

University of Arkansas
HIST 2003-005, History of the American People to 1877
T/R, 8:00-9:20
SCEN 407
 Fall 2009

Instructor: Matthew M. Stith
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Office Hours: T/R, 11:00-11:50 and by appointment.

Course Description:

This course covers American history from human origins in North America to the end of Reconstruction. We will examine social, political, environmental, cultural, and military history and how each together shaped the course of American history.

Important Note:

I encourage you to meet with me regularly to discuss or clarify lecture, discussion, or reading—or to talk about American history in general. My job (and satisfaction) is as much to work with students on an individual basis as it is to lecture and facilitate discussion. Please keep this in mind throughout the semester.

Overview of Core Courses in History:

History is the study of the past. As an academic discipline, history embraces every aspect of the human experience, including warfare, political institutions, the economy, religious practice, technology, and artistic endeavor. History asks students to analyze empire and revolution, genocide and humanism, enslavement and liberation, sexuality and gender and to do so from the perspective of both social scientific and humanistic inquiry. There is no field more diverse than History and none more individualistic. History can be as long ago as the excavated texts and artifacts of ancient China or as recent as mass-produced newspapers from the twentieth-century American West

Objectives of Core Courses in History:

By the end of the semester, you will have an understanding of the following issues:

- The role played by diversity in shaping human experience
- The operation of large-scale forces responsible for causing change over time, such as politics, economics, technology, and religion
- The challenges mounted by an increasing reliance on technology
- The changes caused by the increasing interconnectedness of today's world

Required Reading:

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!* vol. I, 2nd edition, (Seagull Edition)

Eric Foner, ed., *Voices of Freedom*, vol. 1, 2nd edition

Virginia J. Laas, ed., *Wartime Washington: The Civil War Letters of Elizabeth Blair Lee* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2000) [ISBN: 978-0-252-06859-1]

Exams:

There will be three exams including the final. Each exam will consist of fifty multiple choice questions. You will receive a study guide at least one week prior to each exam. The final is *not* comprehensive.

Essay:

Students will write a three to five page essay based on Laas's *Wartime Washington*. The essay is worth fifty points. A separate assignment sheet with detailed instructions will be distributed well before the due date (Thurs., Nov. 19).

Quizzes:

There will be an unspecified number of unannounced quizzes over reading and lecture given throughout the semester. These cannot be made-up. I will drop the two lowest quiz scores at the end of the semester. No matter how many are given, they will, in sum, be worth fifty total points.

Attendance and Participation:

Regular attendance is essential to succeed in this course. Come to class prepared to interact concerning readings and lecture. Sleeping, texting, surfing the internet, or doing anything else not directly related to the course is absolutely forbidden.

Point Breakdown:

Test I:	50 pts
Test II:	50 pts
Test III (final):	50 pts
Quizzes	50 pts
Book Review Essay:	<u>50 pts</u>
	250 pts

Classroom Conduct:

This category need not be on a college syllabus, and I hope it will not have been needed for this course. Come to class prepared with cell phones turned off. If there is potential for an emergency situation, please notify me before class and, of course, you can keep your cell phone on vibrate. Be courteous to your fellow classmates by not talking out of turn or by being otherwise disruptive. Lastly, show up to class on time. Nothing is more distracting for the class and instructor than students slogging in late.

Make-up Policy:

Make-ups for exams will be considered on an individual case basis. Severe illness or other emergencies will generally suffice. No quizzes can be made-up.

Inclement Weather Policy:

If Fayetteville Public Schools is closed due to inclement weather, our class will not meet.

Academic Honesty:

Cheating of any kind, including plagiarism, will result in immediate failure of the class and possibly further sanctions from the University of Arkansas. Plagiarism, put simply, is using another's work as your own without proper citation or usage. This includes everything from copying and pasting from the Internet to failing to cite an idea from another source that you put in your own words. I strongly recommend reviewing the university policy at the following website: <http://www.uark.edu/depts/gradinfo/dean/governance/academichonestypolicy.html>. We will discuss plagiarism and how to avoid it in class—but please consult me if you still do not fully understand what plagiarism entails.

Schedule¹**Week 1: (August 25)**

A New World

Foner, *Give Me Liberty [GML]* & *Voices of Freedom [VOF]*, chap. 1

Week 2: (September 1)

American Beginnings, 1607-1650

Foner, *GML* & *VOF*, chap. 2

Week 3: (September 8)

Crisis and Expansion

Foner, *GML* & *VOF*, chap.3

Week 4: (September 15)

Slavery, Freedom, and the Struggle for Empire

¹ The reading schedule is subject to change – but the exam and assignment dates are firm.

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 4

Week 5: (September 22)

The American Revolution

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 5

Week 6: (September 29)

Catch-Up/Review

Test I (Thursday, Oct.1)

Week 7: (October 6)

The Revolution Within

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 6

Week 8: (October 13)

Founding a Nation

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 7

Week 9: (October 20)

Securing the Republic

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 8

Week 10: (October 27)

The Market Revolution

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 9

Week 11: (November 3)

Catch-Up/Review

Test II (Nov. 5)

Week 12: (November 10)

Democracy in America

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 10

Week 13: (November 17)

The Peculiar Institution

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 11

Week 14: (November 24)

An Age of Reform/A House Divided

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap.12 & 13

Week 15: (December 1)

The Civil War

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 14

Essays Due (Thurs., Dec. 3)

Week 16: (December 8)

Reconstruction/Course Wrap-Up

Foner, *GML & VOF*, chap. 15

Catch-Up/Review

Final Exam: Tuesday, December 15, 7:30-9:30am (same room)

Important Dates:

Exam I:	Thursday, October 1
Exam II:	Thursday, November 5
Essay:	Thursday, December 3
Final Exam:	Tuesday, December 15 (7:30-9:30am)

University Policies:

Students with disabilities should consult <http://www.uark.edu/ua/csd/>.

Any part of this syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor—with ample notice given to students.