HISTORY 217: U.S. HISTORY TO 1865

DR. ERIN MAULDIN
SPRING 2017
MWF 9:15 AM, DBH 216

ecstewar@samford.edu
OFFICE: DBH 111
OFFICE HOURS: TR 1-3 PM

The U.S. History survey usually leaves students with the impression that history is just one thing after another, a series of immutable dates and facts to be memorized and regurgitated. Although this course explores the history of the United States from the pre-colonial period through the Civil War, this is not a typical survey that relies on a textbook and moves rapidly from historical event to historical event in an effort to maintain “coverage.”

Instead, we will approach the class from a thematic, story-oriented perspective with two goals in mind: first, to uncover lesser-known narratives that change the way you think about our nation’s past and present, and second, to figure out how historians know what they know about U.S. history. Along the way, we will compare and assess historical interpretations using evidence, work together to formulate and present insightful responses to complex questions, and clearly articulate opinions in both written and oral forms.

COURSE GOALS

❖ Educate students in the basic outline of U.S. history through 1865

❖ Contextualize current headlines using historical knowledge

❖ Introduce students to the methodology of the historian—what sources to use, how to approach primary documents, and ways to give voice to the past

❖ Synthesize information and communicate that information effectively in both written and oral forms

REQUIRED TEXTS

We will be reading large sections of the following texts, which are available for purchase in the bookstore and, of course, online. E-books are acceptable. Our other readings will be posted on Moodle.

❖ Paul Johnson and Sean Wilentz, The Kingdom of Matthias: A Story of Sex and Salvation in 19th-Century America

❖ Susan Dunn, Sister Revolutions: French Lightning, American Light

❖ Ari Kelman and Jonathan Fetter-Vorm, Battle Lines: A Graphic History of the Civil War
ASSIGNMENTS (FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE EXPLANATIONS OF ASSIGNMENTS AT THE END OF THE SYLLABUS)

Books Tests and Discussions (10%)  Connecting Past to Present Panel (15%)
Imagining History (10%)  “History Through…” Projects (25%)
Midterm (20%)  Final Exam (20%)

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES
All submissions are due at the beginning of the class period on the day specified on the syllabus. Late writing assignments will be docked one letter grade per day late. Late speeches are not accepted unless permission has been granted by instructor prior to due date. Students will not be given extra credit assignments or allowed to make up work that they have missed due to absence other than that incurred for University business.

❖ All essays and responses must be typed.
❖ Submissions must be double-spaced, with 1 inch margins and Times New Roman 12-point font. Failure to follow these very simple instructions will result in a loss of points.
❖ Please include your name on all submissions. No name, no grade.

GRADING SCALE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>63-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>below 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PLAGIARISM
All submissions must be original with sources clearly and correctly documented. Work previously submitted for other courses is not accepted. Any student who represents the work of another as his or her own is guilty of plagiarism and will be subject to the penalties outlined in The Student Handbook, including failure in the course and suspension from the University. Think for yourself, do your own work, and cite your sources.

MAKE-UP WORK
I will not give “make-up” quizzes, though students may be exempt from this work by an excused absence which includes: (A) a death in the immediate family; (B) an illness with a doctor’s note; or (C) university business (with documentation). Students who come late to class and miss any quizzes/essays will not be able to make up that work. Students who must miss the exam for legitimate reasons must contact me BEFORE the exam is scheduled to begin. In the event you have to miss class, you will be responsible for work due and lecture notes missed.
TECHNOLOGY
Consider this class an ancient technology zone. You will not be allowed to use laptops, computers, or tablets to take notes (unless you have an academic accommodation from Disability Resources for a specific technology). I have received too many complaints from too many students in years past of distractions caused by inconsiderate peers with disruptive addictions to connectivity. You will take notes the old-fashioned way: with a pen and notebook. This method allows you to more fully and creatively connect with the material, as well as hone your doodling and daydreaming skills. ALL electronic devices MUST be turned off during exams.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
This class is a seminar, and its success depends upon your presence and full participation. Students who miss more than two weeks of class (6 absences) will receive an FA (failure due to absences) for the course. Students who must be absent due to University business should notify the teacher early in the course. Arriving late or leaving early from a class is disruptive; three tardies/early exits will be considered the equivalent of an absence. Students who come to class unprepared may be dismissed by the professor and such dismissal will be counted as an absence.

EMERGENCY READINESS
RAVE is the primary method of communication used by Samford University during a campus emergency. If you have not registered for RAVE alerts, please go to the My Contact Information box on your Portal homepage to update your RAVE Emergency Alert Information. Samford University utilizes Samford Alert for desktop, laptop, tablet, and mobile devices to provide students with information, procedures, and links about what to do in the event of a variety of emergency situations that could occur on our campus. If you do not already have the Samford Alert app on your mobile device, laptop, desktop, or tablet, please go to the In Case of Emergency box on your Portal homepage for instructions on downloading the App. Once you have downloaded the App, please take time to review the information provided, it is important that you know what to do in the case of a campus emergency.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
Students with disabilities who wish to request accommodations should register with Disability Resources (205) 726-4078, disability@samford.edu, University Center Room 205, www.samford.edu/dr). Students who are registered with Disability Resources are responsible for providing me with a copy of their accommodation letter and scheduling a meeting with me to discuss how their approved accommodations will apply to this course. Accommodations will not be implemented until we have met to review your accommodation letter.

DISCLAIMER
The professor reserves the right to modify the content of the syllabus at any time during the semester. Students will be given plenty of notification if and when this occurs. Moodle is only used in this course to supply students with readings and notifications of due dates—the gradebook feature will not be used. If you have a question about a grade, please contact me directly.
**SCHEDULE OF CLASSES**

**Week 1: Introduction**  
**Reading:** Charles Mann, “1491,” *The Atlantic Magazine* (URL on Moodle)

January 23: Why study American History—Again?

January 25: The Worlds We Have Lost: Pre-Columbian America (and Europe)

January 27: A Meeting of Continents: The Aftermath of 1492

**Week 2: Forging Empires**  
**Reading:** Virginia DeJohn Anderson, “King Philip’s Herds” (Moodle)

January 30: Spain Constructs an Empire: What does China have to do with it?

February 1: France and England Enter the Competition for North America

February 3: Creatures of Empire: Livestock and Euro-Indian Warfare

**Week 3: Adaptation and Transformation**  
**Readings:** “Life, Death, and Terror in the Slave Trade,” from Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship* (Moodle), due on 2/8

February 6: The Atlantic Slave System

February 8: Race in North America

February 10: WRITING DAY (NO CLASS)

**Week 4: Ambitions Collide**  
**Readings:** *Sister Revolutions*, Chapters 1-3

February 13: Making “British America”

❖ Imagining History Essay DUE

February 15: Imperial Rivalries, Colonial War: The Seven Years’ War

February 17: Post-War Adjustments and the Implications of Victory
Week 5: Wars of Independence
Reading: *Sister Revolutions*, Chapters 5-6

February 20: From Resistance to Revolution: The Disintegration of British America

February 22: Soldiers of Death: Smallpox in the American Revolution

February 24: One of Many Revolutions

Week 6: The New Nation
Reading: “Empire of the Plains,” from Pekka Hämäläinen, *Comanche Empire* (Moodle)

February 27: Federalism versus Republicanism: An Excuse to Listen to *Hamilton!*

March 1: Diverging Cultures: Slavery Becomes a Problem

March 3: The Long War for the West Begins

Week 7: Bridging the Atlantic and the Pacific

March 6: The Actors on the Maritime Frontier

March 8: Trans-Pacific Exploration

March 10: **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week 8: SPRING BREAK

Week 9: The Great Awakening
Readings: *Kingdom of Matthias*, Prologue, Chapters 1-2

March 20: The Market Revolution and the Silent Majority

March 22: Girl Power: Gender in the Early Republic
March 24: Awakenings: Religion and the Culture of Reform

Week 10: Making a White Republic
Reading: *Kingdom of Matthias*, due on 3/29, Chapters 3-4, Epilogue

March 27: The Age of Jackson: Indian Removal East and West

March 29: Thanks, Eli Whitney: The Expansion of Black Slavery

March 31: Research for “History Through…”

Week 11: Race and the West
Readings: Excerpt from Andrés Reséndez, *The Other Slavery* (Moodle)

April 3: Comancheria and the Long War for the West, Part II

April 5: Mexico, Texas, and the Renewal of Imperial Warfare

April 7: Sectionalism and Manifest Destiny

Week 12: On the Eve of War
Readings: Excerpt from David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness* (Moodle)

April 10: An Empire of Cotton

April 12: A House Divided: Political Crises of the 1850s

April 14: “Free” Soil, “Free” Labor, “Free” Men

Week 13: Presentations

April 17: EASTER

April 19: Connecting Past to Present Panels

*April 21: Connecting Past to Present Panels
Week 14: The War of Northern Aggression
Reading: *Battle Lines*

April 24: The Yankee Leviathan
April 26: Rich Man’s War, Poor Man’s Fight
April 28: War and Environment

_________________________

Week 15: Interpreting American History

May 1: Discussion of *Battle Lines* and Course Wrap-up
May 3: Help Day for “History Through…” Portfolios

**Final Exam Wednesday, May 10 at 8 am**

**Bring “History Through…” Project to Exam, Book test on *Battle Lines* part of exam**
Quizzes and Discussions (10%)

We don’t have a textbook, but you read three full-length monographs as well as various chapters and articles from other books. This approach to the course reading does three things: one, it helps you avoid the soporific experience of reading a textbook; two, it introduces you to lesser known vignettes in U.S. History; and three, it exposes you to different types of academic writing.

Quizzes will be given every Friday that we have class (occasionally on a Wednesday, see the syllabus). This means that while I’d like you to have all of your reading for the week done on Monday, it is not DUE until Friday. Each quiz will consist of no more than two content-related questions. This means I will ask you questions related to the ideas or conclusions of the text, rather than minute details. Here’s an example: A content-related question for a reading on the rapid industrialization of the 1870s might be, “What does the author say about the relationship between industrialization and the decline in Native American populations?” A detail-related question would be, “Who invented the steamboat?”

I also expect you to discuss the readings, out loud, in class. All of these assignments go toward your Participation grade.

Midterm and Final Exam (20% each)

These tests will be a mix of short answer and essays. You will not need a Blue Book; I will provide the paper needed.

Imagining History (10%)
3 page minimum, due February 13

This is a creative exercise that encourages you to think of historical actors as real people who have voices, motivations, insecurities, and biases. Choose one of the vignettes from “Life, Death, and Terror on a Slave Ship,” available on Moodle, and imagine a scene from the information shared about that person (or shark). You may write it as a journal entry,
a conversation, a short story, a letter—it doesn’t matter. Have fun, but make sure you include enough “facts” from the chapter to make it seem real.

**Connecting Past to Present Panel (15%)**
**Due April 19 and 21**

This is a group presentation that chooses a news story or series of news stories published in the last calendar year and connects it to an historical subject we’ve covered in the class. For instance, you might select the controversy over the Native American protests of the oil pipeline in South Dakota. The resulting presentation will
- introduce and explain the news story,
- provide historical context using lectures, readings, outside research, or the textbook on reserve in the library, and
- conclude with how knowing the “bigger picture” helps explain the news story.

In this example, you might argue that the Native protests are not about oil, but about the centuries-long erosion of tribal rights, and that media outlets that brush over this fact get the story wrong. Here’s another example that’s slightly too late for the period we cover: An article published in *Newsweek* recently outlined the current child migrant crisis in the U.S. as tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors have traveled up through Central America and Mexico to reach the U.S.-Mexico border. The rhetoric used by anti-immigration politicians in the current crisis echoes that of nineteenth-century Americans who opposed the vast numbers of immigrants flowing into the U.S. from the coast of California (Asians) and Ellis Island (southern Europeans and Irish). I think it would be interesting to compare and contrast the assumptions Americans make about the immigrants, or perhaps compare and contrast the reasons the immigrants are coming in the first place, or even compare and contrast Ellis Island to Arizona detention centers.

You won’t have a written component (i.e. you don’t turn in what you say), but you do have to make a PowerPoint, Prezi, or other multimedia presentation to accompany your content.

Acceptable news sources include the major newspapers such as *The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, the Chicago Tribune, The L.A. Times* as well as *TIME* magazine, *Newsweek, The Atlantic, Bloomberg News, Mother Jones*, and anything from the *BBC, NPR*, or *Al Jazeera*. All sources must be cited within the paper and you need a Works Cited page attached to the end of the paper.
“History through...” Projects
Due at Final Exam

The sources historians use to answer questions are called primary sources. But not all primary sources are the “traditional” letters and diaries one associates with the term. Historians use a range of sources to interpret the past, or even to interpret how one generation versus another remembers the past (called memory studies). This assignment challenges you to think about sources and what they reveal or obscure, but it does so by encouraging the use of non-traditional sources. Here is a list of possibilities: archaeological excavations, newspaper editorials, advertisements, art, artifacts, film, plays, sport, political cartoons, cemeteries, landscapes, photographs, maps. I am open to other suggestions, but you must receive approval for sources not on this list.

The task here is to assess the value of a particular type of source and to tell a story using it. Each portfolio will include a summary of the parameters of the study (about 2 pages), at least five annotated examples of your source, and an essay of at least five pages that tells a story using those examples. This will require outside research (obviously), and all sources must be cited.

Here’s an example, again, from a period too late to be studied in this class: The Problem of Race in America: Broadway in the Interwar Years. For this project, I would use my summary to explain the history of Broadway and reflect on the pros and cons of this particular source base. Then I would have either playbills or ads or some visual from each show (Porgy and Bess, As the Clouds Roll On, the Ziegfield Follies, etc.) with an annotation delineating that particular show’s details. Let’s say that my essay argues that Broadway pushed the boundaries of race relations in the 1920s and 1930s by hiring black actors or incorporating African-American musical styles, but also reflected the limits of racial integration pre-WWII in how those shows were received or how those actors were treated. I would use my shows—their content or music, as well as their critical reception—as evidence. By my count, that’s a 2 page summary, 5 individual sheets of paper for each annotated show, and a 5 page essay, plus a Works Cited page. That’s why I’m calling it a portfolio or project rather than an essay.