

# HIST 2111

## United States History to 1865

### Spring 2020

Instructor: Dr. Dan Williams

Office Hours: TLC 3207

Mon., 3-5pm

Tues., 2-4pm

Thurs., 2-5pm

(Additional office hours available by appointment)

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Class Location:

TLC 3205

Tues. & Thurs., 9:30-10:45am

#### **Description:**

This course will provide an overview of the social, cultural, and political history of the United States from the colonial era to the Civil War, and will equip you to better understand the problems and challenges of the contemporary world in relation to events and trends in early American history.

This course does not require you to have a prior background in American history or historical writing, but you should come to the class with the willingness to learn techniques of writing and historical analysis that will help you in other college courses and in your future career.

Because this is a seminar-style course limited to only sixteen students, each class session will include a lot of class participation and will focus on a discussion of significant questions related to the class readings.

#### **Learning Outcomes:**

In accordance with the learning outcomes adopted for the University of West Georgia's Core Area E, students in this course will demonstrate the ability to understand the political, social, economic, or cultural dimensions of American history.

In addition, the exams and assignments in this class will require students to:

- 1) Demonstrate content knowledge of US history.
- 2) Analyze primary and secondary sources for their historical content and interpretations.
- 3) Develop critical thinking skills.

#### **Why Study US History?**

Throughout this semester, we will discuss the connections between the study of US history and your own life and understanding of the world. By the end of this course, you may discover

reasons for studying US history that go beyond those listed here, but a few reasons that I think the study of US history can positively affect your life and future career include:

- 1) Studying US history will give you an informed understanding of contemporary debates about race, gender, sexuality, social justice, the distribution of wealth, the role of religion and morality in American society and politics, and a host of other issues. If you want to understand the long-term story behind the news headlines, a study of American history is essential.
- 2) Because all of us are shaped by our social context, a study of the events and trends that have shaped your life (including events and trends that occurred long before you were born) will give you a better understanding of your own values and beliefs.
- 3) Because all of us are shaped by our social context, a study of the events and trends that have affected other people will give you a better understanding of other peoples' stories and will equip you to better relate to them.
- 4) Because this class will focus heavily on reading primary sources (that is, accounts written by participants in the historical events that they discuss) from different viewpoints, the study of US history in this course will give you the tools that you need to become a more critical, sympathetic, and informed listener.
- 5) Listening to the views of other people, including those from the past, will help you avoid the pitfall of presentism – that is, a belief that the prevailing attitudes of the present are always right. You might find that there is wisdom in beliefs that people held in the past, and you might even begin to question some of your own views as a result of listening to the views of others from different cultures and different time periods.
- 6) A study of US history will give you the ability to see events in the fourth dimension: time. You will be able to understand the historical processes that have brought us to the point where we are today, and you might even be able to take an educated guess about where those processes might take us in the immediate future.
- 7) Because the study of US history in this course is closely tied to the process of critical thinking, written analysis, and oral communication, this course will help you sharpen your communication skills and critical analytical abilities.

Will all of this help you in your future career or life goals? Yes! Think about it this way: Would an employer want a person who is an excellent writer and communicator, and who has the ability to understand people from a wide diversity of backgrounds and understand social and political trends in long-term perspective, with the capacity to critically engage with a wide range of views? If so, the employer would want a person who has the skills of an educated historian. These are the skills that this class will help you develop.

### **Assessment:**

You have three options for assessment in this course: 1) The honors track (for honors students); 2) The family history track; 3) The document-based writing track; or 4) The artistic track. You will be asked to choose one of these tracks by January 14 and indicate your choice by filling out a short form in class.

### **Option 1: The honors track (for honors students):**

If you are taking this class for honors credit, you will be expected to read several books that are not assigned to the other students in the class and meet with me for discussions of the central themes in those works. You will also be expected to complete a research project, which you will design in consultation with your instructor. Your grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm exam	15%
Two primary source-based essays (5% each)	10%
Family history essay & family history chart	10%
Research project and class presentation	20%
CourseDen posts and class participation	25%
Three-paragraph assessment essay	5%
Final exam	15%

### **Option 2: The family history track:**

The family history track will give you a chance to trace your own genealogy and discover the ways in which larger historical trends and events shaped the experiences of your ancestors. If you choose this track, this is how your class grade will be calculated:

Midterm exam	15%
Four primary source-based essays (5% each)	20%
Family history chart & meeting w/ instructor	5%
Family history essay	10%
Research presentation	10%
Class participation	10%
CourseDen posts	10%
Three-paragraph assessment essay	5%
Final exam	15%

### **Option 3: The document-based writing track:**

The assignments for this track focus on reading, research, and writing. If you choose this track, your grade will be calculated like this:

Midterm exam	15%
Four primary source-based essays (5% each)	20%
Two “worldview” essays	10%
Essay on a contemporary issue	5%
Research presentation	10%
Class participation	10%
CourseDen posts	10%
Three-paragraph assessment essay	5%
Final exam	15%

### **Option 4: The artistic track:**

This track is for creative students with artistic abilities. If you choose this track, your grade will be calculated like this:

Midterm exam	15%
One primary source-based essay	5%
Two timeline posters (10% each)	20%
Photo scavenger hunt or political cartoons	10%

Research presentation	10%
Class participation	10%
CourseDen posts	10%
Three-paragraph assessment essay	5%
Final exam	15%

There will be no opportunity for extra-credit assignments in this course.

**Grading Methodology:** This university does not use a plus / minus grading system, but during the course of the semester, I will use plus / minus grades, as well as split-letter grades (e.g., an A- / B+), in order to evaluate students' written work with precision. In computing final course grades, I convert all grades into numeric scores according to the following system:

A = 95

A/A- = 94

A- = 92

A-/B+ = 90

B+ = 88

B+/B = 87

B = 85

B/B- = 84

B- = 82

B-/C+ = 80

(A similar pattern is used for grades in the C-range and D-range).

In computing final course grades, a grade average of 89.5 or higher converts to a course grade of A, a grade average between 79.5 and 89.49 converts to a course grade of B, and a grade average between 69.5 and 79.49 converts to a course grade of C. A grade average of 59.5, which converts to a D, is the lowest possible passing grade in the course.

A-range grades, including the grade of A-/B+, are reserved for work that is of exceptional quality. In order to receive an A-range grade on an essay assignment, a student's essay must show evidence of original thinking and the ability to synthesize information from a variety of assigned sources, as well as an accurate understanding of the material and good writing technique. Essays that receive a grade of 90 or above must be cogent and persuasive in their argumentation, and they must be well written and tightly organized around a strong thesis. In short, an essay that receives an A-range grade not only meets the basic requirements for the assignment, but also demonstrates that a student has mastered the interpretative, analytical, and writing skills expected for a course at this level.

B-range grades are given to essays that demonstrate a student's accurate understanding of the material, adequate use of the assigned sources, and competence in writing. They rarely contain the sophisticated analysis required for an A-range essay, but they meet the requirements and expectations for the assignment.

C-range grades are given to essays that contain factual inaccuracies, errors in interpretation, inadequate use of the assigned sources, or poor writing technique, even though they usually meet most of the basic requirements for the assignment.

D-range and failing grades are assigned to work that fails to meet the requirements and expectations for the assignment.

### **Assignments required for all students:**

**Exams:** There will be two exams in this class – a midterm exam and a final exam, both of which will consist of essay questions. The exams will emphasize broad themes of the course and will test your ability to analyze concepts presented in the assigned readings and the lectures. One week before each exam, I will post a study guide on CourseDen that will give you more information about the material covered on the tests. I will give make-up exams only in cases of a pre-arranged, excused absence for which documentation must be provided, or in cases of a legitimate health or family emergency that must be documented with a doctor's note, dean's note, or similar measure of proof. In all other cases, make-up exams will not be an option.

**Primary source-based essay assignment:** All students will be required to write at least one primary source-based essay, and all assessment tracks other than the artistic track require more than one essay. This is a weekly assignment, so essays can be submitted every week of the term. There are eleven opportunities to submit essays; you are required to submit only four essays if you decide to follow the family history or document-based writing track, and even fewer essays if you follow another assessment track. (However, submitting additional essays could increase your grade average for this assignment, because if you submit more than the required number of essays, essays that receive higher grades can replace those that receive lower grades). These essays are due by 11:59pm each Thursday, and must be submitted to the assignment dropbox in CourseDen. Late assignments will receive grade penalties, so please keep up with this assignment throughout the semester and submit your essays on time. The primary source documents and assigned questions for your assignment are listed on the syllabus under each class discussion topic.

**All students must complete a primary source-based essay assignment by January 30.**

For more information on this assignment, please see the guidelines that are posted on CourseDen.

**Research presentation (required for all students except for those on the honors assessment track):** This assignment will give you the opportunity to research a historical question of your choice that relates to some aspect of American history from the colonial era to 1865. The guidelines for this assignment include a list of suggested research questions and topics, but you are also free to select a question or topic of your own creation if you'd like (as long as you secure my approval for it). After selecting a research question, you will need to research your chosen topic and then sign up for the designated class session in which to give a 5-minute oral presentation on the subject. If you would like, you are welcome to partner with a classmate for this project. If you choose to partner with a classmate, the two of you will give the presentation together and you will share a grade for this assignment. Guidelines and suggested research

topics for this assignment are posted online. The date for your presentation will correspond with your topic. For example, if you present on the Salem witchcraft trials or another 17<sup>th</sup>-century topic, you will give your presentation in a class session in January, but if you sign up to present on the Civil War, I will schedule your presentation for April. The deadline to select a research presentation topic (which you can select via a GoogleDoc) is January 14.

**Class attendance and participation:** Most class sessions will be constructed around discussions of the assigned primary source readings, and I will ask you to come prepared to discuss these readings. Your grade for class attendance and participation will be based both on your presence in class and your level of participation in these discussions. To earn an A for class attendance and participation, you must miss no more than three classes during the semester, and you must be an engaged participant in multiple class discussions, with comments that demonstrate that you have thought about the assigned readings. To earn a B for class attendance and participation, you must miss no more than six classes. To earn a C, you must miss no more than nine classes. If you are habitually silent throughout the semester, with no engagement in our class discussions, you will earn a C for class participation even if you have an excellent class attendance record. So, if you are reluctant to speak up in class, please see me early in the semester so that we can find a way to make sure that you will receive full credit for your engagement with the assigned readings and the ideas in this course. In exceptional cases, I will give credit for written summaries of the readings to make up for a lack of class participation, but I will decide this on a case-by-case basis. Ideally, I would like every student in this class to participate in our class discussions. I will also expect each student to volunteer at several points throughout the semester to summarize specific assigned documents and prepare questions on those documents for their classmates.

**Class participation for honors students:** Because honors students will be expected to help guide class discussions of assigned readings, their participation in class is especially important, and their class grades will reflect this. Class participation will count for 25 percent of honors students' course grades. Honors students are expected to attend every class possible and to be engaged participants (and leaders) in class discussions.

**CourseDen posts:** Your CourseDen post grade will be based on four posts:

- 1) A post at the end of the first week describing expectations and goals in course (2 percent of class grade) (due January 14)
- 2) Summary and reflections on Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (3 percent of class grade) (due February 6)
- 3) Reflections on the Constitution (3 percent of class grade) (due February 25)
- 4) Final reflective post at end of semester (2 percent of class grade) (due April 25)

Each post should consist of approximately two or three paragraphs. For more information on this assignment, please see the guidelines posted on CourseDen.

Like other students, honors students will also be expected to submit these posts, but unlike students who are not taking this course for honors credit, they will not receive grades for each individual post. Instead, their completion of these assignments will be factored into their class participation grade.

### Assignments for students choosing assessment option 1 (honors track):

The honors track is for honors students who are taking this class for honors credit. To receive honors credit for this course, students will be expected to read two additional books and present information from those books to their classmates. They will also complete a research project that applies concepts and information from pre-1865 US history to address an issue that is relevant for the United States today. They will present the results of their research to the class in addition to producing a report of their research in the form of a paper or other appropriate media (e.g., a website, documentary, etc.). Honors students will take the lead in guiding class discussions on assigned readings throughout the semester. In addition, honors students will also complete the family history essay assignment that is required for students choosing assessment option 2 (see next section below).

### Assignments for students choosing assessment option 2 (family history track):

The family history track is for students who would like to discover their own family's 150 or 200-year history and the ways in which their experiences might have been affected by larger historical developments. If you choose this track, I will work with you to research your family history during the first six weeks of the semester, and you will then produce three essays that tell your family's story, using information from interviews with older relatives and documentary evidence from Ancestry.com that I will help you decipher.

**Family history chart and meeting with instructor:** If you choose to follow the family history track, one of the central themes that you will explore in this course will be the relationship between your own family history and the larger history of the United States. Your exploration of your family's story will begin with the creation of an ancestry chart during the first three weeks of class. This chart, along with a subsequent meeting with your professor to discuss your family history, will count for 5 percent of your class grade. The ancestry chart and meeting will also prepare you to write three essays on your family history. The ancestry chart is due in class on January 28, and the meeting with your professor will take place in mid-February.

**Essay on family history:** If you choose to follow the family history track, you will need to write a 3-4 page paper that tells the story of your family's history in the context of larger historical developments that might have affected your family (due April 21).

### Assignments for students choosing assessment option 3 (document-based writing track):

This track is for students who prefer relatively traditional essay-based assignments that involve reading historical information and primary source-based documents and synthesizing that information in the form of essays. If you choose to follow the document-based writing track, you will not have to complete any of the family history assignments, but you will need to write two "worldview" essays, along with an essay that examines a contemporary issue in the light of historical trends.

**“Worldview” essay assignment:** At two points in the semester (February 27 and April 14), each student on the document-based writing track will be asked to submit a 1-2 page essay briefly outlining the “worldview” of one of the people you studied in this course or, if they choose to interview a classmate for one of your essays, the “worldview” of one of their peers. Each essay should discuss the values and assumptions of the person the student selects to profile and the ways in which that person’s values and assumptions shaped their actions and their understanding of the world. Additional information about this assignment is posted on CourseDen.

**Essay on a contemporary issue (2-3 pages):** Each student on the document-based writing track should select a contemporary political or social issue to examine in the light of historical developments. The essay should discuss contemporary debates about the issue and should then explain how Americans’ perspectives on the issue might have changed over time and how contemporary debates on the issue are shaped by things that happened in the past. The essay should explain how a study of American history might change the way that we think about that particular issue. Students are allowed to choose any contemporary political or social issue for this assignment. The essay is due on March 31.

#### **Assignments for students choosing assessment option 4 (artistic track):**

This track is for students with creative skills who would prefer to showcase their historical knowledge through creative visual media rather than through writing. Although students on the artistic track will be required to complete a few essay assignments for this course (e.g., one primary source-based essay and the three-paragraph assessment essay), they will be expected to do significantly less writing than students on the other assessment tracks. Instead, they will produce several visually creative projects, including two timeline posters and two political cartoons or photo documentation of a historically-based scavenger hunt.

**Timeline posters:** Students on the artistic track will be expected to create two timeline posters – one that covers events in US history from the early colonial period until 1787 (due February 25) and the other that covers American historical events from 1787-1865 (due April 21). Each timeline should list twenty events from US history on a poster board, with accompanying illustrations. Students are allowed to complete the timeline assignments with a partner if they would like. More information about the timeline assignment is located on CourseDen.

**Photo scavenger hunt or political cartoons:** For this assignment, students on the artistic track have a choice of either a photo project that involves taking a series of selfies at historically-related sites in the area and putting these photos into a PowerPoint, PDF, or Word document with some brief captions, or submitting two original political cartoons that they have either hand-drawn or produced using other media (including digital media). The subject matter for the cartoons should be directly related to events and concepts that we have discussed in this course. Guidelines for the assignment and a list of suggested historical sites can be found on CourseDen. This assignment should be completed by April 7.



**Grade contracts:** You have the option of signing a contract for either an A or a B in this course. These contracts are optional, and they do not guarantee a particular grade, but they do create the guided structure necessary for you to have a reasonable chance of succeeding in the pursuit of a particular grade in this course. I would strongly encourage you to consider signing one of these contracts. The contracts are posted on CourseDen. If you would like to sign a contract, you should print a copy from CourseDen and give the signed contract to me by January 30.

**Plagiarism policy:** Plagiarism, which is the presentation of someone else's words or ideas as your own, is a serious offense that will not be tolerated. It should go without saying that all essays that you write in this course must be your own work. Any students who are caught copying words or ideas from another student's work, a website, a textbook, or any other source, and presenting these words or ideas as their own work without proper attribution, will be charged with plagiarism. Students who have engaged in academic dishonesty will automatically receive a failing grade for an assignment and, depending on the nature of the offense, may also fail this course and be reported to the university administration for possible further disciplinary action. Please look at the course website on CourseDen to find guidelines for avoiding inadvertent plagiarism and a detailed explanation of what constitutes plagiarism.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly cite sources, please ask, because I will be happy to provide explanations. Ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism; it is your responsibility to read the materials on plagiarism that are posted on CourseDen and to take all necessary steps to avoid plagiarizing someone else's work.

Because it is vitally important for every student in this class to understand what plagiarism is and how one can avoid it, I will require every student in this class to complete a plagiarism quiz on January 9. The quiz score will not be factored into a student's course grade, but completion of the quiz is required. Students who do not complete this quiz will not be allowed to submit weekly primary source-based essays in this course. The quiz will cover the material found in the document on plagiarism that is posted on CourseDen.

The UWG history department's policy on plagiarism can be found here:

[http://www.westga.edu/~histgrad/academic\\_honesty.html](http://www.westga.edu/~histgrad/academic_honesty.html). As this document states, "Any use of the ideas, information, or words of anyone else, including paraphrasing of the words and ideas, without crediting them is plagiarism and is a crime. A direct quote of the words (even only a few words) of someone else must be in quotation marks as well as have a note indicating its source."

More information about the university's honor code and the consequences for violating it can be found here:

[https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/common\\_language\\_for\\_course\\_syllabi\\_v2.pdf](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/common_language_for_course_syllabi_v2.pdf).

All of your written work for this class must be original; you are not allowed to submit essays that you have written for other courses or that you have completed prior to this semester.

**Class communication:** I may send out periodic email communiqués to students in this course, so please check your UWG email account regularly. The university administration has stipulated

that all email communication between faculty and students should take place on UWG email accounts, so please use your UWG email account for all electronic communications that you send me.

Please use my UWG email address ([dkw@westga.edu](mailto:dkw@westga.edu)) for all email communication with me. You will receive a much quicker response if you email me directly through my UWG account than if you send me a message through CourseDen. In most cases, I will probably be able to respond to emails sent to my UWG account within a few hours. I will make every effort to give prompt service to all students who email me at my UWG address.

I will, however, use CourseDen email to communicate with you about your grades for various assignments, and I will also post assignment and exam grades on CourseDen.

For further information about university communication policies and accommodations for students with disabilities, see [https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/common\\_language\\_for\\_course\\_syllabi\\_v2.pdf](https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/assets/docs/faculty-resources/common_language_for_course_syllabi_v2.pdf).

To protect students' privacy rights, I will not return graded papers or exams to any third party (e.g., a student's friend or relative who asks to pick up a student's work on that person's behalf) unless a student gives me permission in writing (e.g., an email) to do so. There are occasions when I must disclose a student's grade to university administrators, other history department faculty (e.g., the department chair), or athletic coaches who need to know the academic status of students on their team, but in all other cases, I will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of students' grades.

I would like to do whatever I can to help you succeed in this course. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a question about any subject pertaining to this class. I make it a priority to respond promptly to emails from students, and I am happy to talk with students during my office hours, so please feel free to stop by my office to introduce yourself and discuss any concerns that you may have about this course.

### **Required readings:**

The following texts are available at the university bookstore, and are required for all students:

David E. Shi and Holly A. Mayer, *For the Record: A Documentary History of America*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., vol. 1 (W.W. Norton, 2016)

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself* (Dover, 2001)

Joel M. Sipress, *The Causes of the Civil War* (Debating American History Series) (Oxford University Press, 2019)

Honors students will be expected to read all of the books listed above, and will also be assigned the following readings:

Benjamin Franklin, *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin* (Dover, 1996)

Jack N. Rakove, *Declaring Rights: A Brief History with Documents* (Bedford / St. Martins, 1998)

**Documents on CourseDen that you should read:**

1. Syllabus
2. Guidelines for the Primary Source-Based Essay Assignment (all students)
3. Guidelines for the Research Presentation Assignment (all students except honors)
4. Guidelines for Research Project for Honors Students (honors)
5. Guidelines for the Family History Essay (honors and family history track)
6. Guidelines for the “Worldview” Essay Assignment (document-based writing track)
7. Guidelines for Essay on Contemporary Issue (document-based writing track)
8. Guidelines for the Timeline Assignment (artistic track)
9. Guidelines for Photo Scavenger Hunt or Political Cartoons (artistic track)
10. Expectations for CourseDen Posts (all students)
11. “What’s Wrong with Plagiarism?” (all students)
12. Contracts for grades of A or B (optional)

## Class Schedule:

**Please complete assigned readings before class, since most classes will focus on a discussion of these readings.**

- 1/7 What can you expect from this course?
- 1/9 Native Americans and European Explorers  
 Primary sources: Website:  
 Christopher Columbus's journal (<http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/before-1600/extracts-from-the-journal-of-columbus.php>): Read journal entries through October 21, 1492.  
 Assigned article: "Was Christopher Columbus a Hero or a Villain?,"  
<https://www.biography.com/news/christopher-columbus-day-facts>  
**Plagiarism quiz**
- 1/14 The Spanish and French Colonies, and the First English Settlements  
 Primary sources: *For the Record*:  
 Bartolomé de Las Casas, "In Defense of the Indians," pp. 3-5.  
 The Jesuit Relations, pp. 9-13.  
**Deadline for selecting an assessment option track (sign up in class).**  
**Deadline to sign up for a research presentation topic (sign up via GoogleDoc).**  
**First CourseDen post due (by 11:59pm):** What are some of the academic or life questions that you would most like to explore and find answers to? What are the subjects that most interest you in college and in life? Are there ways in which this course can fit into your larger interests or life goals? What would you like to gain from this course? What are your fears, anxieties, or concerns about this course?
- 1/16 Jamestown and Early Virginia  
 Primary sources: *For the Record*:  
 John Smith and Powhatan, pp. 7-9.  
 John Smith, *Generall Historie*, pp. 16-18.  
 Indentured Servant's Letter Home, pp. 18-20.  
 Bacon's Manifesto, pp. 20-22.  
 Primary sources: Websites:  
 John Rolfe to Thomas Dale, explaining reasons for marrying Pocahontas, 1614:  
<http://www.smithsoniansource.org/display/primarysource/viewdetails.aspx?TopicId=&PrimarySourceId=1171>.  
 John Smith describing visit with Pocahontas in England in 1616:  
[https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/John\\_Smith\\_and\\_Pocahontas\\_in\\_England\\_an\\_excerpt\\_from\\_The\\_Generall\\_Historie\\_of\\_Virginia\\_New-England\\_and\\_the\\_Summer\\_Isles\\_by\\_John\\_Smith\\_1624](https://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/John_Smith_and_Pocahontas_in_England_an_excerpt_from_The_Generall_Historie_of_Virginia_New-England_and_the_Summer_Isles_by_John_Smith_1624).  
 Assigned article: "The True Story of Pocahontas,"  
<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/true-story-pocahontas-180962649/>.  
**Primary source-based essay assignment #1 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: What does Columbus's journal reveal about his motives for embarking on his trans-Atlantic voyage? After he discovered a new land, what did he intend to do with the inhabitants and resources of that land? After reading the assigned excerpts from Columbus's journal, do you view him in a more positive or less positive light than you did before? (Read assigned online excerpt from Columbus's journal assigned for 1/11).

Option 2: Using the assigned readings from Bartolomé de Las Casas and the French Jesuit priests Paul Le Jeune and Jerome Lalemant, explain how Spanish and French Catholic clergy viewed the Native Americans in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. Are their views what you would have expected, or were you surprised by anything that you read? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 3-5 and 9-13).

Option 3: After reading the four assigned primary sources about Powhatan, Pocahontas, John Smith, and John Rolfe, tell Pocahontas's real story. What were John Rolfe's motivations for marrying her? What were Pocahontas's feelings about John Smith and the English? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 7-9 and 16-18, and two assigned online sources from John Rolfe and John Smith).

Option 4: What were the experiences of white indentured servants in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Virginia? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 18-20).

#### 1/21 Puritan Massachusetts

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

John Winthrop, Model of Christian Charity, pp. 23-26.

Mary Rowlandson, Captivity Narrative, pp. 40-45.

#### 1/23 Religious Freedom in New England: From Anne Hutchinson to the Salem Witch Trials

Primary source: *For the Record*:

Anne Hutchinson, pp. 26-29.

Primary sources: Website:

Roger Williams, A Plea for Religious Liberty:

<http://www.constitution.org/bcp/religlib.htm>.

Assigned article: "God, Government and Roger Williams's Big Idea,"

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/god-government-and-roger-williams-big-idea-6291280/>.

**Primary source-based essay assignment #2 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: Compare the statements of two 17<sup>th</sup>-century New England Puritan women – Anne Hutchinson and Mary Rowlandson. What similarities and differences do you notice in their views of God, the social order, and other matters? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 26-29, 40-45).

Option 2: Read John Winthrop's sermon "Model of Christian Charity," and compare it to his inquisition of Anne Hutchinson. What were his stated reasons for helping to found the Puritan settlement of Massachusetts? Given Winthrop's stated reasons for starting the colony, do you think that Anne Hutchinson was a threat to these founding principles – and, by extension, the colony itself? Why or why not? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 23-29).

Option 3: Why did Roger Williams respect the Narragansetts and believe in religious liberty? In what areas of his thinking did he agree with Puritans such as John Winthrop?

In what areas did he disagree? Why do you think that Puritans such as Winthrop considered him a threat to the colony? (Read the two assigned online sources from Roger Williams).

1/28 The Salem Witch Trials and the Decline of New England Puritanism

Primary source: *For the Record*:

Cotton Mather, *Account of the Salem Witchcraft Trials*, pp. 45-48.

Assigned article: “Unraveling the Many Mysteries of Tituba, the Star Witness of the Salem Witch Trials,” <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/unraveling-mysteries-tituba-salem-witch-trials-180956960/>

**Ancestry chart due (family history track and honors students).**

1/30 The Middle Colonies and the South

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Alexander Hamilton, *Itinerarium*, pp. 67-70.

Assigned article: “The ‘Quaker Comet’” (Benjamin Lay),

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/quaker-comet-greatest-abolitionist-never-heard-180964401/>

**Grade contracts due (optional).**

**Primary source-based essay assignment #3 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: Based on Cotton Mather’s account, what were the reasons why the Puritan residents of Salem believed that witchcraft was occurring in their community? Do you think that any of the people who were accused were likely practicing witchcraft? Why or why not? What does Cotton Mather’s account of the Salem witchcraft trials reveal about the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Puritans’ view of God, the devil, witchcraft, and proper judicial procedure?

Option 2: Based on Dr. Alexander Hamilton’s journal entries, in what ways was life in early 18<sup>th</sup>-century Philadelphia different from life in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Massachusetts? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 67-70).

2/4 Slavery in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Eliza Lucas Pinckney, *Letters from South Carolina*, pp. 57-63.

Ads for Runaway Servants and Slaves, pp. 70-76.

2/6 Discussion of Harriet Jacobs’s *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

**(CourseDen discussion post on *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* due by 9am)**

No primary source-based essay assignment.

2/11 The American Enlightenment, the First Great Awakening and the French & Indian War

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Benjamin Franklin, *Articles of Belief*, pp. 48-50.

Jonathan Edwards, *Present Revival of Religion*, pp. 51-56.

Assigned article: Benjamin Franklin,

<https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital->

encyclopedia/article/benjamin-franklin/

**Honors students will report to class on *Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*.**

**Week of February 10: Students on family history track and honors students meet with instructor to discuss family history.**

2/13 The Path to Independence: 1763-1775

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

John Locke, pp. 80-86.

Stamp Act Congress, pp. 89-91.

John Dickinson, pp. 91-94.

Samuel Adams, About the Boston Massacre, pp. 94-97.

**Primary source-based essay assignment #4 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: What can you learn about 18<sup>th</sup>-century American slavery from Eliza Pickney's letters? What can you learn about slavery from the ads for runaway slaves? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 57-63, 70-76).

Option 2: What were the differences between Benjamin Franklin and Jonathan Edwards's religious beliefs? What do you think Franklin might have said to Edwards if he had met him? What do you think Edwards might have said to Franklin? What do each of these assigned sources reveal about religion in 18<sup>th</sup>-century colonial America? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 48-56).

Option 3: According to the assigned documents of the Stamp Act Congress and John Dickinson, what were some of the complaints of the American colonists about their mother country, Great Britain, in the 1760s? To what extent did their complaints reflect some of the ideas of the earlier English political philosopher John Locke? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 80-86, 89-94).

2/18 The Revolutionary War and the Formation of a New Nation

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, pp. 97-103.

Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence, pp. 104-108.

Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty, pp. 120-121.

Letters between John and Abigail Adams, pp. 126-133.

2/20 The Constitution and the New Republic (part 1)

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Articles of Confederation, pp. 122-125.

Proclamation of Shaysite Grievances, pp. 136-137.

George Washington, About Shays's Rebellion, pp. 137-138.

Constitutional Convention, Debates on Slavery, pp. 139-143.

Constitution of the United States, pp. 143-150.

**Primary source-based essay assignment #5 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: Why did Thomas Paine and Thomas Jefferson believe that the American colonists had a right to declare independence from Britain? Do you find their arguments persuasive? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 97-108).



Option 2: What reasons did Thomas Jefferson give in defense of religious liberty? Why do you think that many of the colonists before this point (such as the Massachusetts Puritans) had not believed in freedom of religion? In what ways did Jefferson's views differ from theirs? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 120-121).

Option 3: What were Abigail Adams's views on women's rights and the government of the new republic? What were John Adams's views on these issues? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 126-133).

Option 4: What do you think were the best and worst features of the Articles of Confederation? How did the national government created by the Articles of Confederation differ from our current national government? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 122-125).

Option 5: What were the complaints and arguments of the people who participated in Daniel Shays's rebellion? What was George Washington's view of the rebellion? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 136-138).

Option 6: What debates occurred over slavery at the constitutional convention? Why was the issue of slavery contentious? What were some of the different views on the issue? How did the convention delegates deal with these differences? What do you think about the compromise that the delegates reached on the issues of slavery? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 139-143).

## 2/25 The Constitution and the New Republic (part 2)

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Patrick Henry and George Mason, Arguments against Ratification, pp. 151-158.

James Madison, Federalist Papers, no. 45, pp. 158-161.

**Honors students will report to class on Jack Rakove's *Declaring Rights*.**

**CourseDen post on the Constitution due by 11:59pm.**

## 2/27 Political Conflicts in the Early Republic

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, pp. 162-163.

George Washington, Farewell Address, pp. 163-168.

**Primary source-based essay assignment #6 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: What were the main arguments for and against ratification of the Constitution? Which set of arguments do you find most persuasive? Why were the main concerns of the opponents of the Constitution? How did the supporters of the Constitution attempt to address these concerns? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 151-161).

Option 2: Why did Thomas Jefferson believe that cities and manufacturing were a threat to the republic, and that farming was a uniquely virtuous enterprise that should be the occupation of the vast majority of Americans? How would you respond to his arguments? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 162-163).

Option 3: What dangers did George Washington encourage his fellow Americans to guard against? How successful has the United States been in guarding against these dangers? What were Washington's main priorities? To what extent do you agree with his analysis and exhortations? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 163-168).

**Family history paper due (submit via CourseDen by 11:59pm) (honors students and**



**family history track).**

**First “worldview” essay assignment due (submit via CourseDen by 11:59pm)  
(document-based writing track).**

**First timeline due (submit in class) (artistic track).**

3/3 The War of 1812

**3/5 Midterm Exam**

3/10 The Market Economy and Western Expansion

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Lewis and Clark, Journals of Exploration, pp. 192-198.

Andrew Jackson, Report of Florida Expedition, pp. 233-235.

Western scenes of nature, pp. 290-298.

3/12 Industrialization and Jacksonian Democracy

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

William Schauler, Factory System, pp. 212-216.

South Carolina’s Ordinance of Nullification, pp. 270-272.

Andrew Jackson, Nullification Proclamation, pp. 272-278.

John Ross, pp. 281-285.

**Primary source-based essay assignment #7 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: Based on Lewis and Clark’s journals, what role does it seem that Sacajawea played in Lewis and Clark’s expedition? What was her importance? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 192-198).

Option 2: What were the experiences of the young women who worked in the Lowell mills? Why did they come to work in the mills? Do you think that they benefited from their time working there? What do you think about the conclusion of the governmental committee that a law limiting the girls to ten hours a day of work was not necessary? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 212-216).

Option 3: What arguments did South Carolina give for nullifying a federal law? What arguments did Andrew Jackson give against nullification? What do you think were the larger implications of this debate? Which set of arguments do you find more persuasive? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 270-278).

Option 4: What arguments did Chief John Ross present in his attempt to convince President Andrew Jackson and the state of Georgia that the Cherokee were loyal Americans? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 281-285).

3/17 & 3/19 No class (spring break)

3/24 The Second Great Awakening and Moral Reform Movements

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Charles Grandison Finney, Revivals of Religion, pp. 325-328.

Horace Mann, Moral and Religious Education, pp. 331-336.

- 3/26 No class (instructor traveling to an academic conference)  
**Three-paragraph assessment essay due (submit via CourseDen by 11:59pm) (required for all students).**  
**Primary source-based essay assignment #8 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:  
 Option 1: Charles Finney believed that Christians needed to be actively involved in politics. What specific political stances did he believe that Christians should take? Which political issues most interested him? What do you think about his argument that Christians who had been influenced by religious revivals should attempt to improve the morals of the nation through political activity? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 325-328).  
 Option 2: Why did Massachusetts educator Horace Mann encourage Bible reading and the teaching of “Christian morals” in public schools even while protesting against “doctrinal” or sectarian Christian teaching in the public school classroom? What might his views on the universal acceptability of the Bible in the public school classroom tell you about American society in the 1840s? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 331-336).
- 3/31 Moral Reform Movements, Women’s Rights, and the Conflict over Immigration  
 Primary sources: *For the Record*:  
 Margaret Fuller, Woman in 19<sup>th</sup> Century, pp. 336-339.  
 Seneca Falls, Declaration of Sentiments, pp. 339-342.  
 Sojourner Truth, pp. 342-343.  
 Anna Maria Klingler, Letters Home to Germany, pp. 217-219.  
 John Francis Maguire, Irish in America, pp. 219-224.  
 Samuel F.B. Morse, pp. 224-230.  
 Primary sources: Website:  
 Catharine Beecher, On the Duty of American Women,  
<http://www.teachushistory.org/second-great-awakening-age-reform/resources/catharine-beecher-duty-american-women>.
- Essay on contemporary issue due (submit via CourseDen by 11:59pm) (document-based writing track).**  
**Photo scavenger hunt assignment or political cartoons due (submit in class or via CourseDen by 11:59pm) (artistic track).**
- 4/2 Slavery in the Antebellum Era  
 Primary sources: *For the Record*:  
 David Walker, Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World, pp. 244-249.  
 Lydia Maria Child, Slavery and Emancipation, pp. 306-309.  
**Primary source-based essay assignment #8 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:  
 Option 1: What arguments did Margaret Fuller, the women of the Seneca Falls Convention, and Sojourner Truth present in defense of women’s rights? What religious and political arguments against women’s rights did they attempt to disprove, and what religious and political arguments did they present to counter them? How did Catharine Beecher respond to women who were beginning to take a more active role in politics? What arguments did she give for women’s “separate spheres”? What did she say that

women could do to contribute to the nation? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 336-343, and online source from Catharine Beecher).

Option 2: What did David Walker urge slaves to do? Why did he think that God wanted slaves to do this? Did you find his argument persuasive? Why do you think that most whites (even those who opposed slavery) found his argument too radical? What did he say in response to such whites (including Thomas Jefferson)? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 244-249).

Option 3: What were some of the similarities and differences between the experiences of German and Irish immigrants in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century? Why did each of these immigrant groups come to America, and what were they expecting? What challenges did they face? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 217-224).

Option 4: Why did Samuel F.B. Morse (and many other Americans like him) believe that Catholic immigrants (especially Irish Catholics) were a danger to the United States? How would you respond to Morse's arguments? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 224-230).

#### 4/7 The Debate over Slavery in the Early 19<sup>th</sup> Century

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

John Quincy Adams, Reflections on the Missouri Question, pp. 240-243.

William Lloyd Garrison, pp. 309-312.

South Vindicated, pp. 312-318.

Lydia Maria Child, Prejudices against People of Color, pp. 318-321.

#### 4/9 The Mexican War and the Path to Civil War

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

James K. Polk, War Message, pp. 358-361.

Henry Clay, Mexican War, pp. 362-369.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, Fugitive Slave Law, pp. 373-378.

**Primary source-based essay assignment #9 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: Based on John Quincy Adams's description of the Missouri Compromise, how tense were the tensions in Congress over slavery in 1820? Why did Adams at first support the compromise, and why did he later have second thoughts about it? What is your view of the Missouri Compromise? Do you think that it was a wise course of action or a mistake? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 240-243).

Option 2: What arguments did the white abolitionists Lydia Maria Child and William Lloyd Garrison make against slavery? How did their arguments compare to the arguments of the black abolitionist David Walker? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 244-249, 306-312, 318-321).

Option 3: What arguments did the pro-slavery southern white who wrote *The South Vindicated* present in his attempt to prove that slavery was compatible with human rights, Christianity, the "golden rule," and the Declaration of Independence and Constitution? How would you respond to these arguments? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 312-318).

Option 4: Why did President James K. Polk ask Congress for a declaration of war against Mexico, and why did Representative Henry Clay oppose it? Do you find Polk or Clay's arguments more persuasive? Do you think that the US war with Mexico was a legitimate action or an unjust war? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 358-369).

Option 5: According to Ralph Waldo Emerson, why did the Fugitive Slave Law make many people in Massachusetts (including Emerson himself) more determined to oppose slavery? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 373-378).

#### 4/14 The Politics of the 1850s and the Path to Civil War

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Democratic Party Platform, pp. 378-382.

Republican Party Platform, pp. 382-384.

*Dred Scott v. Sandford*, pp. 384-391.

Lincoln-Douglas Debates, pp. 391-399.

Hinton Helper, *Impending Crisis of the South*, pp. 399-403.

South Carolina's Ordinance of Secession, pp. 403-406.

Jefferson Davis, Speech, pp. 407-410.

Primary sources: Website:

Alexander Stephens, "Corner Stone" Speech,

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/cornerstone-speech/>.

**Second "worldview" essay due (submit via CourseDen by 11:59pm) (document-based writing track).**

**Second timeline due (submit in class) (artistic track).**

#### 4/16 Debating the Causes of the Civil War

**Discussion of Joel M. Sipress's *The Causes of the Civil War***

**Honors students' class presentations on their research projects**

**Primary source-based essay assignment #10 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: What were the differences between the Republican and Democratic Parties in 1856? How do the issue positions of the parties in 1856 compare to the policy stances that the two parties take today? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 378-384).

Option 2: How did the Supreme Court decision in *Dred Scott v. Sandford* address the question of what the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence said about the "Negro"? How did it address the question of the legality of slavery and the rights (or lack of rights) of slaves who were brought into states where slavery was illegal? Why was this decision so controversial? How would you respond to the Supreme Court's arguments?

Option 3: Why did Abraham Lincoln think that slavery was a threat to the union of the nation, and why did Stephen Douglas disagree? What was Lincoln's proposed solution to the problem of slavery in 1858? What was Douglas's proposal? How would you respond to Lincoln and Douglas's arguments? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 391-399).

Option 4: After reading South Carolina's Ordinance of Secession and the assigned speeches by Jefferson Davis and Alexander Stephens, what do you think was the main reason (or main reasons) why southern states decided to secede from the Union? Do you agree with Hinton Helper's argument that southern whites who did not own slaves had nothing to gain from the Confederacy? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 309-410 and assigned online speech by Alexander Stephens).

#### 4/21 The Civil War and Its Effects on the Nation

Primary sources: *For the Record*:

Frederick Douglass, *The Reasons for Our Troubles*, pp. 413-418.

Elisha Hunt Rhodes, *Diary of a Union Soldier*, pp. 418-424.

Mary Abigail Dodge, pp. 425-427.

Jubal Early, pp. 428-432.

Primary sources: Websites:

Abraham Lincoln, First Inaugural Address,

<http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres31.html>.

Letters of Confederate soldier Billy Elliott,

<http://www.civilwarhome.com/elliottletters.html> (read a sample of several letters from May 1863).

**Honors students' research papers or projects due.**

4/23 The United States in 1865 and Beyond

Primary source: *For the Record*:

The Late Convention of Colored Men, pp. 445-446.

Primary sources: Website:

Abraham Lincoln, Second Inaugural Address,

<http://www.bartleby.com/124/pres32.html>.

**Primary source-based essay assignment #11 (due by 11:59pm):** Write an essay in response to one of the following questions:

Option 1: Why do you think Abraham Lincoln insisted at the beginning of the Civil War that his only goal was preserving the Union, not abolishing slavery (even though he was personally opposed to slavery)? Why did Frederick Douglass believe that this was a serious mistake, and that the best chance of preserving the Union was to end slavery? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 413-418, and the online assigned reading from Abraham Lincoln's First Inaugural Address).

Option 2: What did Elisha Hunt Rhodes and Mary Abigail Dodge think that the Union army was fighting for? Why were they eager to support that cause, and what did each of them do to support it? What did they believe that God's role in the war and in their lives might be?

Option 3: Compare the journal entries of Elisha Hunt Rhodes with the letters of Billy Elliott. How did Union and Confederate soldiers experience the war? Do you notice any differences (or similarities) between the accounts of a Union soldier and those of a Confederate? (Read *For the Record*, pp. 418-424, and the online letters of Billy Elliott).

Option 4: Based on the assigned sources from Jubal Early, the Late Convention of Colored Men, and Abraham Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, how did each of the following groups view the end of the Civil War: white southerners, African Americans in the South, and President Abraham Lincoln? What did each group insist that the war had been about? What did they want to accomplish once the war was over?

4/25 **Final CourseDen post due (submit by Saturday, April 25, at 11:59pm):** How has the information that you encountered this semester changed your understanding of the American nation?

4/30 **Final Exam (8-10am)**