

HIST 113 – The United States to 1877

Spring 2007



Instructor: Dr. James Paxton

Office: Comenius 306

Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30–2:30 and Wednesday 2:00–4:00 or by appointment

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Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the political, economic, ideological, and social developments in the United States from contact to 1877. The first part of the course traces the developments that allowed colonists from thirteen disparate colonies to see themselves as one people who should constitute one nation. The second half explores how Americans struggled with the meaning and consequences of their Revolution. They debated the contradiction between the ideals of liberty and equality and the existence of slavery and other forms of dependence; they argued how best to protect state interests in a federal system of government; they negotiated the competing political ideologies of republicanism and liberalism and economic ideologies of agrarianism and capitalism that shaped American society. Within a hundred years of the Revolution, these issues had so polarized the North and South that the election of a Republican president, Abraham Lincoln, in 1860 prompted the secession of eleven slaveholding states. Only four years of bloody civil war restored the Union and destroyed slavery. This course will provide students with an opportunity to examine and discuss the significance of the American Revolution, Market Revolution, Jacksonian Democracy, and other important issues in American history as they explore the roots of sectionalism and Civil War. We will pay close attention to the interactions between Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans.

Course Objectives

Students will

- become familiar with the main themes in American history from contact to 1877.
- consider human agency, causality, and contingency in historical change.
- identify the roles and contributions of Native Americans, Africans, and Europeans to the development of the United States.
- learn how critically evaluate and interpret a variety of primary sources.
- develop clear and effective oral and written communications skills.

Class Organization

The class will meet twice a week. Most classes will consist of a combination of lecture and discussion. Lectures provide the background and context for the discussions. In order to keep up with the course material, it is important that you complete the assigned reading before class. Days marked “tutorial” on the schedule will be devoted to class discussions of the readings.

Required Texts

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty, Vol. I.* (W.W. Norton, 2006)

Frederick Douglass, ed. *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, eds. William L. Andrews and William S. McFeely (New York: W.W. Norton, 1996).

Michael D. Green and Theda Perdue, eds., *The Cherokee Removal: A Brief History with Documents* (1995).

Additional readings will be emailed to you or placed on reserve in Reeves Library.

Attendance

While there is no formal penalty for missing classes, you are strongly encouraged to attend all classes. Success in the course depends upon comprehension of the lecture material and participation in class discussions. Lateness will not be tolerated.

Please turn off or mute all electronic devices in the classroom.

Grade Distribution

Essay One	10%
Essay Two	12%
Essay Three	15%
Unscheduled Quizzes (5)	12%
Mid-Term	15%
Final Exam	24%
Participation	12%

The participation grade reflects the quality of your participation. It is not an attendance grade.

Assignments

In addition to attending lectures, you will be required to write three essays, two exams, five unscheduled quizzes, and prepare for and participate in discussions. In each of the three papers students will analyze primary documents. More detailed instructions will be handed out in class.

Essay One due Feb. 6.

Essay Two due Mar. 22.

Essay Three due April 12.

All assignments are to be handed in at the **beginning** of the class in which they are due unless you have a doctor's note. Essays handed in at the end of the class will be considered late. Computer and printing problems are not acceptable reasons for lateness. Late papers will immediately be assessed a 5% late penalty and 2% will be deducted each day thereafter. Emailed essays will not be accepted without prior permission of the instructor.

Academic Dishonesty

According to the Moravian College Student Handbook, the following constitutes plagiarism: "as the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment." Plagiarism shall result in the offender receiving zero in the course. Please consult the Student Handbook for fuller details.

Students with Disabilities

Students with physical, learning, or medical disabilities should speak to me and contact Laurie Roth, Director of the Learning Center, to arrange the appropriate accommodations. Please make these arrangements in the first weeks of the semester.

NOTE: Additional readings may be assigned throughout the semester.

Class Schedule

I. Colonial America

Week 1

Jan. 16 – Introduction

Jan. 18 – Invasions of America

Readings: Foner, ch.1.

Week 2

Jan. 23 – Virginia

Readings: Foner, ch. 2.

Census of the Jamestown Settlement (email)

Jan. 25 – New England

Readings: John Winthrop, “A Model of Christian Charity” (email)

Foner, ch. 3.

Week 3

Jan. 30 – South Carolina

Feb. 1 – Colonial Society in the Eighteenth Century

Readings: Foner, ch. 4.

II. The Revolutionary Era

Week 4

Feb. 6 – No Class

Essay One Due

Feb. 8 – Tutorial – The Boston Massacre

Readings: Readings: Three Accounts of the Boston Massacre (email)

Foner, pp. 149-170.

Week 5

Feb. 13 – Imperial Crisis

Readings: Thomas Paine, “Common Sense” (email)

Feb. 15 – Revolution

Readings: Foner, 170-178, ch. 6.

Week 6

Feb. 20 – Confederation and Constitution

Readings: Foner, ch. 7.

Feb. 22 - **MID-TERM**

III. The Early Republic

Week 7

Feb. 27 – Tutorial – Constitutional Convention

Reading: The Constitution, textbook A39-A47

Mar. 1 – Video – A Midwife’s Tale

Reading: Barbara Welter, “The Cult of True Womanhood,” *The Many-Faceted Jacksonian Era: New Interpretations*, ed. Edward Pessen (1977), 47-69.

Available at <http://www.pinzler.com/ushistory/cultwo.html>

Week 8

Mar. 6 **Spring Recess – No Class**

Mar. 8 **Spring Recess – No Class**

Week 9

Mar. 13 – Federalists and Republicans

Readings: Jefferson, “Manufacturers”; Hamilton “Report on Manufactures.” (email)
Foner, ch. 8.

Mar. 15 – The Era of Good Feelings and Bad, 1815-1828

Reading: Washington Irving, “The Devil and Tom Walker,” 437-48. Available at
<http://classiclit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/wirving/bl-wirving-devil.htm>

Foner, ch. 9.

Week 10

Mar. 20 – The Age of Jackson

Readings: Foner, ch. 10.

Mar. 22 – Tutorial – Indian Removal – **Essay Two Due**

Readings: Theda Perdue and Michael Green, eds., *Cherokee Removal*.

IV. Antebellum America

Week 11

Mar. 27 – The Second Great Awakening and Reform

Readings: Foner, ch. 12.

Mar. 29 – The South and Slavery

Readings: Foner, ch. 11.

Week 12

April 3 – Mexican War and Compromise of 1850

Readings: Foner, ch. 13.

April 5 – Tutorial – TBA

Week 13

April 10 – The Collapse of the Second Party System and the Rise of the Republicans

April 12 – Slavery and Freedom – **Essay Three Due**

Reading: Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*.

Part V: Civil War and Reconstruction

Week 14

April 17 – The Civil War

Readings: Foner, ch. 14.

April 19 – Tutorial – Three Experiences of War

Reading: The diary of Nancy Emerson

 The letters of Mary Jane Demus and David Demus

 The letters of Cynthia and Clyde Potter

The letters and diaries are available on the “Valley of the Shadow” website.

<http://valley.vcdh.virginia.edu>

Week 15

April 24 – Reconstruction

Readings: Foner, ch. 15.

April 26 – Conclusion and Review

The instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus with appropriate notification.