

Professor Haynes
History Department
4119 Humanities
april.haynes@wisc.edu

Office hours: M 11-12; W 1-3

History 344 **The Era of the American Revolution**

MWF 9:55-10:45
Humanities 1111

This course considers in close detail the causes and consequences of the American Revolution. The creation of a republic in North America required devising an innovative government structure and a new conception of citizenship. But social location and status inevitably shaped experiences of the war. While some leaders hoped that a transfer of power could take place without destabilizing the social order, others envisioned a complete transformation. Many, many more Americans were never consulted about how to create an independent republic. Nevertheless, disenfranchised, enslaved, and colonized people also affected the fighting of the Revolution and asserted their own visions of independence and liberty. Who benefited from the revolution, and who did not? Why did so many people oppose the constitution? How did theories of federalism and republicanism work when applied in the new nation's political culture? To what extent can the American Revolution be said to have sparked an age of democratic revolutions throughout the Atlantic world?

Required Reading

1. Woody Holton, *Forced Founders: Indians, Debtors, Slaves, and the Making of the American Revolution in Virginia* (University of North Carolina, 2011).
2. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776) – access on Learn@ UW page.
3. Pauline Maier, *Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788* (Simon & Schuster, 2010).
4. Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano: or, Gustavus Cassa, the African*, ed. Vincent Carretta (Penguin Classics, 2003).
5. Jill Lepore, *Book of Ages: The Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin* (Knopf, 2013).

Additional readings will be posted to Learn @ UW

Structure

The class is divided into **five segments**: colonial crisis & mobilization, the war for independence, debates over the how the postrevolutionary society should be organized, the American

Revolution considered within the context of a broader “age of revolutions,” and, finally, assessments of the revolution’s outcomes.

Instead of one midterm and one final exam, five short tests will be given at the end of each segment (see the schedule below for precise dates). The tests will be relatively short, asking for no more than two pages of your handwritten response. Each test will take one of the following three forms: a series of short answer/identification paragraphs; an essay prompt; or a copy of one of the assigned primary sources for you to interpret. All of these formats will test your command of the information presented in lectures and readings throughout the segment. In assigning grades, we will be assessing your ability to think carefully about historical information, rather than simply memorize it. Therefore, **you may use your own paper notes during the tests**. You must be physically present on test-day: we will not give make-up tests. Please speak to me or Jesse Gant (your TA) right away if you need specific test accommodations to make this class accessible to you. We will need documentation showing that you are working with campus accessibility services in order to make the appropriate arrangements.

The capstone project for this class will be a term paper, which accounts for 30%. The goal of the term paper is to learn how to use your campus libraries and archives in order to independently pursue a theme or topic within the era of the American Revolution that especially interests you. For example, if you are mainly interested in military history, you might search for accounts of a particular battle and interpret them to better understand the causes, consequences, perceptions, and overall significance of that battle. The term paper should have **a strong thesis statement** that a reasonable person could dispute, and it should use **evidence** from within the primary sources to sway readers toward your interpretation of events. It should also have a **conclusion that explains how your chosen subject fits within a broad context** by reflecting on its relationship to information that you have learned in the class to date. This exercise will build your research, writing, and critical thinking skills—all of which are in high demand by employers.

Term paper parameters: The Wisconsin Historical Society and UW libraries offer abundant primary and secondary sources about various aspects of the American Revolution. This assignment requires you to use these campus resources—as opposed to, say, Google—to locate at least one digital primary source, at least one archival or printed primary source, and at least one appropriate secondary source about your chosen subject. The secondary source may be a chapter in a book published by a university press, or it may be an article published in a peer-reviewed history journal. You may use digital secondary sources, as long as they are created by professional historians and presented in a peer-reviewed forum. Please use double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12-point font with standard margins and Chicago-style footnotes. For information about the latter, see <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html> and bring additional questions to section or lecture. **The length should be 10-12 pages**. The term paper will be due as a digital Word file to Jesse Gant on the last day of finals week. In order to prepare you to write the strongest possible term paper, we will require you to turn in a **topic proposal** in week 10 and a **rough draft** in week 14 (see schedule below). Both of these stages are **required**; if they have not been completed, the final term paper will not be graded. The rough draft alone is worth 10%

of the grade; the final paper alone accounts for the other 20%. If you are struggling to decide on a potential topic by week 10, please see me in office hours for guidance.

Participation: Your participation grade counts for 20% of the entire grade. Excellent participation requires being physically present, prepared, focused and able to use relevant examples from the assigned readings in discussion. The schedule below indicates the readings you should complete during each week in order to get the most out of the lectures. However, since discussion sections for this class will meet on Tuesdays, we do not expect you to have completed the entire week's readings prior to section. Prioritize the primary sources over other readings, unless otherwise instructed. Our baseline expectation is that you will be able to work with all of these documents during the discussion section, as well as at least some of the secondary readings assigned for the week. If you added this course after week 1, please see your TA in office hours by the end of week four for a chance to verbally engage with the readings that were discussed before you arrived.

Conduct: Half of your discussion grade (10% of the course grade) is based on your compliance with a few simple rules of conduct. The first and most important is to focus on the lecture or discussion at hand. Phones should be completely silent, invisible, and out of reach. This is a paper-only classroom: **please do not use laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices** unless you have a documented need for them in order to access the class. Several recent studies show that most students learn more by taking paper notes rather than using a laptop. In addition, screens can be distracting to other students and to your professor during a lecture. We also expect you to come to class on time and refrain from leaving the room abruptly unless you have notified one of us in advance. And finally, we expect civil and informed discussions: listen to and respond to others' points of view, don't try to bluff when you haven't read by raising unrelated issues in section, etc. By doing these three things, you can earn perhaps the easiest A of any college assignment. Each departure from these conduct guidelines, however, will result in the loss of participation points.

Assignments and Grading

- 50% Tests (@ 10% each)
- 20% Participation (10% conduct; 10% discussion)
- 30% Term paper (10% rough draft; 20% final draft)

Grading standards

A+: Work of unusual distinction. Therefore, this grade is rarely awarded.

A: Work that distinguishes itself by the excellence of its grasp of the material and the precision and insight of its argument, in addition to being well executed and reasonably free of errors.

B: Work that satisfies main criteria of the assignment, and demonstrates command of the material, but does not achieve the level of excellence that characterizes work of A quality.

C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect, demonstrating a basic misunderstanding of the material and/or disregard for the assigned question. (Disregard includes cheating and plagiarism.)

Late work: Please be punctual in meeting deadlines. Any late assignment (defined as turned in thirty minutes or longer after the beginning of class on the due-date) will automatically lose a letter grade. It will continue to lose 1/3 of a letter grade every 24 hours thereafter.

Grading Disputes: TAs are trained to read students' work carefully. In addition, the professor and TA consult weekly about expectations, standards, and learning objectives. We will take care to inform you of our expectations in advance of the due-date. If you disagree about a grade, bring a copy of the assignment with you to your TA's office hours for a conversation before coming to see me. In the event that the dispute remains unresolved, I will closely review your work and the TA's assessment. Please be certain that your work will withstand such scrutiny before contesting a grade.

Schedule

Week 1. Overview

- W, 1/20 Course Introduction
- F, 1/22 North America before 1763
 - Read: Colin Calloway, *The Scratch of a Pen*, 19-46.

Segment I: Colonial crisis and mobilization

Week 2. French and Indian War

- M, 1/25 "The War for Empire"
- W, 1/27 "The First War for Independence"
- F, 1/29 Imperial reckoning
 - Read: Gregory Evans Dowd, *War under Heaven*, pp. 54-89; Albany Plan of Colonial Union; Declarations of the Stamp Act Congress, 1765.

Week 3. Mobilization

- M, 2/1 The view from above
- W, 2/3 The view from below
- F, 2/5 The view from outside

- Read: Holton, pp. xiii-xxi, 3-73; Governor Francis Bernard to Lord Halifax, August 15, 1765

Week 4. Interests, Ideas and Passions

- M, 2/8 Sons and Daughters of Liberty
- W, 2/10 Committees and Congresses
- F, 2/12 Test 1
 - Read: Holton, pp. 75-132; Diary of John Adams, Dec. 17, 1773; Hannah Griffiths, “The Female Patriots.”

Segment II: War for Independence

Week 5. Bodies at War

- M, 2/15 The early insurgency
- W, 2.17 Raising a continental army
- F, 2/19 Loyalists and pacifists
 - Read: T.H. Breen, *American Insurgents, American Patriots*, 207-240; Kathleen Brown, *Foul Bodies*, pp. 159-189; and “Fighting for Independence” documents from *Major Problems in the Era of the American Revolution*, ed. Richard D. Brown, pp. 191-202.

Week 6. Getting to Independence

- M, 2/22 Making the Declaration I
- W, 2/24 Making the Declaration II
- F, 2/26 Occupied cities
 - Read: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (all); Adams correspondence, 1776

Week 7. “Death or Liberty”

- M, 2/29 Black movements for freedom
- W, 3/2 The war in Indian country
- F, 3/4 The home front
 - Read: Holton, pp. 133-220; Brant correspondence; Ward speeches.

Week 8. War’s End

- M, 3/7 Yorktown, the Bahamas, and Paris
- W, 3/9 Segment II review
- F, 3/11 Test 2
 - Read: Andrew Jackson O’Shaughnessy, “The Other Road to Yorktown,” 213-238; *Major Problems*, 202-205.

Segment III. Postrevolutionary settlements

Week 9. Confederation

- M, 3/14 The Articles of Confederation
- W, 3/16 Instructional session: Wisconsin Historical Society
- F, 3/18 **No class: term paper research**
 - Read: Maier, pp. ix-xvi, 1-124; Articles of Confederation, 1781

Spring break

Week 10. Cultural Revolutions

- M 3/28 Republicanism and social life
 - Due in section: your term paper proposal
- W 3/30 Pageantry, parlor politics, and print culture
- F 4/1 Rebels & ratifiers
 - Read: Maier, pp. 125-319; Thomas Jefferson's Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty

Week 11. Ratification

- M 4/4 The Northwest Ordinance
- W 4/6 Segment III review
- F 4/8 Test 3
 - Read: Maier, pp. 320-468; 473-485; The Northwest Ordinance; Nathan Dane to Rufus King, July 16, 1787.

Segment IV. An "Age of Revolutions"

Week 12. A Shot Heard 'Round the World?

- M 4/11 The impact of the American Revolution beyond US borders
- W 4/13 The impact of Atlantic politics on the early American republic
- F 4/15 Black politics and transatlantic abolitionism
 - Read: Equiano, pp. ix-xxxviii, 31-130

Week 13. Republic or empire?

- M 4/18 US expansion
- W 4/20 Segment IV Review
- F 4/22 Test 4
 - Read: Equiano, pp. 5-30; 131-236

Segment V. Assessing the Outcomes

Week 14. How radical was the American Revolution?

- M 4/25 Independence gained and lost
 - Due in section: your term paper rough draft
- W 4/27 Personal politics
- F 4/29 Children of the Revolution
 - Read: Lepore, pp. xi-xiv, 3-172

Week 15. Course conclusion

- M 5/2 Course conclusion
- W 5/4 Segment V review
- F 5/6 Test 5
 - Read: Lepore, pp. 175-267

Term paper final draft is due by 10:00 a.m. on May 13

Other policies and resources

Academic integrity: All written assignments in this course are intended to be completed individually; please do not collaborate during the writing process. This includes the open-note tests: you are allowed to use only *your own* notes. Borrowing another student's notes is considered academic dishonesty. In addition, it is considered a breach of academic integrity in this course to use sources beyond the scope of this class and its Learn@UW page. Do not base your interpretation of any primary source or your analysis of any secondary source on a published synopsis, webpage, book review, or encyclopedia.

By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in UW-Madison's community of scholars in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest academic integrity standards. Academic misconduct compromises the integrity of the university. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of academic misconduct, which can result in disciplinary action. This includes but is not limited to failure on the assignment/course, disciplinary probation, or suspension. Substantial or repeated cases of misconduct will be forwarded to the Dean of Students Office for additional review. For more information, refer to <http://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/>.

Accessibility: The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform me of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will work either directly with you in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

History lab: New this year, the History Lab is a resource center in Humanities 4255, where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter your stage in the writing process, the History Lab staff is here, along with your professors and teaching assistants, to help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. Sign up for a one-on-one consultation online: <http://go.wisc.edu/hlab>. This is an excellent resource for all students, and a place where those who are new to the kinds of critical thought used in this class can ask for additional help.

Sexual and gender violence: The UW is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you or someone you know has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UW has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more. Please be aware that all UW faculty members are required reporters. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to the office of the Dean of Students. You will still have options about how your case will be handled. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need. If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call a 608-251-7273, a 24-hour hotline. To learn more about resources at the UW, visit <http://evoc.wisc.edu/>.