

HIST 2111: United States History I: to 1865
Spring 2018
University of West Georgia
MW 3:30-4:45 (Sec. LL2 & LLX)
TLC 1203

Instructor: Richard Primuth

Office: TLC 3103

Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30, 5-5:30 pm; or by Appt.

Email: rprimuth@westga.edu (preferred method of contact)

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)

Main Text online and FREE: www.americanyawp.com

Choose one of these short readers:

The Salem Witch Hunt: A Brief History with Documents by Richard Godbeer **OR**

Black Americans in the Revolutionary Era: A Brief History with Documents by Woody Holton

Course Requirements:

Movie Review: You will need to write a 1 and a half to 2 page critical 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? Write on its accuracy **or** inaccuracy-not both! The paper needs an introduction, argument with supporting evidence (usually examples from the film to support your argument) and a conclusion. Movie

suggestions include (but are certainly not limited to): *12 Years a Slave*, *The Revenant*, *Sleepy Hollow*, *Cold Mountain*, *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*, *Elizabeth*, *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 January 29)

Book essay: On April 2 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** (not from Introduction) to bolster that argument. More details to follow. (Due April 2)

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. (February 14, March 14, and a Final on May 2)

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 (1 and a half to 2 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? 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: 25%

Exam 1: 15%

Exam 2: 15%

Exam 3: 20%

Attendance/Participation 10%

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. If you need to leave early please inform instructor and sit near exit.
- 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 8-12): Course Introduction/ Early North America (to 1500)

Read: Text, chapter 1

Week 2 (January 16-19; no class 15th): Worlds Collide

Read: Text, chapter 2

Week 3 (January 22-26): Establishing Colonies

Read: Text, chapter 3; A Gaspesian Indian defends his way of life, 1641

Week 4 (January 29-Feb. 2): Colonial America

Read: Text, chapter 4

Due: Movie Review (January 29, Turn in hard copy in class)

Week 5 (Feb. 5-9): The Approaching War for Independence

Read: Text, chapter 5; Declaration of Independence

Week 6 (Feb. 12-16): American Revolution

Read: Text, chapter 5; Constitution of the United States and Bill of Rights (find online)

(1st exam Feb. 14)

Week 7 (Feb. 19-23): The Early Republic

Read: Text, chapter 6

Week 8 (Feb. 26-March 2): The Early Republic; Continued

Read: Text, chapters 7

Week 9 (March 5-9): Jacksonian America/Growth of Democracy

Read: Text, chapter 9

Week 10 (March 12-16): Economic Transformation/Market Revolution

Read: Text, chapter 8

(2nd exam March 14)

SPRING BREAK : March 19-23

Week 11 (March 26-30): Slavery & the South

Read: Text, chapter 11; Thomas Jefferson's Racism, 1788 (under chapter 7 in text)

Week 12 (April 2-6): The Industrial North/ Reform Movements

Read: Text, chapter 10; Sarah Grimke calls for Women's Rights, 1838

Due April 2: Second essay (turn in hard copy in class)

Week 13 (April 9-13): American Expansion

Read: Text, chapter 12

Week 14 (April 16-20): The Coming Crisis

Read: Text, chapter 13; South Carolina Declaration of Sentiments

Week 15 (April 23-27): The Civil War

Read: Text, Ch. 14; Alexander Stephens on Slavery and the Confederate Constitution,

Week 16: (April 30): "Catch-Up"

Final Exam: May 2; 2:00-4:00pm

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

