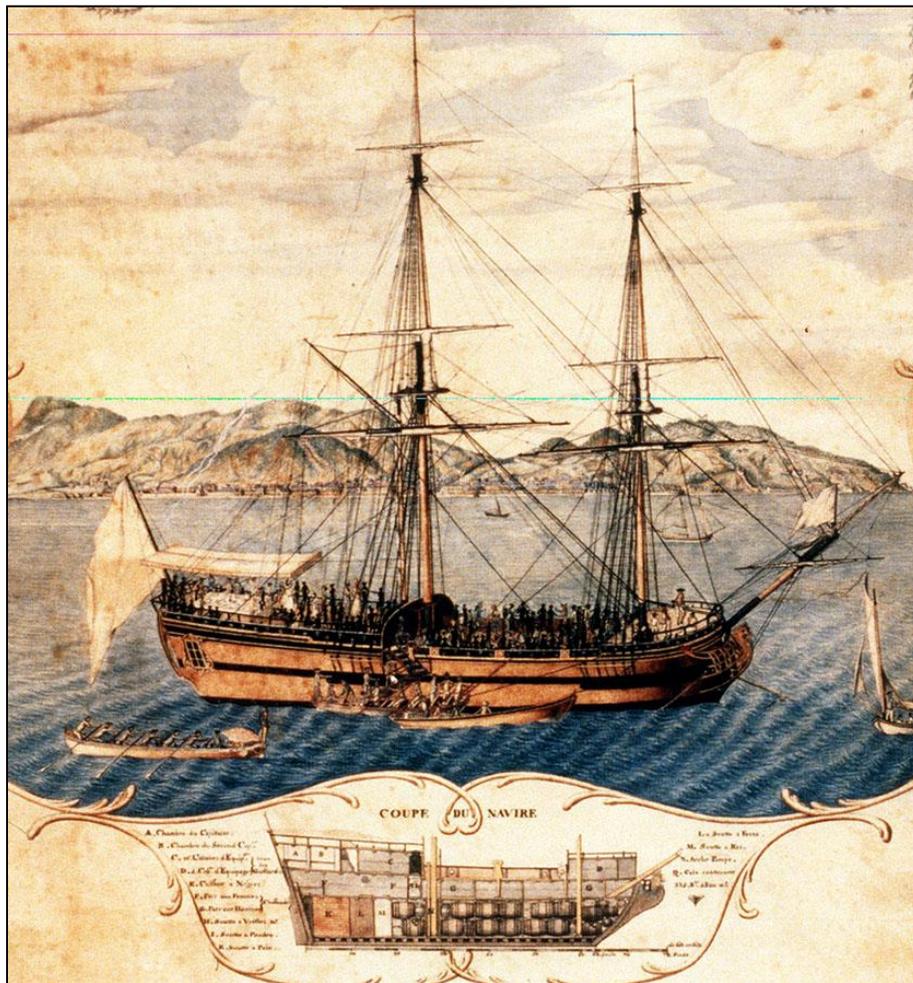


# HISTORY 101: AMERICAN HISTORY TO THE CIVIL WAR ERA DRAFT SYLLABUS

Professor Gloria Whiting | [gwhiting@wisc.edu](mailto:gwhiting@wisc.edu) | 5108 Mosse Humanities Building  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-2:00 PM or by appointment

Teaching Assistants: Leah Webb-Halpern and Megan Falater



This 1773 watercolor of French slave ship La Marie-Séraphique in Cap Français, Saint Domingue (Haiti), shows an iron barrier separating slaves for purchase on the front of the ship from Europeans picnicking on the back. This course will help you understand how people who have not usually been considered integral to American history—such as Afro-Haitian slaves—fundamentally shaped the mainland American colonies and the early United States. Source: Musée du Château des Ducs de Bretagne, Nantes, France. Published in Madeline Burnside ed., *Spirits of the Passage* (New York, 1977), 124.

## Course Description

This course will ask surprising questions. How did Haitian slaves, Aztec gold, and the humble potato influence the history of the region that would become the United States? Because they did—profoundly.

This may not be the sort of history you learned in high school. Traditionally, historians have understood the history of early America or colonial America as the history of the thirteen colonies that joined to create the United States in the American Revolution. But such an approach severs these colonies from their context and creates an affinity between them that did not exist prior to the Revolutionary era.

Our course will take a much broader view. We will situate these thirteen colonies in the framework of the Atlantic world: the world created by Africans, Europeans, and American Natives from the sixteenth century—when European expansion into the Atlantic basin began in earnest—through the American Revolution, when the thirteen colonies united in a revolt against Britain. This revolt would usher in an era of state-building in the Atlantic and signal the beginning of the end of Europe’s imperial power in the Americas. Together we will explore how people, pathogens, plants, animals, labor systems, ideas, technologies, and institutions across a vast geographic expanse shaped the history of the thirteen colonies that created the United States of America, and then influenced the nation’s early development.

### **Objectives:**

I have four main objectives for this course. The first is content-based, and the latter three more process-based:

1. I want you to understand how the early American colonies developed in the context of a rich and interconnected world centered on the Atlantic Ocean; how those colonies created the United States; and how tensions in the nation’s early history ultimately led to the Civil War.
2. History 101 is an introduction to a time and a place—early America—but it is also an introduction to a particular field of inquiry: History. I want you to understand how historians *make* history. How do we know what we know about the past? Why do our understandings of the past change over time?
3. This objective follows from the prior one. I want you to learn *how* to learn about the past. That is, I want you to practice doing what historians do: answering historical questions using primary sources. There’s no reason why you can’t start doing that this semester, even if this is your very first history course at UW.
4. Finally, I want you to become captivated by the past. I’ll do my best this semester to help you envision times and places so unfamiliar to you that you cultivate a deep fascination with worlds beyond your own. History should never be boring!

### **Format:**

This course will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays for lecture (11:00 – 12:15 AM in Humanities 1121). In addition, discussion sections will be held once a week. Lectures and discussions are designed to build on each other, not replicate each other, so attending both is vital—and required.

### **Reading:**

Your reading assignment each week will consist of both primary sources (documents—such as letters, petitions, and memoirs—that were written during the years we are studying) and secondary sources

(documents that were written by historians in later years and usually rely on primary sources). Readings average approximately 35 pages per week: a 25-page-long secondary source, and 5 to 10 pages of primary sources. Though this does not sound like very much reading, you should be prepared to spend a significant amount of time analyzing the few short primary sources that are assigned each week; it is much more difficult to read primary sources than it is to read secondary sources.

Some readings will be from the two books I have ordered for this course, and the others will be available in a course pack. The two required texts are available for purchase at the UW Bookstore, and they are also on reserve at College Library.

Required texts:

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, 2002

Brett Rushforth and Paul Mapp, *Colonial North America and the Atlantic World: A History in Documents*, 2009

Selected articles, book chapters, and primary sources will be available in a course pack.

### **Computer Policy:**

I know this is very old-school, but I ask that you refrain from using computers during lecture. The temptation to get distracted by things that are not related to class is simply too great. I promise that you'll get far more out of this course if you use just a pen and a pad of paper. Cell phones should be silenced and put away. (If you are a McBurney student who needs accommodation, please come talk to me.)

### **Academic Integrity:**

UW-Madison takes academic integrity very seriously, and no academic misconduct will be tolerated in this course. Academic misconduct can assume many forms, so make sure you know what it is and how to avoid it. (See <https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/academic-integrity/>)

### **Requirements:**

Discussion section attendance and participation: 25%

Please come to section ready to engage with the material, your peers, and your TA. You will often be asked to complete a short assignment prior to section and upload it in the course dropbox. Thoughtful completion of these assignments contributes to your discussion section grade.

Lecture attendance and participation: 10%

Lectures won't be 75-minute monologues; you will be involved in what goes on in our classroom—sometimes through group work, sometimes through sharing your insights with the class. You therefore must consistently be present and willing to play an active role in your own learning.

Map quiz: 10%

This course works on a broad geographical canvas that includes Europe, Africa, and the Americas. In order to understand the developments we are studying, you must have a good sense of what happened where.

Check-In Quizzes: 30%

In lieu of a final exam, this course will have five low-stakes “check-in quizzes” (each valued at 6% of your final grade). If you attend lecture and section regularly, read the assigned material, take good notes, and review those notes well (preferably with a classmate), you should do well on these. These quizzes will be given every three weeks.

Source Analysis (2 pages): 10%

In this analysis of a primary source, you will think about who created the source you are examining and for what purpose; what the source can tell us about the past; and how the source relates to the other primary and secondary sources assigned that week. Doing this thoughtfully will refine your ability to evaluate, interpret, and use new information: skills that are crucial not only for historians but for people in just about every profession.

Midterm paper (4-5 pages): 15%

Your midterm paper will give you an opportunity to look closely at two of the colonies we examine in the “Building Colonies” section of the course. Using primary and secondary sources, you will develop an argument that explains the similarities and differences between the colonies. We will be working on the skills you need to do well on this paper throughout the course.

## Course Schedule:

### PART I: SEAFARING, CONQUERING, PLANTING

#### *Week of Sep. 5: Overview of the Course*

Sep. 6 Introducing the Course

Sep. 8 Before 1492: Indigenous America

#### *Week of Sep. 12: Iberian Expansion and Conquest, 1400-1600*

Sep. 13 Portugal Begins to Explore: Atlantic Islands

Sep. 15 Spanish Conquest in America

*Readings:*

Taylor, *Introduction*

#### *Week of Sep. 19: Africans in Africa and America, 1400-1700*

Sep. 20 Africa, Slavery, and the Beginnings of the Atlantic Slave Trade

Sep. 22 —**Quiz 1**—Lecture: Surviving the Middle Passage, Making Life in the Americas

*Readings:*

John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World* (1993), ch.

6

Steven Mintz, ed., *African American Voices* (2009), selections:

An Employee of Britain’s Royal African Company Describes the

Workings of the Slave Trade (pp. 48-49)  
Olaudah Equiano, an 11-Year-Old Ibo from Nigeria, Remembers His  
Kidnapping into Slavery (pp. 49-50)

***Week of Sep. 26: Northern Europeans in the Atlantic, 1556-1670***

- Sep. 27 The French, Dutch, and English Enter the Atlantic  
Sep. 29 Corn, Pigs, Microbes, and the Shaping of the Americas  
*Readings: TBD*

**PART II: BUILDING COLONIES**

***Week of Oct. 3: Greater Virginia***

- Oct. 4 Virginia's Beginnings  
Oct. 6 Case Studies: Pocahontas and Antonio the Negro  
*Readings:*  
Taylor, ch. 6  
The First Colonists Arrive at Jamestown (Rushforth, pp. 87-91)  
Captain John Smith Describes Virginia Indian Society (Rushforth, pp. 91-100)

***Week of Oct. 10: New England***

- Oct. 11 Faith, Freedom, Family  
Oct. 13 —**Quiz 2**—Film: *We Shall Remain—After the Mayflower*  
*Readings:*  
Taylor, ch. 8  
Winthrop's Vision of New England (Rushforth, pp. 125-128)  
Anne Hutchinson Challenges Massachusetts Orthodoxy (Rushforth, pp. 129-136)

***Week of Oct. 17: French in America***

- Oct. 18 New France: A Different Kind of Colony  
Oct. 20 Natives in New France  
*Readings:*  
Taylor, ch. 5  
Indian Diplomacy in New France (Rushforth, pp. 273-276)  
A Traveler Describes French Society in St. Lawrence Valley (Rushforth, pp. 276-285)

***Week of Oct. 24: The Anglo-Caribbean Colonies***

- Oct. 25 —**Source Analysis Due**—Lecture: Sugar and Slaves  
Oct. 27 Film: *Sugar Dynasty*  
*Readings:*  
Taylor, ch. 10  
A Portrait of Barbados (Rushforth, pp. 171-179)  
Pirates of the Caribbean (Rushforth, pp. 180-188)

***Week of Oct. 31: Carolinas***

Nov. 1 Founding a Caribbean Colony on the Mainland

Nov. 3 —**Quiz 3**—Lecture: African Rice: Crop, Labor, and Culture in the Carolinas

Readings:

Taylor, ch. 11

A Missionary Discusses Christianity and Slavery (Rushforth, pp. 192-199)

A Description of Eighteenth-Century South Carolina (Rushforth, pp. 199-204)

**PART III: REVOLUTIONARY REORGANIZATIONS**

***Week of Nov. 7: The Seven Years' War in the Atlantic World***

Nov. 8 George Washington's Blunder, World War, and "Peace"

Nov. 10 Two Wars for Independence

Readings:

Taylor, ch. 18

Disaster in American Forest (Rushforth, pp. 315-316)

Pontiac's Forces Surprise and are Surprised (Rushforth, pp. 320-323)

***Week of Nov. 14: Revolution in North America***

Nov. 15 Faithful Islands, Rebellious Mainland

Nov. 17 —**Midterm Paper Due**—Lecture: The Farmers, the Framers, and the Constitution

Readings:

Linda Kerber, ed., *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, selections:

"The ladies going about for money exceeded everything..." (pp. 134-135)

Rachel Wells, "I have Don as much to Carrey on the Warr as maney..." (pp. 137-138)

Annette Gordon-Reed, "The Hemings-Jefferson Treaty: Paris, 1789" (pp. 139-146)

Linda K. Kerber, "The Republican Mother and the Woman Citizen: Contradictions and Choices in Revolutionary America" (pp. 147-153)

***Week of Nov. 21: The Global American Revolution***

Nov. 22 Revolution in France and its Empire

Nov. 24 Thanksgiving Break!

**SECTION 4: THE UNITED STATES**

***Week of Nov. 28: The Early American Republic***

Nov. 29 —**Quiz 4**—Lecture: Liberty in Haiti, Slavery in the Early American Republic

Dec. 1 Expanding and Securing the Republic

Readings: TBD

***Week of Dec. 5: American Democracy***

Dec. 6 Jackson's Election and the Rise of the "Common Man"

Dec. 8 —**Map Quiz**—Lecture: Indian Removal

*Readings:*

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History*, ch. 10.

Cherokee Memorial (1829)

Andrew Jackson on Native Americans (1830)

***Week of Dec. 12: America in Crisis***

Dec. 13 Migration, the West, and the Sectional Crisis

Dec. 15 Lecture: Bringing Things Together

*Readings:*

Fugitive Slave Act (1850)

Abraham Lincoln to Joshua Speed (1855)

Charles Sumner's Speech on the Crime Against Kansas (1856)

**Final "Exam" (ie Quiz 5): Dec. 20, 2:45 PM**