
U.S. HISTORY I—Online

Contact through Reconstruction

Syllabus for HIS 201
Professor: Terrence Delaney
Phone: (860) 383-5248
E-mail: use Vista account

The overall aim of this course is to develop an understanding of the history of the United States by examining the major themes and movements that were happening during this period. It is hoped that each student will gain a sense of where the country has been and what that could possibly mean for the future. At a time when more and more people are “clueless” about their past, and unfortunately quite comfortable in that state, it is important that we build an important component to good “citizenship”: an historical understanding.

History is the “explanation of change over time,” as one of my professors defined it. The study of history is an important component of a sound liberal arts education. Here is one answer to the question, [why study history?](#) Another purpose of this course, and one I feel is equally important as those above, is that everyone involved has an enjoyable time. For this to happen it is necessary that everyone participate in the class. Please, ASK QUESTIONS. This is a way for all of us to learn.

The question is always asked: [What can you do with history?](#) An objective of this class is not only a knowledge of history, but to help the student develop a methodology of examining evidence and learning to report on it in a clear and concise manner. In the future you may have a boss who will ask you for a three-page report on a project you are in the middle of. You will have to examine the files, going through the data and finding the significance. This is what a historian does. So in a way, just about everyone can use historical methodologies on their job.

Course Description

This course is a survey of United States history from colonial times to 1877. A survey of the major political, economic, social, cultural and diplomatic developments in American History, including the Revolution, the Constitution, Jeffersonianism, Jacksonianism, sectionalism, slavery, expansionism, and the Civil War and Reconstruction.

▶ Start here with [Important Points and FAQ](#).

Required Texts

The following books and resources will be used:

America: A Narrative History Volume I

Major Problems in American History Volume I

Uncle Tom's Cabin

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave

[Homework Assignments](#)

Since much of this course entails using the Internet, it may be helpful to have some of the following software on your computer. They are very easy to install; just follow the directions. Make sure you get the free version of each of these (you may have to look closely for it). All of them have plug-ins, applications that automatically link with your web browser, that allow you to more fully experience the web. You should have the latest version of the following:



Method of Evaluation

- 1) Exams- There will be a total of two examinations. Material for examination purposes will come from a variety of sources: your readings, the websites assigned, any videos assigned, and the message board. Although several questions may be offered, only one will be completed for each exam in an essay format. Essays are to be typed and double spaced, and use of the [MLA format](#) is expected. These papers will constitute forty percent of your final grade. Words of wisdom: "Every job is a self-portrait of the person who did it. Autograph your work with excellence." J. Guidobono.

- 2) Term Paper- for this course you will write a paper that will address a question and/or theme from the course. This will be a polished piece of work: double spaced and typed, logical and clear progression, clear introduction and conclusion, as well as other aspects of good writing will be expected. More details will be available on the assignment page. This paper will be worth twenty percent of the final grade.
- 3) Discussion Board Postings- We will be using the WebCT Vista site for this purpose. Students can log into Vista by accessing the www.my.commmnet.edu site using their user ID name and password. Vista has a link in the top, right-hand corner. One of the clear advantages and joys of learning is that it does not occur in a vacuum. Indeed, the socialization of learning can be an exciting experience as ideas and opinions can have a steamrolling effect. That is one of the drawbacks of online learning. This is not, nor is it intended to be, a correspondence course. The challenge is to “come together” as a class. Hopefully the discussion boards will allow that to occur. Each student is expected to be a regular and frequent contributor to the message board (more on this later), making substantive postings. A “substantial posting” is one that brings a unique (comparative, analytical, critical) perspective to some aspect of the reading, websites, or another student’s perspective. The discussion board is also a place for you to ask questions and answer those questions that are asked by others. You may also use this space to bring in websites you have found on your own. This exercise will constitute twenty percent of your final grade.
- 4) Objective tests- Also at the WebCT Vista site there are objective tests for each chapter. They are comprised of twenty true-false/multiple-choice questions for each chapter of the text. Each student must complete the test that corresponds to that module’s readings by the end of the module. These are date sensitive, and once the deadline has passed the test will no longer be available. The tests are also time sensitive: you have twenty minutes to take each test. They are meant to be both a device to keep reading at a given pace, and thus facilitate discussion, as well as an assessment of knowledge. To paraphrase a former student: if you have read the material closely and taken good notes from the readings, they aren’t a problem; if you are sitting there with the book looking for the answers, you could have great difficulty. This will constitute twenty percent of your final grade.

Grade	Equivalent	Quality Points
A	94-100	4.0
A-	90-93	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	0.7
F	0-59	0.0

Three Rivers is working to provide more resources for students to help them be successful at the learning process. One of those resources, newly added, is [iCONN](#), a comprehensive database with trade and general-interest periodicals. Follow the link, select a site, and enter your password, which is the bar code number on your library card (example: D310123456)

Although the journals accessed through iCONN are academic in nature, not everything available online is. But the Internet can be a tremendous resource for learning. The T.A.S.C. has developed an online self-tutorial called [Research and the Internet](#) that helps decide what a valuable site is for academic exercises. Search engines are used to access an ever-growing number of webpages the Internet offers. One that works very well for academic searches is [Google](#).

Course Objectives

The objectives for this course are varied, being specific to U.S. history, and supportive of the Liberal Arts and Sciences objectives. Working through a variety of methodologies, the successful student will develop the skills necessary to:

- Read and interpret historically relevant information.
- Use analytical and critical thinking skills to assess historical data.

- Articulate an understanding of the major themes and issues of our history.
- Use the English language, both in written and verbal forms, to communicate thoughts and ideas.
- Access current technology to obtain historical information.

College Withdrawal Policy

A student who finds it necessary to discontinue a course MUST complete a withdrawal form obtained from the Registrars Office. Students may withdraw from class anytime during the first thirteen weeks of the semester without being in good standing or obtaining prior permission of the instructor. Students who fail to properly withdraw and discontinue coming to class will be assigned an "F" grade. Eligibility for refund of tuition is based upon date of withdrawal when received by the registrar. Verbal withdrawals will not be accepted.

Learning Disabilities Statement

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the Disabilities Counseling Services at 383-5240. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, you should contact the counselor as soon as possible. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from the Disabilities Counselor. Your cooperation is appreciated.

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