HISTORY 1483: AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1865
Fall 2014

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Teaching Assistants:

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Course Description:

This course traces American politics, society, and culture from the beginnings of European colonization through the American Civil War and offers an introduction to the historian's craft. It aims not only to provide you with a broad overview of American history, but also to acquaint you with the different ways in which historians have attempted to make sense of that history. Accordingly, we will study what happened in the past. But we will also pay close attention to the ways in which historians have interpreted that past, exploring questions of evidence, method, and, most especially, interpretation. How have different groups of women and men interpreted the world around them? How can historians uncover these worldviews? What kinds of evidence can we use to understand the past? What kinds of questions have different historians brought to bear on the evidence that they have found?

By the end of the semester, you will put your knowledge and your skills to work in a brief, original research paper. Along the way, you will improve your ability to communicate verbally and in writing. You will also hone your ability to read and think critically. These skills will serve you well through the rest of your OU career and beyond. Welcome!
**Course Requirements and Grades:** Your final grade will be based on two writing assignments (listed as Essay 1 & Research Paper in the syllabus); an in-class midterm, a final examination, 10 pop quizzes; and discussion section attendance and participation. Points will be distributed as follows:

- **ESSAY 1:** 150 points  
  *(First submission: 50 points possible; total points possible after final submission, 150 points)*
- **THESIS PARAGRAPH:** 25 points
- **RESEARCH PAPER:** 225 points
- **MIDTERM:** 150 points
- **FINAL EXAM:** 200 points
- **POP QUIZZES:** 100 points
- **DISCUSSION SECTION ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** 150 points

A note on the quizzes: Quizzes will be administered in lecture and graded on a Pass/Fail basis. If you pass 7 or more, you will secure 100 points. If you pass 5 or 6, you will secure 70 points. If you fail (or fail to take) more than 5, you will secure 0 points for this component of your grade.

Finally, because lectures will not recapitulate the readings, your *engaged* attendance at lectures is strongly recommended.

**Policies on Classroom Civility:**

Phones should of course be silenced during class meetings, review sessions, and visits to office hours.

Text messaging and internet surfing during class demonstrate disrespect for your peers and your instructors. Trust us -- these are not silent, private diversions. *The Professor reserves the right to ban all laptops, phones, tablets, and kindles in class at any time if she feels they are interfering with class. The Professor and Teaching Assistants reserve the right to eject texters and surfers from class without warning.*

Please model your e-mails to the professor and teaching assistants on business memos. This enables faster, easier, and more effective responses. What does this mean in practice?

* Use a subject heading that identifies the class and the issue at hand. (HIST 1483; Question about Midterm!)
* Please make a request that is both specific and reasonable. It isn’t helpful to know that you think the reading is hard; it *is* helpful to know that you are confused by the issues raised in the last three paragraphs of the Merrell essay. Similarly, although we welcome opportunities to help you with your work, getting a paper draft as an attachment on midnight the night before it is due is unlikely to generate much of anything that you can use to improve your grade.
* Please identify yourself by both first and last name.

Finally, although this should go without saying, all requests – large and small – should be accompanied by both a “please” and a “thank you.”
Required Course Materials:

The following books are available at the OU bookstore and at other Norman area bookstores:

- Kierner, ed., *The Contrast*

Other course readings are available free of charge on either the Explore History website (explorehistory.ou.edu), where they can be accessed by clicking on SOURCES for the Research paper, or the course D2L homepage. Readings available on D2L are noted in the syllabus; all others are on Explore History.

If you are trying to access readings and course materials from off campus, you must first log in with your 4x4 and password on Bizzell’s webpage.

We will also be using a handful of very brief, very effective videos to enhance your written work. These videos offer concrete suggestions for targeting some of the most common problems we see in student papers. The videos can be accessed at Explore History under Writing Tutorials; please watch them before the discussion sections in which they are due.

University Policies

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class under any circumstances, ever. Please familiarize yourself with OU’s Student Guide to Academic Integrity (http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html).

Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure full participation and facilitate your educational opportunities. Further information can be also be found by contacting the Disability Resource Center (Goddard Health Center, Room 166, ou.edu.drc)

It is the policy of the University to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. If your plans to observe a religious holiday conflict with lectures, section, assignment or exam dates, please notify me as soon as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements for class work or rescheduling of examinations.
SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS

NOTE: The following syllabus is a detailed description of the course. However, it is subject to changes, which will be announced via D2L, email, and in class if and when they occur. Students are responsible for staying up-to-date with any alterations in the course program and for checking D2L and email regularly for course announcements, reminders, updates.

Week One
Aug. 19 What Do Historians Do? Introductions & Course Overview
Aug. 21 Making Sense of America: Europeans Encounter a New World
Section: In-class exercise on interpretation and evidence: Please come to discussion section with three pieces of evidence about your life that you do not mind showing a stranger. These might include your class schedule for this semester, pictures from your wallet, a list of the magazines you subscribe to or your favorite CDs. Don't think too hard about what you bring; just make sure that these are "documents" that you are comfortable showing to a classmate.
Readings: Foner, Ch. 1; Merrell, “Indians’ New World” (accessed through D2L homepage).

Week Two
Aug. 26 Colonial Visions I: The Chesapeake
Aug. 28 Colonial Visions II: New England
Section: DISCUSSION: How and why did Indians’ old world give way to a new world?
Readings: Foner, Ch. 2; “What Can You Get by Warre” and “Metacom Relates Indian Complaints.”
Please view “Working the Evidence” video before discussion section.

Week Three
Sept. 2 Challenges to the Colonial Order Bacon’s Rebellion & Metacom’s War
Sept. 4 Material Culture of Class
Section: How did imperial economic development, in general, and colonial consumption, in particular, shape politics in the decades leading up to the Revolution?
WORKSHOP: A-C-E Card Group Work
SEMINAR: What makes a strong thesis?
Readings: Foner, Ch. 3; Breen, “Baubles of Empire.”
Please view “Thesis” video before class.
Week Four
Sept. 9  No class; professor out of town. Use this time to work on Essay 1!
Sept. 11  Bound Labor I: Equality and Opportunity
Section: WORKSHOP: Introduction Peer Review
SEMINAR: Topic Sentences and Bridge Sentences
Reading: Foner, Ch. 4.
Please view “Paragraphing” video before class.

**Essay One DUE at beginning of Discussion Section**

Week Five
Sept. 16  Bound Labor II: Slavery
Sept. 18  Politics and Society in the Colonies on the Eve of Revolution
Section: How did eighteenth-century culture and society simultaneously provide runaway slaves and servants with new avenues to freedom and provide masters with new means for regaining their human property?
Readings: Foner, Ch. 5, Waldstreicher, “Reading the Runaways;” “Runaway Slave Advertisements.”

Week Six
Sept. 23  Republicanism
Sept. 25  A People in Revolt
Section: SEMINAR: Library Research
Readings: Foner, Ch. 6; begin reading The Contrast (Kierner’s introduction & play itself.)

**Essay One Revision DUE at beginning of Discussion Section**

Week Seven
Sept. 30  Contested Nation I: Power and Authority in the Republic
Oct. 2  Contested Nation II: The Constitution
Section: The patriots won the war; now what?
Readings: Foner, Ch. 7; The Contrast, 35-101, 131-139.

Week Eight
Oct. 7  Thomas Jefferson’s Republic
Oct. 9  Midterm Examination
Sections cancelled this week due to OU-TX weekend. Boomer Sooner!
Readings: Foner, Ch. 8 &9.

**Research Topic DUE in D2L DropBox by 5 pm Friday, Oct. 10**
Week Nine
Oct. 14  Andrew Jackson’s Democracy
Oct. 16  From Market Society to Market Revolution
Section: Library Scavenger Hunt. For this week’s section, please meet in Bizzell Library, prepared to follow the Footnote Trail to a Scavenger Hunt.
Readings: Foner, Ch. 10 & 11.

Week Ten
Oct. 21  Industrialized Labor
Oct. 23  The Transformation of Everyday Life in the North
Section: How did female factory workers shape labor conditions?

Week Eleven
Oct. 28  The Expansion of Slavery in the South
Oct. 30  Looking at the Old South I: The View from the Big House
Section: How did white Southerners square reconcile their commitments to slavery and their commitments to the nation?
Readings: Ford, “Reconfiguring the Old South;” Calhoun, “Slavery as a Positive Good.”

Week Twelve
Nov. 4  Looking at the Old South II: The View from the Quarters
Nov. 6  Yeomen in a Slaveholders’ Republic
Section: Slave owners’ and traders’ wealth and status depended upon their ability to control the bodies of people who had no legal rights. How did enslaved people try to regain some measure of self-determination?
Please view “Introductions” video before class.

Week Thirteen
Nov. 11-13  The Battle Against Slavery in Black and White
Section: SEMINAR: The Research Introduction; Compelling Quotations
Readings: Foner, Chapter 12.
Please view “Integrating Quotations” video before class.

** Thesis Paragraph DUE at Beginning of Section**

Week Fourteen
Nov. 18  Political Culture of Disunion I: Westward Expansion
Nov. 20:  Political Culture of Disunion II: Parties & Ideologies
Section: How did US politicians understand the connections between slavery, race, and democracy on the eve of the Civil War?
Readings: Sinha, “Caning of Charles Sumner.”

Week Fifteen
Nov. 25 Victory Lap! Turn in your research papers & have a great Thanksgiving!

**Research Paper DUE by 5 pm**

NOTE: Papers MUST be deposited electronically in D2L Dropbox and in hard copy to TA mailboxes in DAHT 403A. Papers that are not received in both formats will not receive a grade.

Week Sixteen
Dec. 2 A House Divided
Dec. 4 The Civil War
Section: How did Lincoln make sense of the Civil War? How can we? Also: Tips on prepping for the final getting the most out of review sessions!
Readings: Lincoln, “The Emancipation Proclamation;” “The Gettysburg Address” (accessed through D2L homepage)

FINAL EXAM: MONDAY, DEC. 8, 4:30-6:30 P.M.