

United States History to 1877
Prof. Jacqueline Beatty

Course Description:

This course will cover the history of North America and United States from pre-European contact through the end of Radical Reconstruction. It will examine changing relationships between peoples on the North American continent including Native Americans, European settlers, enslaved and free Africans and African-Americans, and citizens of the United States. It will explore major events such as European colonial settlement, the American Revolution, the Market Revolution, the Age of Jackson, the Civil War, and Reconstruction, and cover political, economic, racial, gender, social, and cultural historical aspects of this first half of United States History.

Course Objectives:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of the first half of United States History.
2. Demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities throughout this period of study.
3. Identify, evaluate, and appropriately cite online and print resources.
4. Develop multiple historical literacies by analyzing primary sources of various kinds and using these sources as evidence to support interpretation of historical events.
5. Communicate effectively—through speech, writing, and use of digital media—their understanding of patterns, process, and themes in the early history of the United States.

Grading and Course Policies:

Classroom Etiquette: You may not use any electronic devices during class time (including cell phones, laptops, and tablets) unless the instructor indicates otherwise, or unless you have a learning accommodation. Use of these devices during class will adversely affect your participation grade.

Communications: Students are responsible for checking their university email accounts and Blackboard regularly. The instructor will communicate with students via email and announcements on the course's Blackboard site. Please be sure to use your university email account when corresponding with the instructor.

Participation and Attendance: Students must earn their participation grade through regular attendance and active engagement in class. Although this course is classified as a lecture, a significant amount of class time will be spent in discussion, so participation is required for students to demonstrate engagement with the material. Your participation grade will include regular involvement in class discussion and group work along with attendance. If you must miss class, you are responsible for material covered during that session. The instructor will not re-teach a missed class session via email or office hours.

Reading and Weekly Quizzes: Students are expected to complete readings prior to the class meeting. It is advised that students print the readings and/or bring notes for class discussion. Each week, students will take a brief quiz consisting of multiple choice and short answer

questions based on that week's assigned readings. No make-up quizzes will be offered for students with unexcused absences.

Historical Analysis Papers: These three writing assignments will expose students to a variety of historical perspectives. Each paper must be 3-5 pages in length. Cite your work using the Chicago Manual of Style (<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>). Each paper will follow one of the below prompts:

1. After reading Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, answer the following question: How does Paine convince his readers that American independence is necessary?
2. Using the *America's Historical Newspapers* database, find 3-5 political cartoons of the Jacksonian era. Using both these images, your textbook, and relevant online readings on americanyawp.com, answer the following question: How did the American political system change during the Jacksonian era?
3. Identify a current event in the United States that you see as deeply rooted in the history we've studied this semester. Using at least three primary sources and three news sources, make an argument as to how you see this country's early history (pre-contact through 1877) affecting our current world. Topics and news sources should be pre-approved two weeks in advance of the paper's due date.

Midterm and Final Exams: Exams will test your knowledge of both lecture and discussion. You should be prepared to be tested on lecture materials, readings (textbook and online), and ideas discussed in class with your peers. Both exams will include identification, a primary source analysis essay, and 1-2 essays covering broader topics.

Required Texts:

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!* Volume 1, (Fourth Edition, 2014)

Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*

Unless otherwise noted, all readings are free and available online at

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader.html>

Grade Distribution

Attendance and Participation: 25%

Reading Quizzes: 10%

Historical Analysis Papers (3): 20%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 25%

Course Schedule:

Week 1a Facing East: Life in America Before European Contact

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 1 (to page 16)
- “Imagining A Distant New World,” in Dan Richter, *Facing East from Indian Country* (2001), p. 11-41
- Native American Creation Stories

Week 1b Facing West: Europeans Settle and Conquer North America

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 1 (16-37)
- Journal of Christopher Columbus, 1492
- Bartholomé de las Casas describes the exploitation of indigenous people, 1542
- Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca travels through North America, 1542

Week 2a Early British North America and the Settling of New England

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 2 (38-46; 53-66)
- Richard Hakluyt makes the case for English colonization, 1584
- John Winthrop dreams of a city on a hill, 1630
- Thomas Morton reflects on Indians in New England, 1637

Week 2b Early British North America and Settling the Chesapeake and Carolinas

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 2 (47-52; 67-71)
- John Lawson Encounters North American Indians, 1709
- Recruiting settlers to Carolina, 1666
- Letter from Carolina, 1682
- Song about life in Virginia

Week 3a Creating an English America

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 3 (72-79; 86-103)
- Memorial Against Non-English Immigration, 1727
- Letter from a Swiss-German Immigrant to Pennsylvania, 1769
- Eliza Lucas Letters, 1740-1741

Week 3b The Origins of American Slavery

- Foner Chapter 3 (80-85)
- Virginia Slave Codes of 1705
- Governor William Berkeley on Bacon’s Rebellion, 1676
- Olaudah Equiano describes the Middle Passage, 1789

Week 4a Slavery, Freedom, and Empire

- Foner, Chapter 4 (104-118)

Week 4b Colonial Society, Part I

Reading:

- “Textures of Community: Mobility, Learning, Gentility, and Authority,” in Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia*, 115-142

Week 5a Colonial Society, Part II

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 4 (119-138)
- Jonathan Edwards revives Northampton, Massachusetts, 1741
- Extracts from Gibson Clough’s war journal, 1759

Week 5b The Imperial Crisis Begins

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 5 (all)

Week 6a The Other American Revolutions

***Historical Analysis #1 Due**

Reading

- Foner Chapter 6 (182-192)
- Abigail Adams to John Adams, March 31, 1776
- Esther deBerdt Reed, “Sentiments of an American Woman,” 1780, available at [https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpe:@field\(DOCID+@lit\(rbpe14600300\)\)](https://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/rbpe:@field(DOCID+@lit(rbpe14600300)))
- Women in South Carolina experience occupation, 1780
- Petition of Prince Hall et al. to the Massachusetts General Assembly, 1777, available at <http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/6237/>

Week 6b The Challenges of Revolution

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 6 (167-181)
- George R.T. Hewes, A Retrospect of the Boston Tea-party, 1834

Week 7a Founding a New Nation

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 7 (193-201)
- Articles of Confederation, 1777, available at <https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=3&page=transcript>

Week 7b The Battle for the Constitution

- Foner Chapter 7 (202-220)
- United States Constitution, 1787, available at <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript>

Week 8a

Midterm Exam

Week 8b The Early Republic

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 8 (all)
- Thomas Jefferson's racism, 1788

Week 9a The Market Revolution

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 9 (249-266)
- James Madison asks Congress to support internal improvements, 1815
- The Monroe Doctrine, 1823, available at <https://ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?doc=23&page=transcript>

Week 9b The Limits of American Freedom and Prosperity

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 9 (267-279)
- Harriet H. Robinson remembers a mill workers' strike, 1863

Week 10a Changing Politics in the Early Republic

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 10 (280-295)
- Missouri Controversy Documents, 1819-1820
- Rhode Islanders protest property restrictions on voting, 1834
- Black Philadelphians defend their voting rights, 1838

Week 10b The Age of Jackson

***Historical Analysis #2 Due**

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 10 (296-310)
- Andrew Jackson's Veto Message Against Re-chartering the Bank of the United States, 1832

Week 11a The "Peculiar Institution"?: Life in the Old South

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 11 (311-320)
- George Fitzhugh argues that slavery is better than liberty and equality, 1854

Week 11b Life in Slavery

Reading

- Foner Chapter 11 (321-338)
- Nat Turner explains his rebellion, 1831
- Solomon Northrup describes a slave market, 1841

- Harriet Jacobs on rape and slavery, 1860

Week 12a Religion, Women, and Reform

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 12 (339-347; 356-364)
- Revivalist Charles G. Finney emphasizes human choice in salvation, 1836
- Sarah Grimké calls for women's rights

Week 12b The Rise of Abolitionism

Reading

- Foner Chapter 12 (348-354)
- David Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World, 1829
- William Lloyd Garrison introduces *The Liberator*, 1831

Week 13a A House Divided: The Sectional Crisis Begins

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 13
- Prigg v. Pennsylvania, 1842
- Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, 1852
- Margaretta Mason and Lydia Maria Child discuss John Brown, 1860

Week 13b The Emergence of the Republicans and Abraham Lincoln

***Historical Analysis Paper #3: Submit topics and news sources to professor via email by 5pm**

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 13 (383-401)
- Lincoln-Douglas Debates, 1858, available at <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/the-lincoln-douglas-debates-4th-debate-part-i/>
- 1860 Republican Party Platform
- South Carolina Declaration of Secession, 1860

Week 14a The Civil War Begins

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 14 (402-416)
- Alexander Stephens on slavery and the Confederate Constitution, 1861
- Ambrose Bierce recalls his experience at the battle of Shiloh, 1881

Week 14b The Civil War as the Second American Revolution

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 14 (417-440)
- General Benjamin F. Butler reacts to self-emancipating slaves, 1861
- Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, 1865

Week 15a Redefining Freedom: The Making of Radical Reconstruction

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 15 (441-461)
- Charlotte Forten teaches freed children in South Carolina, 1864
- Jourdon Anderson writes his former master, 1865

Week 15b The Overthrow of Reconstruction

***Historical Analysis Paper #3 Due**

Reading:

- Foner Chapter 15 (462-474)
- Mississippi Black Code, 1865
- General Reynolds describes lawlessness in Texas, 1868
- Frederick Douglass on remembering the Civil War, 1877

Final Exam: Date/Time TBD