

History 201: History of the United States: Colonial and Early America
Fall 2015
University of Oregon

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Office Hours: Mondays 11:30-1:30 and by appointment.
Office: 323 McKenzie Hall

Lecture: Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00-11:20
Location: 250 CLS

Graduate Teaching Fellows:

Hayley Brazier
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Course Description:

This course examines the history of the United States from the colonial through early national period, roughly to 1815. It is the first term of a three-quarter introductory survey of United States history.

Approach:

Working chronologically, this course will focus on major themes, issues, and circumstances that continue to matter in the history of the United States—including colonialism; immigration; economic development; slavery, race, and ethnicity; ideas and practices of freedom and equality; civil and human rights; technological innovation and transformation. As a survey it cannot be exhaustive in its coverage, nor does it emphasize the simple accumulation of facts. Instead we will situate facts within context and consider how events fit within larger processes and trends within historical periods.

Class Participation

Regular attendance coupled with consistent and engaged participation in the course is expected.

Evaluation:

Essay 1 _____	20%
Essay 2 _____	25%
Midterm Examination _____	15%
Final Examination _____	20%
Class Participation and Response to Readings _____	20%

Assignment sheets will be distributed for each paper in class. The midterm and final examinations will be a mixture of short response and essay questions.

Grading Policies

Thesis, Papers, and Exams

An **A** or **A-** thesis, paper, or exam is one that is good enough to be read aloud in a class. It is clearly written and well-organized. It demonstrates that the writer has conducted a close and critical reading of texts, grappled with the issues raised in the course, synthesized the readings, discussions, and lectures, and formulated a perceptive, compelling, independent argument. The argument shows intellectual originality and creativity, is sensitive to historical context, is supported by a well-chosen variety of specific examples, and, in the case of a research paper, is built on a critical reading of primary material.

A **B+** or **B** thesis, paper, or exam demonstrates many aspects of A-level work but falls short of it in either the organization and clarity of its writing, the formulation and presentation of its argument, or the quality of research. Some papers or exams in this category are solid works containing flashes of insight into many of the issues raised in the course. Others give evidence of independent thought, but the argument is not presented clearly or convincingly.

A **B-** thesis, paper, or exam demonstrates a command of course or research material and understanding of historical context but provides a less than thorough defense of the writer's independent argument because of weaknesses in writing, argument, organization, or use of evidence.

A **C+**, **C**, or **C-** thesis, paper, or exam offers little more than a mere a summary of ideas and information covered in the course, is insensitive to historical context, does not respond to the assignment adequately, suffers from frequent factual errors, unclear writing, poor organization, or inadequate primary research, or presents some combination of these problems.

Whereas the grading standards for written work between **A** and **C-** are concerned with the presentation of argument and evidence, a paper or exam that belongs to the **D** or **F** categories demonstrates inadequate command of course material.

A **D** thesis, paper, or exam demonstrates serious deficiencies or severe flaws in the student's command of course or research material.

An **F** thesis, paper, or exam demonstrates no competence in the course or research materials. It indicates a student's neglect or lack of effort in the course.

Participation

A student who receives an **A** for participation in discussion in section typically comes to every class with questions about the readings in mind. An 'A' discussant engages others about ideas, respects the opinions of others, and consistently elevates the level of discussion.

A student who receives a **B** for participation in discussion in section typically does not always come to class with questions about the readings in mind. A 'B' discussant waits passively for others to raise interesting issues. Some discussants in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation.

A student who receives a **C** for discussion in section attends regularly but typically is an infrequent or unwilling participant in discussion. A student who fails to attend precepts or seminars regularly and adequately prepared for discussion risks the grade of **D** or **F**.

Students must submit all assigned work in order to pass the course. Failure to submit *all* required work will result in a failing grade.

Academic Honesty:

All work submitted for this course must be your own. Plagiarism is a serious offense that can result in course failure, and in some cases expulsion from school. When drawing from the thought, work and research of others it is important that you use proper citations, and give credit where it is due. If you have any questions about this, ask me, or consult a writing tutor.

Students with Disabilities

We will make every effort to accommodate students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with the instructor as soon as possible. Please request that the Counselor for Students with Disabilities send a letter verifying your disability.

Course Outline

Course Level Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

- Evaluate arguments and evidence effectively.
- Make and defend intellectual hypotheses and employ historical evidence to do so.
- Write a historical essay employing primary source material to support their arguments.
- Demonstrate familiarity with historical literature regarding Early American History and be able to identify key arguments and debates within the field.

Course Format and Requirements

This course is composed of lectures twice weekly and an additional discussion section. Each student must register for and attend a discussion section. Although lectures, readings, and discussions are carefully coordinated, each will introduce material not available elsewhere. Therefore, attendance at lectures and discussion sessions, and careful reading of all assignments **is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at weekly discussion section meetings.**

Required Texts:

The following are required reading. They are available at the UO Bookstore. Copies will also be placed on reserve at Knight Library.

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History*, vol. 1 (New York: W.W. Norton, 4th Seagull Edition, 2011).

Eric Foner, ed., *Voice of Freedom: A Documentary History*, vol. 1 (New York: W.W. Norton, 4th ed., 2011).

- Note: You may substitute an earlier edition of either book (which might be available more cheaply as a used copy), even though the materials in these editions will vary slightly.

Students will be expected to have completed their weekly reading assignments in preparation for their discussion session meetings each week.

Course Outline

Week 1: Introduction; Before Columbus and Early American Encounters.

September 27: Introduction. What is American History and why should we care?

September 29: Before 1492, Colonialism, and the Columbian Exchange.

Read *Give Me Liberty!* Preface and chapter 1 (pp. xxi-xxx; 3-47);

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom: Morton, Las Casas, de Brébeuf, pp. 4-10, 13-18.

Week 2: Colonial Beachheads.

October 4: The Chesapeake:

October 6: New England: A Bible Commonwealth?

Read *Give Me Liberty!* Chapter 2, pp. 47-89

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom: pp. 22-41.

Week 3: Settlement and Unsettlement.

Paper 1 due in week 3 discussion sections

October 11: Middle Colonies and Borderlands

October 13: Witch-hunting and Crisis in New England.

Read, *Give Me Liberty!* Chapter 3, 89-131.

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom women in household economy, 46-60;

read also: excerpts from witchcraft trial records available on Canvas.

Week 4: Servitude, Slavery, and Resistance.

October 18: Debt peonage, coerced labor, the poorhouse and slavery

October 20: Slavery and an African-American Culture of Resistance.

Read, *Give Me Liberty!* Chapter 4 to p. 149 (pp. 131-49)

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom: 63-74.

Week 5: Eighteenth-Century Turmoil and Transformation.

October 25: Enlightenment and Awakening, Reason and Revelation.

October 27: **Midterm Examination.**

Read *Give Me Liberty!* Remainder of chapter 4 (149-175)

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom 74-84.

Week 6: Revolution

November 1: Imperial Crisis and the Movement for Independence.

November 3: War for Independence—how did the Rebels Win?

Read *Give Me Liberty!* Chapter 5, 175-212

Primary Sources

Voices of Freedom, 84-105; Declaration of Independence (in *Give me Liberty* text, appendix A18-A20).

Week 7: Revolutionary Settlement.

November 8: How Revolutionary was the Revolution?

November 10: The Constitution

Read *Give Me Liberty!* Chapters 6 & 7, 210-283

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom 105-116, 122-140, U.S. Constitution (in *Give Me Liberty* appendix, A21-A28).

Week 8: A More Perfect Union?

Paper 2 due in discussion sections.

November 15: Slavery and Emancipation

November 17: The West: Expansion, American Indians, and an “Empire for Liberty”?

Read, *Give Me Liberty!* Chapter 8, 283-320; see also pp. 381-84 from chapter 10 on the Cherokee Removal controversy;

Primary Sources:

*Voices of Freedom:*140-160.

Week 9: Early National Transformations.

November 22: Incorporation of America: Commercial Revolution, Early Industrialization

Thanksgiving Holiday, November 24-25

Read, *Give Me Liberty!* Chapter 9, 320-57;

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom, 166-188.

Week 10: Early National Evolution.

November 29: Work, Class, and Reform in the Early Republic.

December 1: Conclusion: “Democracy in America.”

Read *Give Me Liberty!*, chapter 10 through p. 375 (357-388), and the beginning of chapter 12, through p. 441 (427-41)

Primary Sources:

Voices of Freedom, 227-250.

Final Examination: 10:15 AM Wednesday, December 9, 2015