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Canvas: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/332965>

Virtual Office Hours: Th, 2-4pm

History 200: Liberty and the American Revolution

The American Revolution looms large in the memories of Americans, not least because of its centrality in both our national myths as well as our textbooks from grade school to courses like this one. In recent years, particularly since the publication of the controversial but inarguably influential *1619 Project*, the ways in which we teach this era have become increasingly polarized as pundits on either side of the political divide insist that their narrative is the *true* history of the nation's birth. Fortunately, as historians, we can examine such arguments in light of the evidence the historical record provides us and draw our own conclusions. However, given that we have only a short time together, our exploration will be limited to the ideas and ideals that spurred the Revolution. Over the next six weeks, we will look at the intellectual trends within this revolutionary moment to see the impact and promise of ideas alongside the realities that limited them. Our aim is not to come up with a nicely packaged narrative, but rather to see the complexity, contradictions, and hypocrisy that was interwoven with the genius and promise of such lofty concepts as equality, liberty, and a government established for the people.

Our goals, and your learning objectives throughout the class, are as follows:¹

- Ask historical questions
- Read primary sources and evaluate them critically
- Understand historical arguments
- Practice responsible digital citizenship
- Analyze influences that shape historical narratives and debates
- Evaluate how ideas and ideals play a role in America's history

Online Format

This class features entirely virtual instruction. All announcements, course materials, and assessments will be conducted via Canvas.

Course Materials

All class lectures and readings are embedded in our Canvas course website. Please do not purchase anything for this class.

Conduct and Compartment

The historical discipline is built upon arguments that rely on well-sourced information that can be openly and civilly debated. Disagreements are a natural part of that process, but keep in mind that you are debating ideas, not people. This may be easier to forget in an online course, but it is imperative that we extend the same respect to our peers through a computer screen as we would in person.

¹ Adapted from the history department guidelines and the syllabus of the original course curator, Michael Kaelin.

Credit Hour Information

This is a six-week, one-credit course, but be aware that it carries the weight of 45 credit hours. In other words, the credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 45 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities, which include lecture videos, readings, discussions, virtual field trips, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

The weekly breakdown is approximately as follows:

Lectures: 1.5 hours

Discussions: 1.5 hours

Readings: 3 hours

Assignments: 1.5 hours

Assignments:

Discussions

During the course, you will be asked to pause and ponder, in writing, the material from the class. Each week you will post a response to the discussion prompt by the end of the day on Thursday. You are required to read, respond, and substantively engage with at least 2 other classmates' posts by the end of the weekend (please note that this means more than just writing two posts). Your goal is to craft posts that capture both your personal voice and an analytical view of the class readings and lecture material.

Quizzes

You will take a quiz at the end of each week. My goal for these quizzes is to get you to engage with the class materials carefully and thoroughly. If you get less than 80% on a quiz, you may make an appointment with me to discuss the materials. If you demonstrate a solid understanding of the material, I will happily raise your grade to reflect that. You must request this meeting before the next quiz is due.

Virtual Field Trips

There are two virtual field trips built into this class. After exploring the website, you will take a short quiz on what you discovered.

Artifact & Reflection

The final project for this class has two parts. First, you will need to find a historical artifact (document, song, film, art piece, web page, etc.), that demonstrates how the ideas that spurred the founding are still present in our society today. You will then write a reflection on that artifact.

Secondly, you will submit a short video responding to the final prompt. Given the strict time restraint, you will need to carefully curate what you want to say (and how you want to say it). Grading details (and some suggestions) will be available on Canvas.

Class Policies:

Late Assignments

This course, though asynchronous, is designed to be interactive, requiring students to remain on the same schedule. Deadlines are designed with that in mind. Discussion board posts **must** be completed by the deadline, as prompt responses are necessary for a conversation to flourish. Late posts will earn a grade of 0. For all other assignments, extensions will be considered if requested 24 hours before an assignment is due.

However, I get that life happens and online courses (especially one-credit ones) can get lost in the shuffle. Every

student is granted one “flexibility” card, meaning I will allow one exception (and do not need an explanation) to this policy. Simply email me and say that you are playing your flexibility card. I recommend you save it for when [you get sick/your wif goes out/your roommate is in the ER/you need a mental health day], as it is the only flexibility card you get.

All assignments, of course, must be submitted by the last day of class (March 12th).

E-mail

I will attempt to return your e-mails within 24 hours during the week. Saturday and Sunday enter a black hole of communication, so any emails received on the weekend will be returned promptly on Monday. I will also respond only during normal working hours (8am-5pm).

Please allow me the full 24 hours to respond to your request. In other words, do not e-mail me 3 hours before an assignment is due to ask a question about it; I cannot guarantee I will get back to you. And, in reverse, if you do not hear back from me within a day (weekends excepted) feel free to email me again and nudge me along.

Office Hours

I will be holding office hours every Thursday afternoon from 2-4pm. Appointments can be made on the Canvas site (see the video for instructions on how to make an appointment). Office hours are also a great time to send any emails or questions from the class, as that is when I will be able to respond most quickly. If you need to chat with me outside of those hours (or would prefer an in-person meeting), just let me know.

Academic Misconduct

Please submit your own work. If you are having difficulty with an assignment, please ask me for assistance rather than stealing, or even relying too heavily on, the work of others (or online content generators). If you are caught plagiarizing material, you will automatically fail the assignment, regardless of the impact on your final grade. I will also file an academic misconduct report.

****Please take note that using ChatGPT or other AI programs to assist you in drafting your work (including class discussions) falls under the category of academic misconduct in this class.²**

UW Statement on Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

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 faculty [I] 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. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or 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.

² Adapted from syllabus of Dr. Lynn Nyhart, UW-Madison, January 2023.

Grade Breakdown		
Assignment	% of Grade	Points
Syllabus Quiz	2.5%	5
Introductory Discussion	2.5%	5
Virtual Tours (2)	5%	10
Artifact & Reflection	10%	20
Video Project	20%	40
Weekly Quizzes (6)	30%	60
Weekly Discussions (6)	30%	60

Grading Scale		
Letter Grade	Percentage	Points
A	93-100%	186-200
AB	88-92.9%	176-185.9
B	83-87.9%	166-175.9
BC	78-82.9%	156-165.9
C	70-77.9%	140-155.9
D	60-69.9%	120-139.9
F	0-59.9%%	0-119.9

Course Outline

(Official schedule available on Canvas)

Week 1: Intellectual and Political Foundations

Module 1: Course Introduction

Lecture:

~*Welcome to the Class*

Readings:

~Syllabus

Assignments:

~Syllabus Quiz

~Introductory Discussion Post

Module 2: Foundations

Lecture:

~*An American Enlightenment*

Readings:

~Anti-Slavery Arguments in the Colonies

~Excerpts from John Locke and Thomas Hobbes

Module 3: Colonial Context

Lecture:

~*The Legacy of Colonial America & the War that Started *the* War*

Readings:

~Excerpts on Independence & the Colonies

Assignments:

~Discussion (first post due 11:59pm Thursday; responses due by 11:59pm Sunday)

~Quiz (due by 11:59pm Friday)

Week 2: The Economic Crisis

Module 1: The Tax Debate

Lecture:

~*Representation Matters (in so many ways)*

Readings:

~Soame Jenyns, "The Objections to the Taxation Consider'd"

~Daniel Dulany, "Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes"

~Transcript, Benjamin Franklin's Testimony to Parliament

Module 2: Class Dynamics in the Revolution

Lecture:

~*The People & the Revolution*

Readings:

~Primary Source Collection on the Coercive Acts & Continental Congress

~Accounts of the Boston 'Massacre' (video and reading)

Assignments:

~Discussion (first post due 11:59pm Thursday; responses due by 11:59pm Sunday)

~Quiz (due by 11:59pm Friday)

Week 3: Common Sense

Module 1: Thomas Paine's Ideas

Lecture:

~*Colonial Ideas on the Brink of War*

Readings:

~Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*

~Edmund Burke, Speech on Conciliation

Module 2: The Declaration of Independence

Lecture:

~*Deciding on & Declaring Independence*

Readings:

~Declaration of Independence

~Excerpts from Jefferson's Draft

~Primary Source Collection on the Slavery & the Declaration

Assignments:

~Discussion (first post due 11:59pm Thursday; responses due by 11:59pm Sunday)

~Quiz (due by 11:59pm Friday)

~Virtual Tour (due by 11:59pm Sunday)

Week 4: The Limits of Liberty Part I: Slavery

Module 1: Enslaved Lives in the Revolution

Lecture:

~*Slavery & the Revolution*

Readings:

~Primary Source Collection on the Experience of Enslaved Persons

Module 2:

Lecture:

~*Grappling with the Founders & the Legacy of Slavery*

Readings:

~Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the 4th of July?" (audio)

~Jennifer Schuessler, "In Search of the Slave Who Defied George Washington"

Assignments:

~Discussion (first post due 11:59pm Thursday; responses due by 11:59pm Sunday)

~Quiz (due by 11:59pm Friday)

Week 5: The Limits of Liberty, Part II: Indigenous Peoples & Women

Module 1: Indigenous Peoples & the Revolution

Lecture:

~*First Nations & the Emerging Nation*

Readings:

~Delaware Treaty

~Mark Charles, "Native people dehumanized in the Declaration of Independence"

Module 2: Inspired, Involved, and

Lecture:

~*Women's World, Work, & Ideas in the Revolutionary Era*

Readings:

~Primary Source Collection on Women & the Revolution

~Jan Lewis, "Women & the American Revolution"

Assignments:

~Discussion (first post due 11:59pm Thursday; responses due by 11:59pm Sunday)

~Quiz (due by 11:59pm Friday)

~Virtual Tour (due by 11:59pm Sunday)

Week 6: The Legacies of the American Revolution

Module 1: The Revolutionary Spirit meets its End?

Lecture:

~*Shays & the Continued Revolution*

Readings:

~Primary Source Collection on Shays's Rebellion

Module 2: The Revolution and Us

Lecture:

~*A Fond Farewell*

Readings:

~David Armitage, "The Declaration of Independence in World Context"

Assignments:

~Discussion (first post due 11:59pm Thursday; responses due by 11:59pm Sunday)

~Quiz (due by 11:59pm Friday)

~Final Project (due by 11:59pm on Sunday)

	Week 1 Intellectual & Political Foundations	Week 2 The Economic Crisis	Week 3 Common Sense	Week 4 The Limits of Liberty Part I	Week 5 The Limits of Liberty Part II	Week 6 Legacies of Revolution
Monday	<p>Lecture: ~Welcome to the Class</p> <p>Reading: ~Syllabus</p> <p>Assignments: -Discussion Board intro -Syllabus quiz</p>	<p>Lecture: ~Representation Matters (in so many ways)</p> <p>Readings: ~Jennys "The Objections to the Taxation consider'd" ~Dudman, "Considerations on the Propriety of Imposing Taxes" ~Franklin, Testimony to Parliament</p>	<p>Lecture: ~Colonial Ideas on the Brink of War</p> <p>Readings: ~Paine, <i>Common Sense</i> ~Burke, Speech on Conciliation</p>	<p>Lecture: ~Slavery & The Revolution</p> <p>Readings: ~Primary Source Collection on Slavery & the Revolution</p>	<p>Lecture: ~First Nations & the Emerging Nation</p> <p>Readings: ~Pedarue Treaty ~Mark Charles, "Native people dehumanized in the Declaration of Independence"</p>	<p>Lecture: ~Slays & the Continued Revolution</p> <p>Readings: ~Primary Source Collection on Slays's Rebellion</p>
Tuesday	<p>Lecture: ~An American Enlightenment</p> <p>Reading: ~Anti-Slavery arguments in the colonies ~Excerpts from Hobbes & Locke</p>	Reading Day	Reading Day	Reading Day	Reading Day	
Wednesday	<p>Lecture: ~The Legacy of Colonial America & the War that Started the War</p> <p>Readings: ~Excerpts on Independence & the Colonies</p>	<p>Lecture: ~The People & the Revolution</p> <p>Readings: ~Primary Source Collection on the Coercive Acts & Continental Congress ~Investigating the Boston "Massacre"</p>	<p>Lecture: ~Deciding on & Declaring Independence</p> <p>Readings: ~Declaration of Independence ~Excerpts from Jefferson's draft ~Primary Source Collection on Slavery & the Declaration</p>	<p>Lecture: ~Grappling with the Founders & the Legacy of Slavery</p> <p>Readings: ~Frederick Douglass, "What to the Slave is the 4th of July?" (audio) ~Article, "In Search of the Slave who Defied Washington" ~Jefferson-Coles Correspondence</p>	<p>Lecture: ~Women's World, Work, & Ideas in the Revolutionary Era</p> <p>Readings: ~Primary Source Collection on Women & the Revolution</p>	<p>Lecture: ~A Ford Farewell</p> <p>Readings: ~"Armitage," "The Declaration of Independence in World Context"</p>
Thursday	<p>Assignment: -Discussion Board: First Post due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion Board: First Post due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignments: -Discussion Board: First Post due by 11:59pm -Virtual Field Trip</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion Board: First Post due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignments: -Discussion Board: First Post due by 11:59pm -Virtual Field Trip</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion Board: First Post due by 11:59pm</p>
Friday	<p>Assignments: -Week 1 Quiz due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignment: -Week 2 Quiz due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignment: -Week 3 Quiz due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignment: -Week 4 Quiz due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignment: -Week 5 Quiz due by 11:59pm</p>	<p>Assignment: -Week 6 Quiz due by 11:59pm</p>
Sat/Sun	<p>Assignment: -Discussion responses due by 11:59pm Sunday</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion responses due by 11:59pm Sunday</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion responses due by 11:59pm Sunday</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion responses due by 11:59pm Sunday</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion responses due by 11:59pm Sunday</p>	<p>Assignment: -Discussion responses due by 11:59pm Sunday -Final project due by 11:59pm Sunday</p>