History of the United States I
21:512:201:86

Class Location/Time: Sundays, 12:45 - 4:00 PM, Conklin Hall, Room 455
Professor: E. Eittreim
Office: Conklin Hall, Room 326
Office Hours: by appointment
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Course Description:

This course examines the history of the United States from the pre-colonial era through 1877. Topics covered include indigenous-European encounters, slavery, nation-building, the Revolutionary War, urbanization, immigration, the Civil War, and empire. Course lectures, readings, and activities survey diverse perspectives and experiences and engage with contemporary scholarship.

In this class, students will apply analytic reading and writing skills. “Close reading” and “active reading” of primary and secondary sources will be modeled and practiced. Guided and unguided writing assignments will help students to organize their ideas and formulate arguments about class readings and topics covered in the course.

Course Requirements:

1) Attendance: You are required attend and participate in class discussions and activities.
2) Readings: You are required to carefully read the assigned texts by the date indicated on the syllabus and complete related writing assignments (“Reading Reactions”). You are also required to bring the assigned readings with you to class to facilitate class discussion.
3) In-class writing assignments: You will be given a series of graded in-class writing assignments to practice writing skills and analyze primary source material.
4) Papers: You will be assigned one short paper (2 pages) and one long paper (5 pages) to be completed outside of class. There will be in-class writing workshops to edit and review peers’ work before the final drafts are due.
5) Exams: Midterm exam held on October 8 and final exam on December 17.
6) Does History Matter Blog: You are required to sign up for and submit one original blog entry on Blackboard that draws from contemporary news relevant to U.S. history.
Grading:

Participation: 20%
In-class writing: 10%
Short Paper: 10%
Long Paper: 20%
Midterm exam: 20%
Final exam: 20%
Blog*: +/-
Reading Reactions**: +/-

Blog*: You are required to post and share one blog entry relevant to contemporary news items and American history. Blog entries will be graded with a check (if the entry is completed), a check plus (if the entry is particularly well done), or a check minus (if the entry is barely passable). You will be required to share your blog entries with the entire class through an informal presentation. You may post up to two additional blog entries and make comments on your classmates’ posts for extra credit.

Reading Reactions**: You are required to complete short writing assignments relevant to course readings. These will be conducted in and out of class on a regular basis and will include simple tasks like writing questions about the reading, listing key terms, note-taking, etc. Extraordinarily good “Reading Reaction” assignments (many check-pluses) will raise your course grade by half a grade (from “B” to “B+,” for example). Barely passable “Reading Reactions” (many check-minuses) will lower your course grade by half a grade (from “B” to “C+” for example). Seriously incomplete “Reading Reactions” will lower your final grade by ONE FULL GRADE (from “B” to “C,” for example).

Attendance/Tardiness:
Attendance is required and you are expected to sign in each class. Class will begin on time. Habitual lateness is not acceptable and will be penalized. Do not take the course if you are unable to get to class on time. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed classes.

Excused vs. Unexcused Absences: The Rutgers-Newark Undergraduate Catalog (http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_0608/pg23613.html) states: “The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions.” If you plan to claim a religious holiday as an excused absence, you must inform me of this fact within the first two weeks of class.

Tardiness and Grade Penalties: Lateness of twenty minutes or more counts as a half-absence and puts a student at risk of grade penalties (discussed below). Any student who is habitually late for class (five or more times over the course of the semester)—even if the student arrived within twenty minutes after the start of class—will receive a half grade reduction (from a “B” to “C+,” for example).
Attendance and Grade Penalties: Any student who misses TWO classes will receive a half grade reduction (from “B” to “C+,” for example). Any student who misses THREE classes will receive a full grade reduction (from “B” to “C,” for example). Any student who misses FOUR or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

Late writing assignments:

Writing Assignments: Papers must be posted to Blackboard prior to the beginning of class on the dates indicated on the syllabus. For every class day that a paper is not turned in, the paper will lose a half grade reduction (from “B” to “C+,” for example). If posted late on the due date (after class has begun), the paper will lose a half-grade reduction (from “B” to “C+,” for example).

Blog and Reading Reactions: Late Blog or “Reading Reaction” assignments will not be accepted. One of the main purposes of these assignments is to give students a chance to reflect on and engage with the readings, ultimately preparing them for class. As indicated above, several late assignments can significantly bring down the final grade.

Technology and Class Environment:

Use of technology for personal use (texting, social media, etc.) during class time is prohibited. Breaking this code of conduct will result in penalties, including dismissal from class and grade reductions (pertaining to class participation).

Members of the class are expected to create a “safe” learning space by speaking, listening, and engaging with one another in a respectful manner. It is important to both be present—demonstrate that you are engaged in the class—and to consider others’ opinions and ideas regardless of whether they complement or challenge your own. Many of the topics are sensitive (i.e. violence, abortion), and it is important both to respect your own limits as a scholar as well as those of others.

Disabilities:

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus’s disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form. For more information please contact the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or contact odsnewark@rutgers.edu
Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):
Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and ethical offense. It violates your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those students who took the time to work on the assignment honestly. As a standard minimum penalty, students who are suspected of cheating or plagiarism are reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Pending investigation, further penalties can include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance on this examination/assignment.”

Course Readings:

There are no required books to purchase for the course. All required readings can be accessed via Blackboard (blackboard.newark.rutgers.edu).

Recommended Readings – In class, I will often cover material that is not required reading for the course but is “recommended.” If you would like a textbook to reinforce some of the background material covered in lectures, I recommend the following book: Nancy A. Hewitt and Steven F. Lawson, Exploring American Histories: A Survey With Sources, 2nd edition (Boston: Bedford St. Martin’s, 2017).

SYLLABUS

Sunday Sept. 10 – Introduction: Does History Matter?

Sunday Sept. 17 – Indigenous Lands

Required Readings:


- Daniel R. Richter, “Prologue: Early America as Indian Country” and “Imagining a Distant New World,” in Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America (Cambridge, MA: 2003), 1-40.

Recommended Reading from Exploring American Histories: Chapters 1 and 2, “Mapping Global Frontiers: to 1585” and “Colonization and Conflicts: 1550-1680,” 1-68.
Sunday Sept. 24 – Slavery in/to North American Colonies

Required Readings:


Sunday Oct. 1 – Religious Awakenings and Retaliations

Required Readings:

- Peter Nabokov, “Bearers of the Cross” including “Burn the Temples, Break up the Bells” in *Native American Testimony, Revised Edition*, (New York, 1999), 49-56.


*Recommended Reading from Exploring American Histories*: Chapter 4, “Religious Strife and Social Upheavals: 1680-1750,” 103-136

Sunday Oct. 8 – Families of Monticello and Short Midterm Exam

**********SHORT PAPER DUE**********

Required Readings:


Sunday Oct. 15 – American Revolution

Required Readings:


Sunday Oct. 22 – Political “Parties”

Required Readings:


Sunday Oct. 29 – Westward Exploration

**********MID-TERM EXAM IN CLASS**********

Required Readings:


Recommended Reading from Exploring American Histories: Chapter 8, “The Early Republic: 1790-1820,” 241-274
Sunday Nov. 5 – Speculation, Spectacle, and Survival

Required Readings:


Recommended Reading from Exploring American Histories: Chapter 9, “Defending and Redefining the Nation, 1809-1832,” 275-310.

Sunday Nov. 12 – Making and Breaking Slavery

Required Readings:


Sunday Nov. 19 – Waves of Immigration

Required Readings:


Sunday Nov. 26 - NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Weekend)

Sunday Dec. 3 – Civil War and Reconstruction

***********LONG PAPER DUE***********

Required Readings:


Sunday Dec. 10 – Colonial Legacies

Required Readings:


- Jacqueline Fear-Segal, “Native Views: ‘A New Road for All the Indians’” and “Mission Schools in the West: Precursors of a System” (excerpt), in *White Man’s Club: Schools, Race, and the Struggle of Indian Acculturation* (Lincoln, NE, 2007) 48-73.

Sunday Dec. 17 – Final Exam (tentative date)