

HIST 2111
American History to 1865
Summer 2009
Room 101 LeConte Hall

Instructor: George W. Justice
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COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES

This course is a survey of American history that covers the period from colonization through the American Civil War. This class will use a textbook as a general resource, but emphasis is placed on lectures and additional readings. In the end, the hope is that students will learn to think critically about the past by evaluating sources of information and historical context. Writing in this course will afford the student an opportunity to grapple with issues, sort out conclusions, and effectively communicate them to others in a structured argument.

CLASSROOM CULTURE AND RULES

In this era of multi-tasking and instant communication, all attention during the class period must be focused solely on the subject at hand. Notes may be taken using laptops or other methods as long as email, instant message, or any internet connections are turned off during the period.

Although discussions about the subjects covered are encouraged, private conversations or distractions are not permitted. There will be no talking, reading newspapers, or otherwise distracting activities allowed once class has begun. Blatant disregard of this policy could involve penalties affecting grades and even expulsion from the class. Please demonstrate common courtesies to others in the class.

The class is a learning environment in which respect for all must be maintained. Consequently, be prepared to begin each class on time and do not leave until you are dismissed unless it is demonstrably urgent. Otherwise, exceptions require prior approval.

Attendance will be monitored each day. Any student with more than 6 absences will drop a final letter grade with each additional. After 9 absences students will be dropped from the roll with a WF. There will be no make-up exams except in rare incidents in which excuses of a critical nature can be validated either by University administration or myself. **There are no distinctions made between excused or unexcused absences.** Any student having perfect attendance will automatically receive 5 bonus points on the final exam. It is the student's responsibility to keep a record of attendance. If a student is late to class, it is that student's responsibility to ensure his/her attendance is recorded before leaving class.

INCIDENTALS

Office hours are printed at the top of the syllabus. If you prefer to make a special appointment you may either email me or see me immediately following class to set up a time of mutual convenience. Please be informed of the University's policies on plagiarism and cheating—for more information on these and other related policies see the University website: http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/academic_honesty/academic_honesty.htm

In addition, I have designed this syllabus as a general guideline to this course—a roadmap of sorts, if you will. From time to time, however, it may become necessary to adjust and/or make substantive changes to the syllabus either due to unforeseen circumstances or in the instructional/learning interests of the class.

REQUIRED READINGS

Wilkins, Roger, *Jefferson's Pillow: The Founding Fathers and the Dilemma of Black Patriotism* (Beacon Press, 2001)

McPherson, James M. *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (Oxford, 1997).

Tindall, George Brown and David E. Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, Vol. I

EVALUATIONS

This class will require a midterm and a final exam. In addition, quizzes on certain assigned readings may be given without notice.

A written assignment will also be required. This assignment (4-6 pages) will be a book review of Wilkins's *Jefferson's Pillow*. Emphasis will be placed on analysis, making convincing arguments, and on formal writing skills. If you need help and/or advise on the mechanics or styles of formal writing, I urge you to consult the University Writing Center in Park Hall (the English Department), Room # 66. You may consult their website (<http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter>) Further instructions for this paper will be forthcoming. All papers require formal rules of writing in Turabian format. (See Kate L. Tarabian manual cited above.) Failure to format properly will automatically result in a minimum initial deduction of 5 points off the grade of the paper submitted.

Grades will be assessed by the following criterion:

Midterm Exam=40%

Final Exam=40%

Book Review=20%

Any late assignments will drop by one letter grade per day. Assignments 48 hours overdue will not be graded and will automatically receive an F. Make-up exams or

quizzes must have at least a 24 hour prior approval and will be substantively different from regular exams and quizzes. There is no plus/minus grading for the final grades in this class. Furthermore, final grades will not be rounded up from decimal points. For example, a student having 70 to 70.9 will be given a C; 80-80.9 will be given a B. Grades are not open to negotiation.

CLASS AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

June 5: Introduction to American History

Week 1 (June 8-12): Discovery and Settlement

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapters 1 and 2

Week 2 (June 15-19): The Creation of Colonial Culture and Colonial Identity

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapters 3 and 4

Week 3 (June 22-26): The American Revolution and a New Nation

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapters 6 and 7

(Book Review due June 24)

Week 4 (June 29-July 2): The Early Republic

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapters 8 and 9

(Midterm Exam on July 2)

Week 5 (July 6-10): Jacksonian America

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapters 10 and 11

Week 6 (July 13-17): Antebellum America

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapters 13, 14, and 15

Week 7 (July 20-24): Secession and the American Civil War

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapters 16 and 17; *McPherson's For Cause and Comrades*

Week 8 (July 27-29): Reconstruction

Readings: Tindall and Shi, Chapter 18

Final Exam TBA