

History 1110: U.S. History (Before 1877)
Section 6751 Tues. and Thurs. 11:30-12:45
Namm 618

Dr. Geoff Zylstra
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Course description

This course will examine society and culture as they have developed in the United States up to 1877. This means that we will examine past changes and historical evidence in terms of the evolution of social norms, behaviors, and meanings. We will focus on the meaning and practices of everyday life and the way these practices related to the development of overarching power structures in society. Topics include: Native American society, European colonization, the development of slavery, the American Revolution, white settlement of the West, industrialization, and the Civil War and Reconstruction.

The readings, discussions, and writing assignments in this course will encourage us to recognize the often hidden expressions of class, race, and gender that occur in our social and cultural environments.

Course Objectives

- Understand major developments in the United States up to 1877, and recognize how those developments related to the social and cultural values of everyday people.
- Articulate how race, class, and gender relations have changed over time and how these relations correlate with their historical context.
- Distinguish between and analyze both primary and secondary sources.
- Use analytical and critical thinking skills to communicate in both written and verbal forms.

Texts

U.S. A Narrative History, Vol.1: to 1877 (New York: McGraw Hill, 2009).

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave* (Delaware: Prestwick, 1845).

Assignments and Grading

- Two 1-2 page papers – 10% each, 20% total. These papers are described in the Course Schedule.
- One 5 page research paper based on archival and library research. I will provide you with a detailed description and a list of possible topics. – 25%
- One mid-term exam – 20%
- One final exam – 25%
- Class participation and quizzes – 10%

I will supply you with the written assignments ahead of their due dates and will not grant extensions, period. If you have a conflict, you must turn in the assignment early. I do not accept electronic copies of your written assignments. You must turn in a hard copy.

If you have a conflict on the day of the midterm or final exam, you must contact me at least 10 days ahead and we will schedule an alternative time to take the exam. You will take the exam before the date when the rest of your classmates take the exam.

Attendance

Attendance in class is mandatory and I will take attendance every class period. However, the State of New York requires that I grant each student three absences for medical and personal issues (10% of class time). Upon the fourth absence, your final grade for the course will drop 10 points. If you are absent more than 5 times you will receive a withdrawal. Additionally, be in class on time. If you are late three times, I will count that as one absence. Excused absences must be discussed in advance. In the event of a major medical or family emergency, you must supply me with written documentation.

Student conduct

- You must respect your classmates and their learning experience.
- Cell Phones, pagers, ipods and other personal electronic devices will not be tolerated in class unless you are using them for class purposes. I will ask you to leave class if you use electronic devices and then give you an absence.
- Do not plagiarize. Plagiarism (from Latin *plagiare* "to kidnap") occurs when one person claims words or ideas created by another person

You are plagiarizing if you:

1. Copy words from someone else without citing them.
2. Copy ideas from someone else without citing them.
3. Change words, but copy sentence, paragraph, or plot structure from someone else without citing them.
4. Forget to put a quote in quotation marks.

You can avoid plagiarism by citing your sources. The following examples show two acceptable citing methods.

Parenthetical Citation

“Just as history is never complete, neither is a historical textbook. We have learned much from the responses of readers and instructors to the first six editions of *America: A Narrative History*. Perhaps the most important and reassuring lesson is that our original intention had proved valid: to provide a compelling narrative history of the American Experience, a narrative animated by human characters, informed by analysis and social texture, and guided by the unfolding of events” (Tindall and Shi, xix).

Footnote

(it’s very easy, the computer will do all the formatting for you. Use the insert tab in older versions of Word. In the most current version use the references tab)

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¹ George Brown Tindall and David E. Shi, *America a Narrative History* (New York: Norton, 2007), xix.

Course schedule

Tuesday August 30: Introduction. What's in a Name?

Part I: Colonization and Cultural Exchange

Thursday September 1: First Nations, Peopling the Americas

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 1

Tuesday September 6: The Atlantic Economy, Origins of European Colonization

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 2

Thursday September 8: European Contact and the Biological Exchange

Tuesday September 13: New England Colonial Society

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 4

Research Project topic sheet due

Thursday September 15: Chesapeake School of History and Southern Colonization

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 3

Tuesday September 20: Visit BHS

Thursday September 22: Mercantilism, and the Development of Plantation Slavery

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 5

Tuesday September 27: African American Culture in Slavery

First Essay Due: Interpret a document from BHS

Thursday September 29: No Class

Tuesday October 4: No Class

Part II: Revolution and the Creation of a New Country

Thursday October 6: Seven Years War and the beginning of Revolution

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 6

Tuesday October 11: Resistance to British Policies

Thursday October 13: Midterm Exam

Tuesday October 18: The Revolutionary War

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 7

Thursday October 20: Visit BHS

Tuesday October 25: The Revolution and Social Change?

2nd Short paper Due: Imagine that you are a Colonist living in Boston. Write a formal style letter of complaint to the English government that expresses your feelings about the situation in the Colonies. (You could also act the part of a Tory and write a letter showing your support of the English government)

Thursday October 27: Forging New Governments

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 8

Tuesday November 1: Federalism and Republicanism

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 9

Thursday November 3: The Louisiana Purchase and White Western Development

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 14

Tuesday November 8: Native American Resistance

Part III: Forming an Industrial Society

Thursday November 10: Emergence of Capitalism and the Market Economy

Tuesday November 15: Factories and Work

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 10

Thursday November 17: Leisure and Class

Tuesday November 22: Transportation, Urbanization, and Inequality

Thursday November 24: No Class, Thanksgiving

Part IV: A Social and Economic Study of the Civil War

Tuesday November 29: King Cotton, the Fiber that Led to the Civil War

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 13

Thursday December 1: Frederick Douglass

Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, Pages 9-91

Tuesday December 6: Southern Society and Slave Culture

Thursday December 8: Group work on the web site

Research Paper Due

Tuesday December 13: Secession and Civil War

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 16

Wednesday December 14: Web site due

Thursday December 15: Reconstruction

U.S. A Narrative History Chapter 17

Tuesday December 20: Final Exam