sass pp 49-52, Gonick pp 96-116, Week 6's Putting it into Perspective Page, and George Washington's Farewell Address (1796)

- **Watch:** Check out the Crash Course in American History video, as well as Schoolhouse Rock's "I'm Just a Bill" in the Week 6 Module
- **Discuss:** Online Activity on George Washington's Farewell Address. See Discussion Forum for details.
- **Colony to Statehood Project:** See Colony to Statehood Project Module and Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum for Details. Submit a working link for your third entry to the Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum by midnight EST, Friday, October 2.

Week 7: October 5-9—MIDTERM EXAM

You have the entire week to work on your midterm. Please submit your completed exam to the Midterm Exam Dropbox no later than midnight EST, Friday, October 9. See the Exam Module for Midterm Exam questions and details.

Week 8: October 13-17—The Politics of Balance: Nationalism and Sectionalism in The Early Republic

During Week 8, we examine America during the Early Republican Era, specifically the ideas of nationalism and the growing sectionalism that is developing between the North and the South.

Your To Do List for Week 8

- **Read:** Sass, pp 59-62, 64-66, 71-79; Gonick pp 117-123, 126-131; Week 8's Putting it into Perspective; and Thomas Jefferson's Secret Message to Congress Regarding the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1803)
- **Watch:** Check out the 2 Crash Course videos in the Week 8 Module
- **Discuss:** Online Activity on Jefferson's Message to Congress Re Lewis and Clark. See Discussion Forum for details.

Week 9: October 20-24—The Age of Jackson and the Nullification Crisis

In Week 9, we discuss the idea of states' rights and its impact on the deepening sectionalism taking place during the Jackson Administration.

Your To Do List for Week 9

- **Read:** Gonick pp 132-135, the SC Exposition and Protest (1828), Week 9's Putting it into Perspective, and "Did the Industrial Revolution Provide More Economic Opportunities for Women in the 1830s?"
- **Watch:** Check out the 2 Crash Course videos in the Week 9 Module
- **Write:** Reaction Paper 2 Due –"Did the Industrial Revolution Provide More Economic Opportunities for Women in the 1830s?" This week we discuss the rise of industry in the United States and the effect it had on class and gender. Read the selection that is available for you in the Supplemental Readings Module, write a 1-2 page paper discussing the piece and its arguments, and submit your paper in the assignment dropbox by midnight EST, Tuesday, October 20. See the Reaction Paper Guidelines in CourseDen for more information on how to write this paper.
- **Discuss:** Once you have written the paper, stop by the Discussion Forum in CourseDen and tell us what you think. Be sure and comment on two classmates' posts and reply to at least one comment left on your initial post.

Week 10: October 26-30—Westward Expansion, Texas, and the Mexican War

Ideas of Manifest Destiny and Westward Expansion take precedence in Week 10, as we examine these issues through the case study that is Texas and the Mexican War.

Your To Do List for Week 10

- **Read:** Sass pp 79-81, 84-90, Gonick pp 136-142, John O' Sullivan's "Manifest Destiny" (1839), President Polk's Special Message Calling for a Declaration of War against Mexico (1846), and Week 10's Putting it into Perspective
- **Watch:** Check out the 2 Crash Course videos in Module 10
- **Discuss:** Online Activity and Discussion of Manifest Destiny and Westward Expansion. See CourseDen for details.
- **Colony to Statehood Project:** See Colony to Statehood Project Module and Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum for Details. Submit a working link for your fourth entry to the Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum by midnight EST, Friday, October 30.

Week 11: November 2-6—The 1850s

As we move towards civil war, Week 11 focuses on the complex sociopolitical climate of one of the most turbulent decades in antebellum America.

Your To Do List for Week 11

- **Read:** Gonick pp 159-171, The Dred Scott Decision (PBS), Week 11's Putting it into Perspective, and Abraham Lincoln's "A House Divided" Speech (1858).
- **Watch:** Check out the 2 Crash Course in American History videos in Module 11
- **Discuss:** Online Activity on Abraham Lincoln's "A House Divided" Speech (1858). See Discussion Forums for details.

Week 12: November 9-13—The Peculiar Institution

Before we fight the American Civil War, let's take some time to explore Antebellum slavery and the abolitionist movement.

- **Read:** The selected excerpt of Frederick Douglass' *Narrative*, and Week 12's Putting it into Perspective.
- **Watch:** Check out the Crash Course in American History video in Module 12
- **Write:** Reaction Paper 3 Due—Frederick Douglass' *Narrative*. For your final reaction paper, we take a different approach by reading one man's account of his experiences as an enslaved man living in Baltimore. Read the selection that is available for you in the Supplemental Readings Module, write a 1-2 page paper discussing the piece and its arguments, and submit your paper in the assignment dropbox by midnight EST, Tuesday, November 10. See the Reaction Paper Guidelines in CourseDen for more information on how to write this paper.
- **Discuss:** Once you have written the paper, stop by the Discussion Forum in CourseDen and tell us what you think. Be sure and comment on two classmates' posts and reply to at least one comment left on your initial post.

Week 13: November 16-20—The Civil War

Lincoln has been elected, the South secedes from the Union, and shots are fired on Fort Sumter. The American Civil War is in full effect, and is our main focus during Week 13.

Your To Do List for Week 13

- **Read:** Sass pp 106-123, Gonick pp 172-179, Week 13's Putting it into Perspective, and The Emancipation Proclamation (1863)
- **Watch:** Check out the two Crash Course videos in the Week 12 Module.
- **Discuss:** Online Activity on The Emancipation Proclamation (1863). See Discussion Forum for details.

Week 14: November 24-28—Classes Cancelled for Thanksgiving Break!

Week 15: November 30-December 4—Reconstructing the South

How do you reunite the divided house? What about the millions of newly freed men, women, and children who are struggling to find equality and survive in this new era? Week 15 attempts to answer those questions as we explore the Reconstruction Era.

Your To Do List for Week 15

- **Read:** Sass pp 123-131, Gonick 189-207, Week 15's Putting it into Perspective, and Frederick Douglass, "Reconstruction" (1866).
- **Watch:** Check out the Crash Course in American History video in this week's module
- **Discuss:** Online Activity and Discussion of Frederick Douglass, "Reconstruction" (1866). See Discussion Forums for details.
- **Colony to Statehood Project:** See Colony to Statehood Project Module for Details. Submit a working link for your fifth entry to the Colony to Statehood Project Discussion Forum by midnight EST, Friday December 4.

FINAL EXAM DEETS

Please submit your completed exam to the Final Exam Dropbox no later than midnight EST, Wednesday, December 10. Failure to do so without proper documentation will result in a grade of 0. See the Exam Module for Final Exam questions and details.

Final Grades will be available no later than midnight, Sunday December 13.