

THE REVOLUTIONARY ERA IN AMERICA

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BEATTY**

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Humanities Building 215
Office Hours: MW 1-3pm,
T/TH 12:30-1:30pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore the social, cultural, and political changes and continuities in the American Revolutionary era between 1763 and 1815. The Revolutionary era saw a number of social, cultural, and political upheavals in which many Americans—regardless of age, class, gender, race, occupation, region, religion, or political persuasion—participated. Together, we will examine traditional

narratives of the period which acknowledge the important role of the “Founders” along with the voices of free and enslaved African-Americans, women, Loyalists, impoverished Americans, middle-class consumers, and Indigenous Americans. We will examine the major flashpoints of the revolution, study the central documents of the period, and reflect on the long-term implications of the conflict, from the founding of a new nation to our present day. In this course, you will also develop the tools to analyze both primary and secondary sources in written and oral communication and examine major themes in the historiography of the American Revolution.



COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will be able to identify major themes in, causes, and outcomes of the American Revolution.
- Students will understand the conflict from the perspective of various actors.
- Students will use primary and secondary sources to interpret the major themes in and historical questions surrounding the American Revolution.
- Students will sharpen their critical thinking, oral communication, and writing skills.
- Students will engage with the major historiographical problems central to the scholarship on the American Revolution, and formulate their own views on that scholarship.

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.

TECHNOLOGY POLICY

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 are welcome to use laptops or tablets for note-taking during class. On days in which students' reading assignments are online (as opposed to in the assigned textbook), **students are welcome and encouraged to bring laptops or tablets to class to access those reading materials.** However, the abuse of these devices for inappropriate purposes (i.e., email, messaging, other coursework, internet browsing unrelated to the course) is not acceptable.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Students may buy a copy (ebook or hardcopy) from whichever vendor they choose, but copies are available at the YCP bookstore for your convenience.

Brown and Carp, eds., *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution* (Cengage, 3rd ed., 2014).

Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-1782* (Hill & Wang, 2001).

*Other assigned reading materials available for free on Perusall.



LEARNING 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.



During class, **all cell phone use is prohibited** (unless otherwise permitted explicitly by the instructor for classroom use or unless student has extenuating circumstances and is given express permission by the instructor to use phone). These devices should be **put away, silenced, and out of sight**. Violation of this technology policy by use of laptops/tablets for non-classroom activity or any use of phone will adversely affect students' participation and, if egregious, attendance grades.

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 **YCP email accounts, the Canvas site, and Perusall** regularly. The instructor will communicate with students via email and announcements on the course website; it is imperative that students set up notifications and/or alerts (either via email or an app alert on your devices) of messages from Canvas. Please **do not use your personal email account to email the instructor**; instead, **use your YCP email account** when corresponding with the instructor. It is also advisable to email the instructor via the email client you use (Gmail in browser, Outlook, etc.) and **do not send a message through Canvas**—these messages do not directly forward to the instructor's email account.

INSTRUCTOR FEEDBACK

Unless otherwise notified by the instructor, students should expect feedback on all assignments within one week of handing in these assignments. Students should generally allow additional time when late work is submitted, though the instructor will make every attempt to provide feedback within the week. Feedback will be made available online and in hard copy form (including comments and grades).

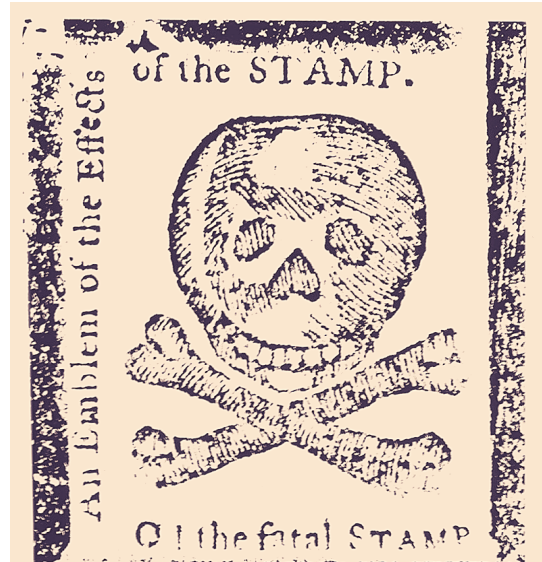
LATE WORK POLICY

All due dates are timestamped on Canvas, and are expected to be handed in at that particular date and time. Perusall readings can be completed for **partial credit within 48 hours of the due date**. Late assignments (group or individual) can only receive up to half credit within 48 hours of the due date, and late papers will receive a deduction of **20% for every day late**. One minute to 24 hours is the first day, and so on, after that. Extensions can be arranged for specific purposes, but must be done ahead of time. If there are extenuating circumstances (personal, health, etc.), these can be arranged as well. N.B. The final project must be submitted at least 2 days in advance of semester grades being due (date TBD, set by Registrar).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

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. When a faculty member believes a student has committed an act of academic dishonesty, the faculty member must inform the student in writing and then has ten business days from that written notification to the student to report the incident to the Dean of Academic Affairs and the Department Chair. Documentation related to instances of academic dishonesty will be kept on file in the student's permanent record. If the academic dishonesty is the student's first offense, the faculty member will have the discretion to decide on a suitable sanction up to a grade of 0 for the course. Students are not permitted to withdraw from a course in which they have been accused of academic dishonesty.

Students who believe they have been unjustly charged or sanctioned (in cases involving a first offense) must discuss the situation with the faculty member and have 10 business days thereafter to submit an appeal to Student Welfare Committee



through the Dean of Academic Affairs. If an appeal is filed, the Student Welfare Committee will then conduct a hearing to review the charge and/or sanction. In cases of a first offense, the faculty member may request that the Student Welfare Committee conduct a hearing and decide on the sanction, which can involve academic suspension or dismissal from the College, if the faculty member believes the offense to be of an extremely egregious nature. If the Dean of Academic Affairs determines that the academic dishonesty is the student's second offense, the Dean will provide written notification to the student, the faculty member, and the Department Chair. The Student Welfare Committee will automatically conduct a hearing to review the charge and decide on an appropriate sanction, which will involve academic suspension or dismissal from the College. Students who believe the Student Welfare Committee has unjustly sanctioned them may submit a written appeal to the Dean of Academic Affairs within 72 hours of receiving notification of the Student Welfare Committee's sanction. Students are encouraged to communicate with the instructor if they have questions about this policy or whether their work violates this policy (in advance of the due date). **Materials defining plagiarism will be provided on the Canvas page. Students are expected to review these materials and contact the instructor if they have any questions. A lack of communication with the instructor implies an understanding of the course plagiarism policies.**

COURSE WORK

ATTENDANCE (25 POINTS)

Students' attendance in class is mandatory, and is essential to success in this course. Attendance includes not just your physical presence in class, but also your mental presence as well; being focused on the class discussion, listening

to your peers and to the instructor, and being actively engaged in each class session is necessary for a strong attendance grade. Students who are regularly late, absent, or otherwise distracted (on phone, etc.) will receive attendance penalties, even when they are physically in class. Students are permitted two absences (no questions asked) without penalty to their grade; after that, students will begin to incur a grade penalty.

PARTICIPATION (50 POINTS)

In-class participation is even more essential for success in this course. Students will earn their participation grade by thinking critically about the reading, coming to class with ideas and questions for discussion, and participating actively in the conversation.

I **strongly encourage** students to take diligent notes on the reading assignments, and students are **required** to bring their reading material to class to have access to it for in-



class discussion. Often, I will provide guided discussion questions (on Canvas); I also **strongly encourage** you to use those questions to focus your reading, answer them as you are able, and bring your notes on those questions to class for discussion.



PERUSALL (50 POINTS)

This semester, portions of our reading activity will be conducted on an online platform called Perusall, with reading assignments linked directly through Canvas. Perusall enables conversations on the readings themselves. Therefore, your reading and engagement with the reading from Perusall will be graded. Perusall grades include the time spent engaged with the reading, your comments and questions on the content, your conversations with each other, your reactions, and any other links you may see between the history, our current world, or other classes you are taking. The instructor will provide an explanation (on Canvas) of the Perusall scoring breakdown. Reading and comments are **due by midnight the night before the date in which they are listed on the course schedule**.

READING QUIZZES (50 POINTS, 10 POINTS EACH, 5 TOTAL)

Occasionally, students will complete quizzes on a class session's assigned readings. **Quizzes will be unannounced; no make-ups are given unless they are arranged in advance.** Students who have excused absences on the dates in which reading quizzes take place must write a 1-2 page summary of that day's assigned readings, to be submitted in a Word document via email to jbeatty@ycp.edu (double spaced, Times New Roman, 12pt. font, one inch margin, no heading). For these submissions, students should prearrange a deadline with the instructor via email. Students' lowest quiz grade of the semester will be dropped (this includes zeros on missed quizzes from unexcused absences).

INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENTS (60 POINTS, 10 POINTS EACH, 6 TOTAL)

Students will complete a mix of in-class and at-home individual assignments over the course of the semester. For in-class assignments, students will submit hard copies of worksheets to be distributed in class and to be handed in by the end of the class session. For at-home assignments, students will be required to submit their work on Canvas (deadlines timestamped).



GROUP WORK (70 POINTS, 10 POINTS EACH, 7 TOTAL)

Occasionally, students will engage in small group work to facilitate discussion. Students may choose their groups, but are not required to work with the same students for each activity. Students will submit hard copies of worksheets to be distributed in class and to be handed in by the end of the class session.

MIDTERM PAPER: POX AMERICANA (30 POINTS)

Students will draft a 3-5 page paper responding to a prompt after reading Elizabeth Fenn's *Pox Americana*. The prompt as well as formatting directions will be available on the Canvas page, where students will also submit their work.



FINAL PAPER: HISTORY OF THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION (50 POINTS)

Students will complete a historiographical review answering a central question in the scholarship on the American Revolution. The prompts that students answer will depend on their reasons for enrolling in this course.

- For students in the “Big Ideas” Constellation, answer the following: Was the “American Revolution” revolutionary?
- For students in the “Leadership” or “Lead the Way” Constellation, answer the following: Whose Revolution was it?
- For students in the “Peace & Conflict” Constellation, answer the following: Who and/or what forces caused the American Revolution?
- For history majors or students taking this course as an elective for their own major/minor, you may choose one of the three above questions.

Papers must be between 7-10 pages. Papers must engage with assigned readings and outside secondary sources that students find on their own. Further guidelines, formatting directions, and a rubric will be provided on the Canvas Page.

GRADE SCALE

4: 90%+, 347+ points

3.5: 85-89.9%, 327-346 points

3: 80-84.9%, 308-326 points

2.5: 75-79.9%, 289-307 points

2: 70-74.9%, 270-288 points

1: 65-69.9%, 250-269 points

0: below 65% and 250 points

COURSE SCHEDULE

Tuesday, August 24: Introduction to the Course

- Read: Syllabus
- In-Class: Individual Assignment #1

Thursday, August 26: Reading and Analyzing Primary Sources

- Read: Ladd-Taylor, "How to Analyze a Primary Source"; *Major Problems*, Ch 2, Introduction and Documents
- In Class: Group Activity #1

Tuesday, August 31: Introduction to Historiography

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 1, all; Michael Hattem, "The Historiography of the American Revolution" (take good notes!); Hogeland, "Against the Consensus Approach"
- In-Class: Group Activity #2

Thursday, September 2: Excavating and Analyzing Secondary Sources

- Read: McDaniel, "How to Read for History"; Rael, "How to Read a Secondary Source"; Duval, "Mastering Charleston"
- At-Home Assignment: Individual Assignment #2, Excavating Secondary Sources (directions on Canvas)
- In-Class: Group Activity #3

Tuesday, September 7: British America and the Emerging Language of Liberty

- Review: *Major Problems*, Ch 2, Documents only

Thursday, September 9: Reform and Resistance

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 2, Anderson and Marshall essays; Ch 3, Documents only

Tuesday, September 14: The Boston Massacre on Trial (No In-Class Meeting)

- Read: MHS' Boston Massacre online exhibit and sources (links on Canvas)
- At-Home Assignment: Individual Assignment #3, Defending or Prosecuting the "Massacre"

Thursday, September 16: The Road to Rebellion

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 3, Carp and Lee essays; Ch 4, Documents #1-4
- Due: Individual Assignment #3

Tuesday, September 21: The Times that Tried Men's Souls

- Recommended reading: Start *Common Sense*

Thursday, September 23: Common Sense

- Read: Paine, *Common Sense*, all
- In-Class: Group Activity #4, Modernizing Common Sense
- Recommended: Bring laptop/tablet

Tuesday, September 28: Declaring Independence

- Read: "Sentiments of an American Woman"; Petition for freedom to the Massachusetts Council and the House of Representatives; *Major Problems*, Ch 4, Documents #7-8, McConville and Armitage essays

Thursday, September 30: The World Turned Upside Down

- Recommended Reading: Start reading *Pox Americana*, Introduction to Ch 3

Tuesday, October 5: Footnotes, Paraphrasing, and Avoiding Plagiarism

- In-Class: Individual Assignment #4, Footnote Workshop and Avoiding Plagiarism
- Recommended Reading: Continue reading *Pox Americana*, Ch 4-6

Thursday, October 7: Crafting a Good Thesis Statement

- Read: Documents 1-7 from "The American Revolution Reader," in *The American Yawp Reader*
- In-Class: Group Activity #5, Crafting a Good Thesis Statement
- Recommended Reading: Finish reading *Pox Americana*

Tuesday, October 12: No Class (Fall Break)**Thursday, October 14: Pox Americana: The 18th Century Epidemic**

- Read: *Pox Americana*, all
- Prepare: Discussion questions (see Canvas)
- In-Class: Group Activity #6, A Smallpox Case Study
- Due: Midterm paper

Tuesday, October 19: From Confederation to Constitution

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 10, all

Thursday, October 21: The Constitution: Redux, Repair, or Remake?

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 11, all

Tuesday, October 26: Creating an American National Identity

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 12, all

Thursday, October 28: Library Scavenger Hunt (Meet at Schmidt Library)

- Meet outside Schmidt Library by the time class starts (please come 5 minutes early)
- In-Class: Individual Assignment #5, Library Scavenger Hunt

Tuesday, November 2: Female Patriots and Politicians

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 8, all

Thursday, November 4: Mary Silliman's War (No Class Meeting: Film viewing online)

- View: *Mary Silliman's War* film (due by Thursday, 11/4 at midnight)
- At-Home Assignment: Individual Assignment #6, *Mary Silliman's War* (due by Sunday, 11/7 at midnight)

Tuesday, November 9: The Meaning of Freedom: Enslaved and Free Black Americans in Revolution

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 7, all
- Due: Individual Assignment #6

Thursday, November 11: Total War, Few Choices, Broken Alliances: Indigenous Peoples in the American Revolution

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 6, all

Tuesday, November 16: Traitors or Patriots?: The Complex Position of Loyalists in the Revolution

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 4, Document #5; Ch 5, Documents #2, 3, 7, 8 and Jasanoff essay

Thursday, November 18: A Rag-Tag Volunteer Army in Need of a Shower: The Militia and the Continental Army

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 5, Documents #1, 4, 5, 6 and McDonnell essay; Holton, "Morale Manipulation"

Tuesday, November 23: Religion and the Revolution

- Read: *Major Problems*, Ch 9, all

Thursday, November 25: No Class (Happy Thanksgiving!)

Tuesday, November 30: Brainstorming Your Historiography Paper

- Bring your readings and notes from the semester thus far (either hard copies or digital)
- In-Class: Group Activity #7

Thursday, December 2: The American Revolution: Truth, Myth, and Politics?

- Read: Hannah-Jones, "Introduction" *1619 Project*; "Introduction," *1776 Report*; Brockell, "'A hack job,' 'outright lies': Trump commission's '1776 Report' outrages historians"; Grossman and Young, "To understand the history wars, follow the paper trail"

Tuesday, December 7: Whose Revolution is it now?: The American Revolution and Popular Memory

- Read: Gopnik, "We Could Have Been Canada"; Lepore, "Tea and Sympathy"; Romano, "*Hamilton*: A New American Civic Myth"; Chervinsky, "Why 'The Framers Never Intended' is Garbage"
- Watch: The American Revolution in Pop Culture Clips

Final Paper Due Thursday, December 9 at noon