

History 4070: Jeffersonian and Jacksonian America

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Class hrs: MWF 12:20pm - 1:10pm

Course description and objectives

This course is designed to introduce students to the history of the United States from the “age” of Thomas Jefferson to that of Andrew Jackson. This course is not concerned with the memorization of dates, the names of (in)famous individuals or even *what* to think about America’s past. Rather it seeks to help you learn *how* to think about the past. We will try to understand what history means to citizens of the twenty-first century: how do we understand it, why does it matter, and can our understanding of our own past change the present and possibly our future?

The course will explore several themes within Jeffersonian-Jacksonian America but will center on the overarching idea of democratic individualism. Who is the American individual and how has this idea evolved? This story is one linked to that of American freedom. People have not always viewed freedom as a principal value for a society or a government to possess, but now we think of it as essential. This centrality in the American story has its origins in period examined in this course. What is the story of freedom? How have various peoples been involved in the struggle for freedom? How have they altered its meanings over time? In following the paths of these struggles, we will examine how Americans chose to answer these questions thereby shaping what we know as “Jeffersonian” and “Jacksonian” America. Additionally, we will look at the two men who give these eras their names. Also, we will investigate other, lesser-known individuals and American society as a whole to observe the mixed legacy that we must understand if we are to make sense of individualism and freedom in our own lives.

Several alternate themes will emerge concerning America’s promise of freedom: the connection between national politics and everyday life; the intriguing and often perplexing relationship between slavery and freedom; freedom’s role in U.S. foreign relations as well as the conquest and settlement of “frontier” regions on the North American continent. It is important for you to know that the story of U.S. history is not always an attractive one; additionally, it is rarely, if ever, a simple narrative. And yet, we live in the world that this story created. We should know how this story played out during America’s opening decades.

Structure

The course is structured around two lectures (Monday and Wednesday) and one deliberation session (Friday). This course is centrally concerned with your intellectual journey. With this in mind, the course structure with its reading assignments, book reviews, and participation in deliberation sessions seeks to help you cultivate two valuable skill sets: one, how to read and analyze both primary and secondary material and two, how to construct a thesis, back it up with evidence, and defend it with concise, logical arguments.

Required Texts (Available at the University bookstore or online retailers like [amazon](#), [barnesandnoble](#), or [borders](#))

Sean Wilentz and Jonathan H. Earle, *Major Problems in the Early Republic, 1787-1848* (Houghton Mifflin, 2nd Edition, 2008) ISBN 0618522581.

Woody Holton, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (2007) ISBN 0809016435.

Seth Rockman, *Scraping By: Wage Labor, Slavery and Survival in Early Baltimore* (2009) ISBN 0801890071.

Steven Deyle, *Carry Me Back: The Domestic Slave Trade in American Life* (2005) ISBN 0195310195.

Stephen Aron, *How the West Was Lost: The Transformation of Kentucky From Daniel Boone to Henry Clay* (1996) ISBN 0801861985.

Lynn Hudson Parsons, *The Birth of Modern Politics: Andrew Jackson, John Quincy Adams, and the Election of 1828* (2009) ISBN 0195312872.

Nancy Cott, *The Bonds of Womanhood: "Women's Sphere" in New England, 1780-1835* (2nd Edition, 1997) ISBN 0300072988.

Writing Assignments

Book Reviews: Six monographs make up the substance of "outside" reading for this course. It is imperative that you read these texts. They were carefully selected and represent both historical standards of writing as well as some of the newest of scholarship on the early U.S. republic.

2-3 page book reviews are **required** for the first 2 books on our list. Reviews should be submitted at the start of deliberation sessions during the weeks indicated on the course schedule (see below). With these in hand, a final comparative piece, a 3-4 page review, is **required**. It can explore any combination of 2 of the remaining 4 books. Reviews should not exceed the page limits. They should be double-spaced, possess standard 1 inch margins, and be typed in Times New Roman font. More detailed guidelines will be discussed prior to submissions. For an excellent example of what book reviews should look like in terms of analysis: http://www.historycooperative.org.proxy-remote.galib.uga.edu/journals/wm/66.2/br_10.html

Course Blog: www.deliberatingtheER.blogspot.com is designed to facilitate deliberative conversation around the materials that we as a community of learners are reading each week. You are asked to choose a blogger id and participate on a weekly basis within the forum of our class blog (you are not asked to create your own blog). The blog presents a weekly prompt which consistently asks you to engage the arguments and interpretations from weekly readings in *Major Problems in the Early Republic*.

Postings on the blog will allow clarity for anyone who might have misread the materials as well as present the opportunity to sharpen critical thinking and evaluative skills that will be necessary when authoring book reviews. General questions to consider when blogging include:

What is the historian's point? What evidence does s/he use to construct the argument(s)? Does her/his argument(s) convince me? Why or why not? What is the relationship(s) between primary sources and the arguments constructed by historians? Entries should range from 500-1000 words.

Suggested Writing Resources for BlogHistory Posts and Book Reviews:

Writing is one of the most important things professional historians do. Thus, this class is designed to give you a taste of what writing historically is all about. On writing generally, I encourage all students to read William Strunk and E.B. White's *The Elements of Style*. This book is a short, inexpensive but invaluable aid to undergraduate writers. It is even available online in a full text version (www.bartleby.com/141/). Another great reference for writing is Diana Hacker's *Rules for Writers* (latest edition). Reading both of these books early in your academic careers at UGA will make your transition to college level writing much easier. On writing and citation rules for undergraduate history papers, see Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (third edition).

Since students are expected to cite all work that is not their own, every one of you should become acquainted with how to do this appropriately. For citation help, see (<http://library.uww.edu/GUIDES/turacite.htm>) and the above books. The use of Turabian/Chicago style method is the accepted manner in this course. If your chosen major uses MLA or APA, they can suffice. If you have any questions about appropriate citation or other writing matters, please see me during my office hours.

Grading Policy and Major Assignments:

25% MIDTERM EXAM

25% FINAL EXAM

30% 3 Book Reviews (Review I: 5%; Review II: 10%; Review III: 15%)

10% Weekly Blog Posts

10% Participation

Attendance Policy

In order to do well on the exams, you need to attend lectures and take thorough notes. I will take attendance with a sign-in sheet at the beginning of each meeting. Students should arrive promptly and not interrupt lecture by arriving late. For this course, there are no "excused absences." If you are sick, do **not** come to class. Letting me know before missing a class will be acknowledged as courteous, but not as an "excuse." As participation in the course is valued at 10% of the final grade, attendance is imperative. Excessive absence (more than six days) will result in dismissal from this class.

REMEMBER: You have a blog post due every Friday. These posts as well as deliberation session participation comprise 20% of your overall course grade. You can, of course, post responses earlier than on Fridays; however, if you choose not to post, you *will* see your inactivity reflected in your final grade. Posts should be made prior to the 12:20pm start of our sessions not during or after the session has begun. Blogspot imbeds time stamps on posts.

ATTENTION: Barring extreme and unusual circumstances, there are no extensions for written work, including exams, in this class. You should make note of assignment due dates included on the schedule as well as exam dates to ensure that you are present.

Classroom Conduct

Your considerate behavior in lecture and deliberation sessions is equally vital to your overall grade. Reading a newspaper in class (online versions included), talking on your cell phone or letting it ring, checking Facebook, tweeting, and/or text messaging are all distracting to your fellow classmates and disrespectful to the instructor. If you choose to do these things, (and yes, I can see YOU) your final grade will suffer.

Academic Integrity, Non-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment:

Academic honesty is expected of each student enrolled in this course. I have zero (none, zilch, nada) tolerance for cheating or plagiarism. If you commit either of these offenses, you will, *at the very least*, receive a "0" on the assignment. Furthermore, the assignment will be given additional weight when calculating your final grade which will make failing the course almost guaranteed.

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Additionally, adherence to the University's policy on non-discrimination and anti-harassment is required. For policy awareness, see the following web pdf: www.uga.edu/eoo/pdfs/NDAH.pdf

Disability Services

If you have a disability and require classroom accommodations, please see me after class or make an appointment during office hours. If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center at www.drc.uga.edu/contact_request.php or contact their office at (706)542-8719.

Contacting Me

It is my goal for each student to have an intellectually engaging semester "doing history." If you feel as though you are having problems with the writing assignments or want to discuss strategies for studying, I am almost always available. The best way to reach me is through email: TCH315@uga.edu. Please do not expect an immediate response. You should also feel free to schedule an appointment if you have any questions about the course or your progress.

Course Schedule

Week One

January 8: Course Introduction and “Can you spell hi-stohr-ee-og-ruh-fee?”

Week Two

January 11-13: “Discovering Significance of the Early Republic”

January 15: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 1 in *Major Problems in the Early Republic, 1787-1848* (MPER) and Chapters 1-10 of Woody Holton’s *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution* (2007)

Week Three

January 18: **No Class – MLK Day**

January 20-22: “The Constitution and Beginnings of the New National Government”

Readings: Chapter 2 (MPER) and Chapters 11-Epilogue of Holton’s *Unruly Americans*

Week Four

January 25-27: “The Federalist Era and the Age of Political Crises”

January 29: Deliberations Session

Reading: Chapter 3 (MPER) and **Submit Book Review I**

Week Five

February 1-3: “Jefferson’s Revolution and Republicanism”

February 5: Deliberations Session

Reading: Chapter 4 (MPER) and Chapters 1-4 of Seth Rockman’s *Scraping By* (2009)

Week Six

February 8-10: “The War of 1812”

February 12: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 5 (MPER) and Chapters 5-Conclusion of Rockman’s *Scraping By*

Week Seven

February 15-17: “Living the New Republic”

February 19: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 6 (MPER) and **Submit Book Review II**

Week Eight

February 22-24: "The Market Revolution & Urban Capitalism"

February 26: Midterm Exam

Readings: Chapter 7 (MPER) and Chapters 1-5 of Steven Deyle's *Carry Me Back* (2005)

Week Nine

March 1-2: "The Old South: A Slaveholder's Paradise?"

March 5: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 8 (MPER) and Chapters 6-Epilogue of Deyle's *Carry Me Back*

Spring Break (March 8-12): No Class Read Stephen Aron's *How the West Was Lost* (1996)

Week Ten

March 15-17: "Re-Moving West"

March 19: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 9 (MPER)

Week Eleven

March 22-24: "Slavery and the so-called 'Good Feelings'"

March 26: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 10 (MPER) and Chapters 1-4 of Lynn Hudson Parsons's *The Birth of Modern Politics* (2009)

Week Twelve

March 29-31: "Jacksonian Politics"

April 2: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 11 (MPER) and Chapters 5-Epilogue of Parsons's *The Birth of Modern Politics*

Week Thirteen

April 5-7: "Reforming the Early Republic"

April 9: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 12 (MPER) and Preface through Chapter 3 of Nancy Cott's *The Bonds of Womanhood* (1997)

Week Fourteen

April 12-14: "Opposing a Reformed Republic"

April 16: Deliberations Session

Readings: Chapter 13 (MPER) and Chapters 4-Conclusion of Cott's *The Bonds of Womanhood*

Week Fifteen

April 19-21 "Forging an American Culture"

April 23: Deliberations Session

Reading: Chapter 14 (MPER) and **Submit Book Review III: Comparative Piece**

Week Sixteen

April 26-28: "War with Mexico and a Coming War within"

April 29*: Deliberations Session

Reading: Chapter 15 (MPER)

May 3: (12:00pm-3:00pm) Final Exam

****The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary. Upon notification, amendments will take effect immediately.****