

HIST 113 – The United States to 1877



Dr. James Paxton

Comenius 306

Office Hours: Monday 2:00-4:00; Tuesday 10:00-12:00; by appointment

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Course Description

Welcome to History 113: The United States to 1877. 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 to critically evaluate and interpret a variety of primary sources, including documents, archeological data, pictures, folk stories/music, and oral tradition.
- Learn to think historically and make arguments about the causes of change in history.
- Approach writing as a process, one that involves considerable ongoing reflection and revision.
- Use writing conventions appropriate to the discipline of history.
- Give and receive constructive criticism.
- Hone oral and written communications skills.

Required Texts

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

Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom, Vol. I* (W.W. Norton, 2008)

Additional readings will be distributed in class or emailed to you.

Assignments

During the course, you will write one 8-page essay using as the main sources the documents found in the primary source reader *Voices of Freedom*. Lectures and the textbook, *Give Me Liberty*, will provide background and context for the paper. The essay will cover the entire timeframe of the course, that is from first contact to Reconstruction, and focus on a single theme. What theme you explore is up to you, but you must receive my approval first. Possible themes include but are not limited to liberty, religion, women, African Americans, Native Americans, economy. You will write the paper in stages throughout the semester. First, you will analyze and discuss the documents during eight in-class ‘workshops’ and then you will have an opportunity to write rough drafts of each section and receive peer comments. In order to facilitate the peer review process, you will be assigned to a writing group of your colleagues with whom you will exchange work, ideas, and constructive criticism.

Workshops

Periodically, throughout the semester you will meet with your writing groups in what I call workshops. In some, but not all of these workshops, you will collectively answer questions based on readings from *Voices of Freedom* primary source reader and turn in your answers at the end of the class. The readings will form the basis for your major paper.

Grade Distribution

Essay Part One	15%
Essay Part Two	18%
Writing through the semester	12%
Quiz	5%
Term Test	15%
Final Exam	25%
Participation	10%

Attendance: If you have more than three unexcused absences during the semester, you will receive zero on your participation mark.

Late Policy

- 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.
- Computer and printing problems are not acceptable reasons for handing in work late.
- Work outside of school and having a number of assignments due in the same week are not acceptable reasons for handing in work late.
- Late papers will immediately be assessed a 5% late penalty and 2% will be deducted each day thereafter.
- Emailed essays will not be accepted.

Academic Dishonesty

According to the Moravian College Student Handbook, the following constitutes plagiarism: "the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment. While the work of others often constitutes a necessary resource for academic research, such work must be properly used and credited to the original author. This principle applies to professional scholars as well as to students....All work that students submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be their own original work....When students use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of others, they must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source. Direct quotes from any source (including the Internet) must be placed in quotation marks...and be accompanied by an appropriate citation." Plagiarism will 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.

Class Schedule

I. Early America

Week 1

Jan. 19 – Introduction

Jan. 21 – Europe and America: First Contacts

Reading: *Voices of Freedom (VF)*, ch. 1.

Reading: *Give Me Liberty (1&2) (GML)*, ch.1.

Week 2

Jan. 26 - Early Virginia: Tobacco and the Labor Problem

Reading: *GML2*, 52-68, 99-107, 133-45.

Reading: *GML1*, 36-54, 110-24.

Reading: *VF*, ch. 2.

Jan. 28 – The Origins of Slavery

Week 3

Feb. 2 – Workshop 1

Reading: *VF*, ch. 3.

Feb. 4 – The Contact of Cultures in South Carolina

Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 3.

Week 4

Feb. 9 – Puritan New England

Reading: *GML 2*, 69-88.

Reading: *GML 1*, 54-69.

Feb. 11 – Workshop 2

Reading: *VF*, ch. 4.

II. Revolutionary Era

Week 5

Feb. 16 – Colonial Society

Reading: *GML2*, 145-58.

Reading: *GML1*, 125-38.

Feb. 18 – **TERM TEST**

Week 6

Feb. 23 – Workshop 3

ROUGH DRAFTS DUE TO YOUR WRITING GROUP (NOT TO ME).

Reading: *GML1*, 138-62.

Reading: *VF*, ch. 5.

Feb. 25 – Empire and Colonies

Reading: *GML2*, 158-69, 178-89.

Reading: *GML1*, 138-62.

Reading: *VF*, ch. 5.

RETURN ROUGH DRAFTS

Week 7

Mar. 2 – **NO CLASS- SPRING RECESS**

Mar. 4 – **NO CLASS- SPRING RECESS**

Week 8

Mar. 9 – Workshop 4

Reading: *VF*, ch. 6.

PAPER DUE

Mar. 11– The American Revolution

Reading: *GML2*, 189-242.

Reading: *GML1*, 162-209.

III. The Early Republic

Week 9

Mar. 16 – Workshop 5

Reading: *VF*, ch. 7.

Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 7.

Mar. 18 – Federalists and Republicans

Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 8.

Week 10

Mar. 23 – Workshop 6

Reading: *VF*, ch. 8.

Mar. 25 – The Rise of Capitalism

Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 9.

IV. Antebellum America

Week 11

Mar. 30 – Workshop 7

Reading: a. *VF*, ch. 9.

April 1 – Jacksonian Democracy
Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 10.
Reading: *VF*, ch. 10.

Week 12

April 6 – The Old South and Slavery
Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 11.

April 8 – Religion and Reform
Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 12
Reading: *VF*, ch. 11.

ROUGH DRAFTS DUE TO YOUR WRITING GROUP (NOT TO ME).

Week 13

April 13 – **NO CLASS EASTER**

April 15 – The West and Slavery
Reading: *GML (1&2)*, 462-81.
Reading: *VF*, ch. 13.

RETURN ROUGH DRAFTS

V. Civil War and Reconstruction

Week 14

April 20 – Workshop 8
Reading: *VF*, ch. 12.

April 22 – The Sectional Crisis of the 1850s
Reading: *GML (1&2)*, 481-99.

PAPER DUE

Week 15

April 27 – The Civil War
Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 14.
Reading: *VF*, ch. 14.

April 29 – Reconstruction and Conclusion
Reading: *GML (1&2)*, ch. 15.
Reading: *VF*, ch. 15.

NINE WORKSHOPS

1. Readings

2. *The Old Plantation*
Readings

3. Boston Massacre

4. Begin Reviewing Drafts
Readings

5. Constitutional Convention

6. *Midwife's Tale*

7. Readings

8. Begin Reviewing Drafts
Readings

9. Compromise of 1850