

American Civilization I

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Course Description and Objectives

This course examines American history from the period before European contact and conquest through Radical Reconstruction. Students will demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities throughout this period of study. They will develop multiple historical literacies by analyzing primary sources of various kinds and using these sources as evidence to support interpretation of historical events. And, they will learn to communicate effectively—through speech and writing—their understanding of patterns, process, and themes in the history of the United States.

DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

We will read selected primary and secondary sources, and dissect a wide range of viewpoints from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries.

VARIED HISTORICAL ANGLES

We will pay close attention to social, political, cultural, economic, and intellectual developments during this period.

UNIQUE ASSIGNMENTS

Students will complete a number of different kinds of assignments, allowing them to think outside the box and work with their own unique skills and strengths.

Office Hours

Humanities Center, 215
M/W 12pm-2pm
T/Th 12:30pm-1:30pm

HIST 111.102

HUM 142
MW 3:00-4:15pm

Required Texts

Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History* (vol. 1, 5th edition, 2017)

Camilla Townsend, *Pocohontas and the Powhattan Dilemma*

Melton McLaurin, *Celia: A Slave*

Recommended Text

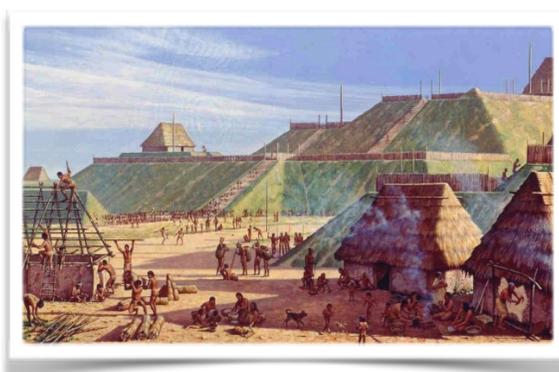
The American Yawp, available at www.americanyawp.com

Course Policies

Students will, above all, be respectful to each other and to the instructor. This course syllabus is subject to revision by the instructor.

Classroom Etiquette

While York College recognizes students' need for educational and emergency-related technological devices such as laptops, mobile devices, cellular phones, etc., using them unethically or recreationally during class time is never appropriate. The College recognizes and supports faculty members' authority to regulate in their classrooms student use of all electronic devices.



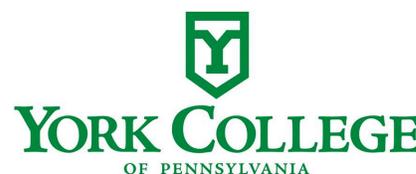
Students who wish to use a **laptop or tablet** for note-taking or for accessing readings in class are welcome to do so. However, the use of laptops for purposes other than the above (i.e., email, instant messaging, internet browsing unrelated to the course) is not acceptable and will adversely affect your grade. During class, **cell phone use is always prohibited**, and these devices should be put away, silenced, and be out of sight. Cell phone use and inappropriate technology use will affect a student's participation grade.

Reading and Assignments

Students are expected to complete all readings **prior** to the class meeting. Students should bring copies of their reading (i.e. assigned books, printed sources from provided URLs, or their computers/tablets with copies of readings/notes) with them to class (N.B.: students will not be permitted to use their phones to access the readings during class). The online textbook readings listed on each course meeting are recommended, but **optional** (i.e. not necessary). Most weeks, students will have short assignments to complete based on related class topics. These assignments should be **typed, printed**, and are due **in class**. Late work can only receive a maximum of half credit and will **only** be accepted in the next class.

Learning and Testing Accommodations:

If you are a student with a disability in need of classroom accommodations and have not already registered with Linda Miller, Director of Student Accessibility Services, please contact her at 815-1785 or lmille18@ycp.edu to discuss policies and procedures related to disability services and to establish the accommodations for which you are eligible. Please contact your instructor ASAP to speak about how these accommodations can be applied to your work this semester.



Communication

York College recognizes the importance of effective communication in all disciplines and careers. Therefore, students are expected to competently analyze, synthesize, organize, and articulate course material in papers, examinations and presentations. In addition, students should know and use communication skills current to their field of study, recognize the need for revision as part of their writing process, and employ standard conventions of English usage in both writing and speaking. Students may be asked to further revise assignments that do not demonstrate effective use of these communication skills.

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

Course Work

Attendance and Participation (50 points each; 100 points total)

Students must earn this grade through regular attendance and engagement in class. Although this course is classified as a lecture, significant class time will be spent in discussion and group work, so participation is expected for students to demonstrate engagement with the material. Participation includes working with a group during class time and engaging in class discussion. You may miss **only two classes** without adversely affecting your grade. Excused absences are granted only in certain circumstances and must be documented (ex: with a doctor's note). 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.



Assignments (20 points each; 200 points total)

Students will be required to complete short assignments based on the day's reading on a weekly basis. There will be ten such assignments throughout the course of the semester, and these assignments will be made available on the course site. Students should complete these assignments and hand them in at the beginning of class discussion, unless otherwise noted.

In-Class Activities (10 points each; 90 points total—one free miss)

During Discussion sessions, students will work in groups to complete activities relevant to the day's reading and/or topic. This work will be used to facilitate class discussion. In-class activities cannot be made up from absences unless excused.

Academic Integrity Policy

York College's mission statement stipulates that strict adherence to principles of academic honesty is expected of all students. Therefore, academic dishonesty will not be tolerated at York College. Academic dishonesty refers to actions such as, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fabricating research, falsifying academic documents, etc., and includes all situations where students make use of the work of others and claim such work as their own. Students are expected to read and comply with the full policy, available here: http://faculty.ycp.edu/~dweiss/course_policies_links/academic_integrity.htm

Historical Analysis Papers (30 points each; 60 points total)

Students will complete two short papers during the semester. Each paper must be 2-3 pages in length. Cite your work using the **Chicago Manual of Style** (see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/> and the left menu options for appropriate citation format). Each paper must answer a prompt provided by the instructor. Prompts and rubrics are available on the course site.

Final Project (50 points)

Students will work individually or in groups of 2-3 on an "unessay"/creative interpretation assignment that makes an argument about equality, rights, liberty, opportunity, or democracy, along with a written component that incorporates primary and secondary source research. Both projects require presentations to the class at the end of the semester during the time allotted for the final exam. Final Presentations are worth 10 points out of the 50 point total,

and students must present their work with the group in order to receive credit for this project. Further details and a rubrics are available on the course site.

Extra Credit Assignments (up to 5 points each; up to 15 points total)

Students may do **up to three** optional extra credit assignments over the course of the semester. The first may **only** be completed and handed in during the month of September; the second **only** in the month of October; and the third **only** in the month of November. Each assignment **requires** engagement with and citation of primary and/or secondary sources appropriate to the topic. Each of the three assignments can earn you up to five points (the equivalent of about one percentage point) to your semester grade (an opportunity of fifteen points total). Extra credit assignments are 1-2 page write-ups on one of the following:

- An analysis of a visit to a historical museum or site with relevant exhibits/material on American history through Reconstruction
- A review of a documentary on any topic in American history through Reconstruction
- A review of a historical film (based on real events, not a film of historical fiction) on any topic in American history through Reconstruction
- A response to any event sponsored by the History and Political Science Department

Grade Scale

4 450-500 points

3.5 430-449 points

3 400-429 points

2.5 375-399 points

2 350-374 points

1 325-349 points

0 below 325 points

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Wednesday, January 23	Introduction to Course		
Monday, January 28	Lecture: Facing East, Facing West	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus • <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 1; Ch 2, I-III 	
Wednesday, January 30	Discussion: Perspectives on First Contacts	Foner, Preface and Ch 1	Assignment #1
Monday, February 4	Lecture: English Colonization	<i>Yawp</i> , Ch 2, IV-VII	
Wednesday, February 6	Discussion: Colonial Perspectives	Foner, Ch 2, all but source #13	Assignment #2
Monday, February 11	No Class Meeting	Townsend, <i>Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma</i>	
Wednesday, February 13	No Class Meeting	Townsend, <i>Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma</i>	Paper #1 Due Friday, February 15 by 5pm on Moodle
Monday, February 18	Discussion: <i>Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma</i>	Townsend, <i>Pocahontas and the Powhatan Dilemma</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring in Hard Copy of Paper #1 • Come prepared for class discussion
Wednesday, February 20	Lecture: Creating Anglo-America and Making the Colonies British	<i>Yawp</i> , Ch 3, III-VI	Assignment #3
Monday, February 25	Lecture: Colonial American Slavery	<i>Yawp</i> , Ch 3, II; Ch 4, III	
Wednesday, February 27	Discussion: Slavery and Freedom	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foner, 4, Sources #1 & #2 • Rael, "How to Read a Secondary Source" • Morgan, "'Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulders'" • Virginia's "Act Concerning Servants and Slaves" (1705) 	Assignment #4
Monday, March 11	Lecture/Discussion: The Imperial Crisis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foner, Ch 5, Sources #27-20 • <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 4, V-VI 	
Wednesday, March 13	Lecture/Discussion: Road to Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foner 5, Sources #31 & 32 • <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 5, I-III 	
Monday, March 18	Lecture: Declaring and Securing Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declaration of Independence • <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 5, IV-VII 	Assignment #5
Wednesday, March 20	Discussion: The Revolution Within	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foner, Ch 6 	

Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment
Monday, March 25	Lecture: From Confederation to Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foner, Ch 7 <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 6, I-V 	
Wednesday, March 27	Discussion: Debating the Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finkelman, <i>Slavery and the Founders</i>, Ch 1 Selected Documents related to the Constitutional Convention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assignment #6 Prep for In-Class Debate
Monday, April 1	Lecture: Politics and Partisanship in the Early Republic	<i>Yawp</i> , Ch 7	
Wednesday, April 3	Discussion: Securing the Republic	Foner, Ch 8	Assignment #7
Monday, April 8	Lecture: The Market Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foner, Ch 9 <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 8 	
Wednesday, April 10	Lecture/Discussion: Jacksonian America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foner, Ch 10 Jacksonian America Primary Sources (read 5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring Laptop View Andrew Jackson Political Cartoons
Monday, April 15	Movie: <i>12 Years A Slave</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foner, Ch 11 <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 11 	
Wednesday, April 17	Book Discussion: <i>Celia: A Slave</i>	McLaurin, <i>Celia, A Slave</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper #2 Due on Moodle and Hard Copy in Class Come prepared for class discussion
Wednesday, April 24	Discussion: The Age of Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foner, Ch 12 <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 10 	Assignment #8
Monday, April 29	Lecture: The Problem of Expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foner, Ch 13, Sources 80-82; 84 <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 12 	
Wednesday, May 1	Lecture: The Emergence of Lincoln and the Impending Crisis	<i>Yawp</i> , 13	
Monday, May 6	Discussion: The Cause(s) of the Civil War	Foner, Ch 13, Sources 83; 85-86	Assignment #9
Wednesday, May 8	Lecture: A New Birth of Freedom? The American Civil War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foner, Ch 14 <i>Yawp</i>, Ch 14 	Assignment #10
Tuesday, May 14, 12:45-2:45pm	Final Project Presentations		Final Project and Presentations Due