

## **History 2111: American History to 1865 Spring 2017 100% Online Course**

Instructor: Dr. Colleen A. Vasconcellos

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### Office Hours

Virtual Office Hours: M-F 10:00am-2pm, and by appointment unless otherwise indicated in the Announcements each week

### 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.

### Special Note

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

[http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common\\_Language\\_for\\_Course\\_Syllabi.pdf](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 Readings: See the Supplemental Readings folder for all course readings. There is no specific textbook for this course. That means you don't have to buy a book! Everything you need to read, I have provided for you. You're welcome.

## 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 email for communication and sending an email attachment if necessary
- navigating the Internet

### 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](mailto: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%
- Reaction Papers 20%
- Class Participation 30%

### 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. Late exams or exams submitted outside of the Exam Dropbox will not be accepted. If you 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. More info on these exams will be given as we get closer to each exam.

### Reaction Papers 20%

You will all write **two short position papers** over the course of the semester based on the readings found in the Supplemental Readings folder in the Content Module, with each exam consisting of 10% of your overall course grade (or 20% combined). Please see the Reaction Papers Module in CourseDen for more information on what is required of these papers. Late papers or papers submitted outside of the CourseDen dropbox will not be accepted without a properly documented excuse. The **in-class discussions relating to those papers will be counted towards your online class participation grade**. Please see the Reaction Papers Module in CourseDen for more information.

### Class Participation 30%

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 on a 25 point scale, and will be graded as follows:

#### How well discussion posts address the Learning Outcome:

- **Superior (A) 5 points:** Comments demonstrate mastery of the objective and critical understanding of the topic
- **Good (B) 4 points:** Comments demonstrate above average understanding of the objective and a good understanding of the topic
- **Acceptable (C) 3 points:** Comments demonstrate moderate understanding of the objective and an average level of thought about the topic
- **Needs Improvement (D) 2 points:** Comments show that student had only partial understanding of the objective, or student demonstrates a lack of thought or consideration of the issue
- **Failing (F) 1 point:** Shows obvious lack of effort or comprehension
- **Not submitted/Late post 0 points:** Your post was not submitted by the posting deadline or was not submitted at all.

#### Discussion posts' specificity/originality:

- **Superior (A) 5 points:** Comments are highly specific, well-supported and show original thought, thereby promoting additional discussion
- **Good (B) 4 points:** Comments are specific, mostly well-supported and show original thought or ideas that further the discussion
- **Acceptable (C) 3 points:** Comments are general, somewhat well-supported, and bring some new ideas into the discussion
- **Needs Improvement (D) 2 points:** Comments are vague, unsupported, and generally restate what others have already said within the discussion
- **Failing (F) 1 point:** Comments are irrelevant or off-topic
- **Not submitted/Late post 0 points:** Your post was not submitted by the posting deadline or was not submitted at all.

Discussion posts' focus:

- **Superior (A) 5 points:** Comments make vividly clear references to readings or other relevant sources
- **Good (B) 4 points:** Comments make some reference to readings or other relevant sources
- **Acceptable (C) 3 points:** Comments make vague reference to readings or other relevant sources
- **Needs Improvement (D) 2 points:** Comments make no reference to readings or other relevant sources
- **Failing (F) 1 point:** Comments make no reference to readings, and strongly suggest that reading assignments have not been completed
- **Not submitted/Late post 0 points:** Your post was not submitted by the posting deadline or was not submitted at all.

On the discussion posts' usage of language:

- **Superior (A) 5 points:** Writing is well-organized, unified, and error-free
- **Good (B) 4 points:** Writing is mostly organized and unified, with few errors
- **Acceptable (C) 3 points:** Writing is somewhat organized and unified, with some errors
- **Needs Improvement (D) 2 points:** Writing is poorly organized and unified, with many errors
- **Failing (F) 1 point:** Writing is not organized or unified; errors impair communication
- **Not submitted/Late post 0 points:** Your post was not submitted by the posting deadline or was not submitted at all.

On overall participation:

- **Superior (A) 5 points:** Weekly discussion meets deadlines, and participation demonstrates an extraordinary level of engagement. Student has gone above and beyond the posting requirements for the discussion.
- **Good (B) 4 points:** Weekly discussion meets deadlines, and participation demonstrates a high level of engagement
- **Acceptable (C) 3 points:** Postings are on time, and participation meets minimum levels required
- **Needs Improvement (D) 2 points:** At least one of your posts were late or were not submitted at all.
- **Failing (F) 1 point:** Most of your posts were late or not submitted at all.
- **Not submitted/Late post 0 points:** All of your posts were not submitted by the posting deadline or were not submitted at all.

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

As part of your class participation grade, you will also be responsible for 3 quizzes in this class.

- Student Contract Quiz: This is a graded quiz, but it is a simple social contract regarding class conduct and intellectual honesty between student and professor and the grade you receive will

count towards your class participation grade. **Failure to take this quiz by 11:59PM EST, Saturday, January 14 result in the deduction of 10 points from your first graded assignment.**

- **Student Assessment Quizzes:** There are 2 student assessment quizzes that will be administered this semester. The first will take place during the first week of class, and the second quiz takes place during the final week of class. These are not a graded quizzes. Instead, these are in-house assessment quiz that the UWG Department of History is administering in order to assess how much you learn over the course of the semester. If you take both quizzes, I will bump your two lowest weekly discussion grades to a 100.

### **A Note about Submitting Assignments to CourseDen**

**ASSIGNMENT FORMAT:** All submitted assignments must be submitted in MS word format. Papers should be double-spaced and be written in size 12 Times New Roman font, black text, with 1” margins. Parenthetical references of (pg) are required for all paraphrased or directly quoted information. The usage of any source outside of CourseDen is not allowed.

**SUBMITTING ASSIGNMENTS LATE OR OUTSIDE COURSEDEN:** Late assignments submitted after the scheduled deadline or outside of the Assignments Dropbox 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 written in stone.**

**THE RETURN OF GRADED WORK:** Assignment grades will be posted within a week of the due date. Discussion grades will be posted within one week of the date of the discussion’s end.

**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. Please make sure that your attachments upload properly, because I will not be contacting you to resubmit them.

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. All assignments and discussion posts submitted in class must be written in your own words. 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 monitored by Turnitin**, and plagiarizers will automatically fail the course. I will also 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

All weekly readings can be found in Courseden. **All assignment deadlines are in red.**

#### Week 1: January 9-13—Introduction to the Course

This week, take some time to familiarize yourself with the course, the online classroom, and discussion forums. The first week of the semester can be a little hectic, so enjoy the slow week.

#### **Your To Do List for Week 1**

- Introduce yourself to the class! Don't be shy! See Discussion Forums for details.
- **Complete the Student Contract** in the Assignments Module by clicking the Quizzes link from the dropdown menu. This is a graded quiz, but it is a simple social contract regarding class conduct and intellectual honesty between student and professor and the grade you receive will count towards your class participation grade. **Failure to take this quiz by 11:59PM EST, Saturday, January 14 result in the deduction of 10 points from your first graded assignment.**
- **Complete Student Assessment Quiz 1** in the Assignments Module by clicking the Quizzes link from the dropdown menu. This is not a graded quiz. Instead, this is an in-house assessment quiz that the UWG Department of History is administering in order to assess how much you learn over the course of the semester. **By taking this quiz, you will receive a 100 on one of your lowest weekly discussion grades at the end of the semester! Make sure that you take this quiz by 11:59PM EST Saturday, January 14 in order to take advantage of this extra credit opportunity.**

#### Week 2: January 17-20—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**

- **Observe:** Class and office hours are canceled on Monday, January 16 in observation of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday. Regularly scheduled office hours resume on Tuesday, and all discussion deadlines remain the same.
- **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:** Online discussion of Columbus's journal (1492). See Discussion Forum for details.

### Week 3: January 23-27—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:** Discuss the sources linked on the Children in the Slave Trade website. See the Discussion Forum for details.

### Week 4: January 30-February 3—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 discussion on Paine's *Common Sense*. See Discussion Forum for details.

### Week 5: February 6-10—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?" Submit your paper in the assignment dropbox by **11:59PM EST, Tuesday, February 7**. See the Reaction Paper Guidelines in CourseDen for more information on how to write this paper.
- **Discuss:** Online discussion of your reaction paper. See Discussion forum for details.

### Week 6: February 13-17—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 discussion on Washington's Address. See Discussion Forum for details.

### Week 7: February 20-24—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 **11:59PM EST, Saturday, February 25**. See the Week 7 Module for Midterm Exam questions and details.

### Week 8: February 27-March 3—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 (1803)
- **Watch:** Check out the 2 Crash Course videos in the Week 8 Module
- **Discuss:** Online discussion of Jefferson's Message. See Discussion Forum for details.

### Week 9: March 6-10 —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**—"Did the Industrial Revolution Provide More Economic Opportunities for Women in the 1830s?" Submit your paper in the assignment dropbox by **11:59PM EST, Tuesday, March 7**. See the Reaction Paper Guidelines in CourseDen for more information on how to write this paper.
- **Discuss:** Online discussion of your reaction paper. See Discussion forum for details.

### Week 10: March 13-17—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 discussion of O'Sullivan's piece. See CourseDen for details.

### Week 11: March 20-24: Spring Break!

During Week 11, this class does not exist. Enjoy your break.

### Week 12: March 27-31—The 1850s

As we move towards civil war, Week 12 focuses on the complex sociopolitical climate of one of the most turbulent decades in antebellum America.

#### **Your To Do List for Week 12**

- **Read:** Gonick pp 159-171, The Dred Scott Decision (PBS), Week 12'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 12
- **Discuss:** Online discussion of "A House Divided." See Discussion Forums for details.



### Week 13: April 3-7—The Peculiar Institution

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

#### **Your To Do List for Week 13**

- **Read:** The selected excerpt of Frederick Douglass' *Narrative*, and Week 13's Putting it into Perspective.
- **Watch:** Check out the Crash Course in American History video in Module 13
- **Discuss:** Online discussion of Douglass' *Narrative*. See the Discussion Forum for details.

### Week 14: April 10-14—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 14.

#### **Your To Do List for Week 14**

- **Read:** Sass pp 106-123, Gonick pp 172-179, Week 14's Putting it into Perspective, and The Emancipation Proclamation (1863)
- **Watch:** Check out the two Crash Course videos in the Week 14 Module.
- **Discuss:** Online discussion of The Emancipation Proclamation. See Discussion Forum for details.

### Week 15: April 17-21—Reconstruction

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 discussion of Douglass, "Reconstruction." See Discussion Forums for details.

### Week 16: April 24-28—Reflections

For this final week of class, there are no assigned readings outside of our class discussion. Instead, we are simply going to discuss the turning points that we have seen over the course of the semester and why they are significant. See the discussion forum for details. **Also, be sure and take your final Student Assessment Quiz** in order to receive a 100 on one of your lowest weekly discussion grades. **Make sure that you take this quiz by 11:59PM EST Saturday, April 8 in order to take advantage of this extra credit opportunity.**

### Week 17-18: May 3-10—Finals Week

Please submit your completed exam to the Final Exam Dropbox no later than **11:59PM EST, Monday, May 8**. 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 11:59PM, Sunday May 14.**