

American History I

HIS 111-01; Fall 2007
Mon, Wed, Fri, 9:00-9:50am; ARH 131

Michael Guenther

Dept. of History
Mears 210; 269-4958
guenthmb@grinnell.edu
Office Hours: T,Th,F: 2:00-4:00pm

Course Overview

This course will survey American History prior to 1877. Together we will explore how and why historical change took place from the pre-contact period through Reconstruction. This class will focus on developments in politics, culture, economics, social relations, and ideology in the diverse areas that became the United States. We will also consider how historians have constructed their different accounts of early America. As the semester progresses, therefore, you should be thinking critically about what forces or factors caused change in the past as well as why historians, themselves, have changed their interpretations over time.

One of our main tasks in this class will be to learn to analyze how power was gained, held, distributed, and contested throughout early American history. Some of the key questions we will be exploring include: What forms of power existed in society, and how were they maintained? How did new groups and individuals gain access to power? How did people contest their exclusions from power? What were the consequences of being in or out of power? How and why did power relations change over time?

Throughout the semester, we will examine such historical questions by analyzing a wide variety of primary documents and scholarly accounts. The design of the course—from the reading and written assignments to the discussion format—are intended to foster the critical skills and methods that are the foundation of historical analysis. Students will learn how to evaluate historical arguments about the past, to identify the methods and assumptions that inform such arguments, to critically analyze historical sources, to articulate and debate their insights, and to construct their own meaningful interpretations of the past.

Required Texts

All required books are available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore.

John Mack Faragher, et. al, Out of Many: A History of the American People, 5th ed., Vol. 1 (2006).

Faragher, et. al., Out of Many Documents Set, 4th ed. (2003).

Victoria Brown and Timothy J. Shannon, Going to the Source, Vol. 1 (2004).

Daniel Richter, Facing East from Indian Country: A Native History of Early America (2001).

Gordon S. Wood, The American Revolution: A History (2003).

Course Requirements

Class Participation & Attendance (25% of Total Grade)

Class discussion provides our main opportunity to examine and debate the complexities of American History. It is crucial, therefore, that students come to each class fully prepared to participate and discuss the topics at hand. This involves not only completing the assigned readings prior to class, but also taking some time to think through the particular issues and questions that emerge from each text. Since class participation will count for 25% of your grade, please make a serious effort to engage the readings and contribute your thoughts, perspectives, and questions during each class. After all, everyone has something to contribute, so speak up and share your ideas with your class-mates!

Any unexcused absences from class will be taken into account when computing your participation grade at the end of the semester. Please contact me if a college-sponsored activity or a medical/personal issue prevents you from attending class, and have the relevant office (Health Services or Student Affairs) do the same.

Two short papers, September 21 & October 8 (20% of Total Grade)

These short papers (2-3 pages in length) will require you to engage critically with a specific historical issue or problem that arises from the readings and themes of the course. I will post the question/topic on Pioneer Web about 10 days before each deadline. All papers must be typed, double-spaced, and in a 12-point font with consistent footnotes or endnotes. Additional paper guidelines will be discussed in class.

Five Page Paper, November 16 (15% of Total Grade)

This longer paper will allow you to engage with a historical issue in greater depth. You will be evaluated on your ability to construct a persuasive and well-organized argument that incorporates the appropriate evidence and interpretive points. I will post the topic on Pioneer Web 2 weeks before the deadline. The paper must be typed, double-spaced, and in a 12-point font with consistent footnotes or endnotes. Additional paper guidelines will be discussed in class.

Midterm exam, October 15 (20% of Total Grade)

The midterm exam will be comprised of both historical identifications and a short essay. Students will be allowed to bring in one double-sided sheet of notes to assist them during the exam.

Final exam, December 18 (20% of Total Grade)

The final exam will consist of historical identifications, short answer questions, and an essay. The final exam will not be cumulative. Rather, it will cover the material and issues that we discuss after the midterm exam. Students will be allowed to bring in one double-sided sheet of notes to assist them during the exam.

Late assignments:

Late papers will receive a deduction of 1/3 of a letter grade per day. Exceptions will be made for legitimate medical or personal issues, but you should seek an extension as early as possible. Students who miss an exam will only be allowed to take a make-up exam if they provide the appropriate documentation from Health Services or Student Affairs.

Disabilities

If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Associate Dean and Director of Academic Advising, Joyce Stern, whose office is located in Rosenfield Center (x3702).

Grades

Your cumulative grade for the course will be calculated according to the following formula:

Short Paper #1	10%
Short Paper #2	10%
Five Page Paper	15%
Mid-term Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Class participation	25%

Significant improvement over the course of the semester will be taken into account when assigning your final grade.

Class Schedule & Reading Assignments

Week 1

Friday (Aug. 31): Introduction & Discussion of Syllabus

Week 2 Power and the Clash of Cultures

Monday (Sept. 3): **Indian Cultures and Communities**

Reading Due: Out of Many (OOM) Ch. 1; Documents Set, #1.1-#1.4, #1.6-#1.7

Wednesday (Sept. 5): **Contact or Conquest?**

Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 2; Richter, Facing East, pp. 1-68

Friday (Sept. 7): **Assessing the Sources**

Reading Due: Going to the Source (GTS), pp. ix-xiii, & Ch. 1;
Documents Set, #2.1- #2.3 & #2.5-#2.8

Week 3 *Comparing Power Structures in Seventeenth-Century Colonies*

Monday (Sept. 10): **Case Studies: Virginia and Massachusetts**
Reading Due: Breen, "Creative Adaptations," (Handout); OOM, Ch. 3;
Documents Set, #3.3-#3.8

Wednesday (Sept. 12): **Coming to America: Passenger Lists**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 2

Friday (Sept. 14): **Indians and Colonists**
Reading Due: Richter, Facing East, Ch. 3-4

Week 4 *Imperial Power in the Eighteenth Century*

Monday (Sept. 17): **Slavery & Empire**
Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 4 & pp. 113-114; Documents Set, #4.2-#4.6 & #4.8

Wednesday (Sept. 19): **New Worlds in the 18th Century**
Reading Due: OOM, pp.116-136; Documents Set, #5.3, #5.4, #5.6;
Richter, Facing East, Ch. 5

Friday (Sept. 21): **Colonial Runaways**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 3
(Short paper due in class)

Week 5 *Power and Colonial Conflict: Forming new "American" Identities*

Monday (Sept. 24): **The Great Awakening**
Reading Due: OOM, pp. 136-143; Documents Set, #5.7;
Lambert, "I Saw the Book Talk," (Blackboard)

Wednesday (Sept. 26): **The French and Indian War**
Reading Due: OOM, pp. 148-154; Documents Set, #6.1; GTS, Ch. 4
Richter, Facing East, pp. 189-216

Friday (Sept. 28): **Imperial Crisis**
Reading Due: OOM, pp.154-164; Wood, American Revolution, pp. 3-44; Documents Set, #6.2-#6.8

Week 6 *The American Revolution*

- Monday (Oct. 1): **Revolutionary Ideology, Revolutionary Politics**
Reading Due: Wood, American Revolution, Preface and pp. 47-74;
Documents Set, #7.5, #7.7 & #7.8; Richter, Facing East, pp. 216-33
- Wednesday (Oct. 3): **The Revolutionary War**
Reading Due: OOM, pp. 165-205; Documents Set, #7.1- #7.4;
Wood, American Revolution, 74-88.
- Friday (Oct. 5): **Patriotism and Civic Culture**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 5; Schlesinger, “Songs as Patriot Propaganda,” (Blackboard)

Week 7 *Republican Experiments*

- Monday (Oct. 8): **Creating the Constitution**
Reading Due: OOM, pp. 208-216 & Appendix (A-3 through A-10);
Documents Set, #7.9, #8.1, #8.2;
Wood, American Revolution, pp. 139-166;
(Short paper due in class)
- Wednesday (Oct. 10): **Debating the Constitution**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 7
- Friday (Oct. 12): **Politics and Society in the Early Republic**
Reading Due: OOM, pp. 216-233; Documents Set, #8.4-#8.8;
Wood, The American Revolution, pp. 96-135

Week 8 *Equality & Citizenship in the New Nation*

- Monday (Oct. 15): **Mid-Term Exam**
- Wednesday (Oct. 17): **The Question of Female Citizenship**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 6
- Friday (Oct. 19): **The Question of Slavery**
Reading Due: “David Walker’s Appeal” (Blackboard)

Fall Break (October 20-28)

Week 9 ***Commerce & Warfare: The Rising Power of the Republic***

Monday (Oct. 29): **The Expanding Republic**
Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 9; Documents Set, #9.1, #9.2, #9.6, #12.1

Wednesday (Oct. 31): **The Crucible of War**
Reading Due: Watts, “The Republic Reborn” (Blackboard)
Documents Set, #9.3-#9.5, #9.8;

Friday (Nov. 2): **Putting Nature to Work**
Lecture (No Reading Due)

Week 10 ***Democracy and Power***

Monday (Nov. 5): **The Growth of Democracy?**
Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 11; Documents Set, #10.1, #10.2, #10.8

Wednesday (Nov. 7): **Indian Removal**
Reading Due: Removal Documents (Handout); Documents Set, #10.3-#10.5;
Richter, Facing East, pp. 223- Epilogue

Friday (Nov. 9): **George Catlin’s West**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 10; OOM, pp. 28-29

Week 11 ***Social and Economic Power***

Monday (Nov. 12): **The Political Economy of the North**
Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 12; Documents Set, #12.2-#12.7

Wednesday (Nov. 14): **The Political Economy of Slavery**
Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 10; Documents Set, #11.2-#11.9

Friday (Nov. 16): **Assessing “King Cotton”**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 9
5 page paper due in class

Week 12 ***Reform and Power***

Monday (Nov. 19): **The Second Great Awakening and the Roots of Reform**
Reading Due: OOM, pp. 358-379; GTS, Ch. 11

Wednesday (Nov. 21): **Challenging Paternalism: Abolitionism & Women’s Rights**
Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 8; OOM, pp. 379-387; Documents Set, #10.8, #12.8, #13.3,
#13.6-#13.9

Thanksgiving Recess (November 22-25)

Week 13 Race, Politics, and Continental Power

Monday (Nov. 26): **Manifest Destiny and Expansion**

Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 14; Documents Set, #14.3, #14.4, #14.10

Wednesday (Nov. 28): **The Mexican-American War**

Reading Due: OOM, pp. 418-419; Documents Set, #14.1, #14.2, & #14.5-#14-7; GTS, Ch. 12

Friday (Nov. 30): **The Crisis of the 1850s**

Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 15; Documents Set, #15.1-#15.7

Week 14 A Nation Divided

Monday (Dec. 3): **TBA**

Wednesday (Dec. 5): **The Civil War**

Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 16

Friday (Dec. 7): **The Experience of War**

Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 13; Documents Set, #16.1, #16.2, #16.5-#16.7

Week 15 The Promises and Perils of Reconstruction

Monday (Dec. 10): **Reconstructing the South**

Reading Due: OOM, Ch. 17; Documents Set, #17.2-#17.8, #17.11

Wednesday (Dec. 12): **The Politics of Violence**

Reading Due: GTS, Ch. 14; OOM, pp. 510-511; Documents Set, #17.9, #17.10

Friday (Dec. 14): **Assessing Reconstruction from a Comparative Perspective**

Reading Due: Hahn, "Postemancipation Societies," (Blackboard)

Final Exam: Tuesday, December 18th (9:00am)