



## SPRING 2023 SYLLABUS for HISTORY 101: AMERICAN HISTORY TO THE CIVIL WAR ERA

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Teaching Assistants:

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This 1773 watercolor of French slave ship *La Marie-Séraphique* in Cap Français, Saint Domingue (Haiti), shows an iron barrier separating enslaved people 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 bound Afro-Haitians—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 enslaved Haitians, gold mined in Mexico, 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 Indigenous Americans 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 investigate 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 we will explore the nation’s early development.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

By taking this course, students will:

- learn 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.
- 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? History 101 is an introduction to a time and a place—early America—but it is also an introduction to the practices of historical inquiry.
- practice doing what historians do: asking questions about the past and answering them using primary sources. There is no reason why you cannot start doing that this semester, even if this is your very first history course at UW.
- become captivated by the past. This is my great hope, at least. I will 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 is an in-person course. It will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays for lecture (1:00-2:15 in Humanities 2340). 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. Lectures will

provide me with my main opportunity to engage in regular and substantive interaction with you. In the lecture context I will give you direct instruction, provide information about course content, and facilitate discussion of the material under consideration. The TAs will do likewise in discussions.

### **COVID-19 Precautions:**

Though attendance is required in lecture, please do not come if you experience any of the following symptoms: fever or chills; cough; shortness of breath or difficulty breathing; fatigue; muscle or body aches; headache; new loss of taste or smell; sore throat; congestion or runny nose; nausea or vomiting; or diarrhea. According to the CDC, these symptoms might be indicative of a COVID-19 infection. If you have any of these symptoms and therefore must miss lecture, please send me an email to that effect, and I will excuse the absence—no questions asked.

Recognizing that some students might have to miss a bit of class this semester, I will be assigning each of you to small groups. These groups, composed of three to five students, are intended to provide you with a backup in case of absence as well as a support network more generally. (And they might even provide you with some great new friends!) I encourage you to share notes from lecture, study together for quizzes, and help each other along in other ways as you see fit. If, upon missing lecture, you consult the slides I post online, get notes from members of your study group, and still have questions about what you missed, please reach out to me or your TA. We would be happy to clear things up for you.

### **Email Communication and Drop-In Hours:**

If you need to reach me with questions or concerns, please send me an email. I will do my best to respond to you in a timely way during the workweek, but I am often unable to respond to emails on the weekend.

My drop-in hours are Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30. I meet with students in my office, which is on the fifth floor of the Humanities Building, #5108. Of course, if you have a conflict with my scheduled drop-in hours, I can arrange to meet with you at another time. I would also be happy to meet with you via Zoom.

### **Credit:**

This is a 4-credit course. It meets as a group for 4 hours per week (three hours in lecture and one hour in section) and carries the expectation that you will spend an average of 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of 8 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and studying for quizzes for this class.

### **Course Designations:**

This course can fulfill either a Humanities or Social Science breadth requirement. It also counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in the College of Letters and Science.

## **Course Requisites:**

There are no requisites for this course.

## **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 45 pages per week: a 35-page-long secondary source, and 5 to 10 pages of primary sources. This may not sound like very much reading, but 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 and interpret primary sources than secondary sources!

There is one required text for this course: Alan Taylor's *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (Penguin Books, 2002). All other readings will be available in our course reader, which can be purchased at the Letters & Science Copy Center, 6120 Sewall Hall. Both the Taylor text and the course reader will be on reserve in College Library.

## **Computer Policy:**

I prefer 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 and need accommodation, please come talk to me.)

## **Disability Statement:**

UW-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. Developing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. If you need accommodations, please let me know 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 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 the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

## **Academic Integrity:**

By virtue of enrolling in this course, you are agreeing to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and

helping others commit these acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary sanctions include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. (See <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/>)

## **Course Evaluations**

You will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate this course and your learning experience. Your participation is an integral component of this course, and your confidential feedback is important to me. You will receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying you that your course evaluation is available. In the email you will receive a link to log into the course evaluation with your NetID. I strongly encourage you to participate in this anonymous course evaluation and will provide you with time in lecture on May 2 to complete the evaluation.

## **Grading Scale:**

A (92.50+); AB (87.50-92.49); B (82.50-87.49); BC (77.50-82.49); C (69.50-77.49); D (60-69.49); F (Below 60) \*\*Note that final grades are not curved. Nor, as a matter of equity, do I round certain students from one grade range to another.

## **Requirements:**

Discussion section attendance and participation: 25%

Please come to section ready to engage with the material, your peers, and your TA. You will regularly be asked to complete a short assignment prior to section and upload it to your section's Canvas discussion board. Thoughtful completion of these assignments will contribute 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 approximately every three weeks.

Primary Source Analysis (2-3 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 (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 1, Tuesday Lecture:***

Jan. 24 Introducing the Course

#### ***Week 1, Section:***

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

None—though sections will still meet

#### ***Week 1, Thursday Lecture:***

Jan. 26 Before 1492: Indigenous America

#### ***Week 2, Tuesday Lecture:***

Jan. 31 Portugal Begins to Explore: Atlantic Islands

#### ***Week 2, Section:***

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, Introduction

#### ***Week 2, Thursday Lecture:***

Feb. 2 Spanish Conquest

#### ***Week 3, Tuesday Lecture:***

Feb. 7 Africa, Slavery, and the Beginnings of the Atlantic Slave Trade

#### ***Week 3, Section:***

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World*, ch. 6

Steven Mintz, ed., *African American Voices*, selections:

An Employee of Britain's Royal African Company Describes the Workings of the Slave Trade (1738)

Olaudah Equiano, an 11-Year-Old Ibo from Nigeria, Remembers His Kidnapping into Slavery (1789 account of events of ~1756)

#### ***Week 3, Thursday Lecture:***

Feb. 9 —**Quiz 1**—Surviving the Middle Passage, Making Life in the Americas

**Week 4, Tuesday Lecture:**

Feb. 14 Corn, Pigs, Microbes, and the Shaping of the Americas

**Week 4, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

Virginia DeJohn Anderson, "King Philip's Herds: Indians, Colonists, and the Problem of Livestock in Early New England"

Selections from the Court Records of the Colony of New Plymouth (1652-1660)

Metacom Relates Indian Complaints about the English Settlers (1675)

**PART II: BUILDING COLONIES**

**Week 4 Thursday Lecture:**

Feb. 16 *Virginia*: Virginia's Beginnings

**Week 5, Tuesday Lecture:**

Feb. 21 *Virginia*: Case Studies: Pocahontas and Anthony Johnson

**Week 5, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, ch. 6 and 7

The First Colonists Arrive at Jamestown (1625 publication describing events of 1606-7)

Captain John Smith Describes Virginia Indian Society (1608)

**Week 5, Thursday Lecture:**

Feb. 23 *New England*: Faith, Freedom, Family

**Week 6, Tuesday Lecture:**

Feb. 28 —**Quiz 2**—*New England: We Shall Remain—After the Mayflower* film

**Week 6, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, ch. 8

Winthrop's Vision of New England (1630)

Anne Hutchinson Challenges Massachusetts Orthodoxy (1767 document describing 1637 examination)

**Week 6, Thursday Lecture:**

Mar. 2 *New France*: A Different Kind of Colony

**Week 7, Tuesday Lecture:**

Mar. 7 *New France*: Native Peoples in New France

**Week 7, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, ch. 5 and 16

Indian Diplomacy in New France (1744 publication describing 1701 negotiations)

A Traveler Describes French Society in St. Lawrence Valley (1771 account of 1749)

observations)

**Week 7, Thursday Lecture:**

Mar. 9 *Anglo-Caribbean: Sugar and Slavery*

**\*\*\*Spring Break: March 11-19\*\*\***

**Week 8, Tuesday Lecture:**

Mar. 21 —**Primary Source Analysis Due**—*Anglo-Caribbean: Sugar Dynasty* film

**Week 8, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, ch. 10

A Portrait of Barbados (1657)

Pirates of the Caribbean (1678)

**Week 8, Thursday Lecture:**

Mar. 23 *Carolina: Founding a Caribbean Colony on the Mainland*

**Week 9, Tuesday Lecture:**

Mar. 28 —**Quiz 3**—*Carolina: Black Rice: Crop, Labor, and Culture in the Carolinas*

**Week 9, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*, ch. 11

A Missionary Discusses Christianity and Slavery (1712-1714)

A Description of Eighteenth-Century South Carolina (1763)

**PART III: REVOLUTIONARY REORGANIZATIONS**

**Week 9, Thursday Lecture:**

Mar. 30 George Washington's Blunder, World War, and "Peace"

**Week 10, Tuesday Lecture:**

Apr. 4 Two Wars for Independence

**Week 10, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

None—though sections will still meet

**Week 10, Thursday Lecture:**

Apr. 6 Faithful Islands, Rebellious Mainland

**Week 11, Tuesday Lecture:**

Apr. 11 —**Midterm Paper Due**—The Farmers, the Framers, and the Constitution



**Week 11, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

- Linda Kerber, ed., *Women's America: Refocusing the Past*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition, selections:
  - Annette Gordon-Reed, "The Hemings-Jefferson Treaty: Paris, 1789"
  - Linda K. Kerber, "The Republican Mother and the Woman Citizen: Contradictions and Choices in Revolutionary America"
    - "The ladies going about for money exceeded everything..." (1780)
  - Rachel Wells, "I have Don as much to Carrey on the Warr as maney..." (1786)

**Week 11, Thursday Lecture:**

Apr. 13 Revolution in France and its Empire

**Week 12, Tuesday Lecture:**

Apr. 18 —**Quiz 4**—Liberty in Haiti, Slavery in the Early American Republic

**PART IV: THE UNITED STATES**

**Week 12, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

- The Americanization of a Danish Immigrant in Wisconsin, 1847-1872
- Black History in Milwaukee and Southern Ontario, 1834-1864
- A Swedish Traveler in Early Wisconsin: The Observations of Fredrika Bremer

**Week 12, Thursday Lecture:**

Apr. 20 Expanding and Securing the Republic

**Week 13, Tuesday Lecture:**

Apr. 25 —**Map Quiz**—Jackson's Election and the Rise of the "Common Man"

**Week 13, Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

- Fugitive Slave Act (1850)
- Abraham Lincoln Opposes the Expansion of Slavery (1855)
- Charles Sumner Denounces the Kansas-Nebraska Act (1856)

**Week 13, Thursday Lecture:**

Apr. 27 Migration, the West, and the Sectional Crisis

**Week 14: Tuesday Lecture:**

May 2 Final Lecture

**Week 14: Section:**

*Readings to be completed for this week's section:*

- None—though sections will still meet

**Week 14: Thursday Lecture:**

May 4 —**Quiz 5**—

***\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE: There is no final exam for this class. You will have completed all course requirements on May 4, when you take Quiz 5.\*\*\****