

# American History I

HSTA 101/103 | Fall 2017

Lecture meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00-10:50AM

Room: Urey Lecture Hall (ULH) 101

**Professor Claire Arcenas | [claire.arcenas@umontana.edu](mailto:claire.arcenas@umontana.edu) | office: LA 261  
office hours: Monday 3:00-4:00PM, Wednesday 1:30-2:30PM, and by appointment**

## Teaching Assistants (TAs) for Tuesday/Thursday Discussion Sections:

Johnny Barber ([breanna.barber@umontana.edu](mailto:breanna.barber@umontana.edu)); Donovan Douglas ([donovan.douglas@umontana.edu](mailto:donovan.douglas@umontana.edu)); Marlin Earp ([marlin.earp@umontana.edu](mailto:marlin.earp@umontana.edu)); Jared Norwood ([william.norwood@umontana.edu](mailto:william.norwood@umontana.edu)); Joshua Pretzer ([joshua.pretzer@umontana.edu](mailto:joshua.pretzer@umontana.edu)); Caleb Wright ([caleb.wright@umontana.edu](mailto:caleb.wright@umontana.edu))

## Course Overview and Goals:

This course will introduce you to some of the major questions, problems, and themes in American history between the late sixteenth century and the period of Reconstruction following the Civil War. We will pay particular attention to social, cultural, economic, environmental, and political factors as we examine the development of Britain's empire in North America and the Caribbean; the reasons for and impact of the American Revolution; the challenges and opportunities facing the new American nation following the ratification of the US Constitution; and the causes and consequences of the Civil War.

Learning about the past should be fun, interesting, and engaging! In this class, you will learn that history is far more than memorizing facts, dates, and people's names. It's about discovering surprises; piecing together funny, sad, and inspiring stories from what are often only fragmentary bits of evidence; and answering puzzling questions about what happened and why.

Why was hard cider so important to English colonists in the seventeenth century? What did Abigail Adams mean when she told her husband, John Adams, to "remember the ladies" in the 1770s? How do historians know about the brutal conditions of slaves' lives on a Southern plantation on the eve of the Civil War? When did "These United States" become "The United States"? These are some of the (many!) questions we will explore together in this class.

Using *evidence* from primary sources as well as *interpretations* provided by historians, we will examine colonial expansion and its impact on native populations; the relationship between slavery and Euro-Americans' conceptions of freedom; the emergence of capitalism; the place of religion in American thought, culture, and politics; changing meanings of democracy; and the role women played in public and private life. We will explore questions of historical perspective and interpretation throughout the semester. What does it mean to take the past on its own terms? How do we know what we do about the past? What are good questions to ask of the past? By probing questions such as these, you will come away with a deeper and richer understanding of American history and its bearing on the world around you today.

## Learning Outcomes:

By taking this class, you will:

- acquire and retain specific **knowledge about the past** (i.e. what happened and why)
- acquire the **tools** and **skills** for analyzing and interpreting history (i.e. why what happened in the past is important or significant)

- learn **critical thinking** and **communication skills** that will enable you to convey your ideas clearly and persuasively both orally and in writing

### **Class Structure:**

This course will meet for three fifty-minute lectures M/W/F with the professor and one fifty-minute discussion section T/W (honors)/Th. with your TA. Lectures are not summaries of the readings; rather, they will provide critical context, framing, and interpretation. To succeed in this class, therefore, you must attend lectures in addition to participating in your discussion sections, completing all the readings, taking notes, and carefully preparing for the exams. For each lecture, I will upload a copy of the lecture outline and a PDF version of the lecture slides to Moodle. I will do my best to have these online by 8 am each lecture day, and you should feel free to print them out and use them to help you follow along and take notes in class. Please note that I reserve the right to stop posting these materials at any point throughout the semester. They are meant to help you get more out of lecture, not to make it easier for you to skip class! ☺

### **Required Texts (available for purchase from the UM Bookstore and on reserve at Mansfield Library):**

1. James L. Roark, et al., *The American Promise: A Concise History*, Vol. 1: To 1877, Sixth Edition (2017). This is the course textbook and will be referred to as **overview reading** below.
2. Michael P. Johnson, *Reading the American Past: Selected Historical Documents*, Vol. 1: To 1877, Fifth Edition (2012). Readings are denoted by RAP and the page numbers, e.g. (RAP, 30-32).
3. Spiral-Bound Course Pack \*\*Readings denoted with [\*\*] below are found in the Course Pack.

### **Further Details on Course Requirements and Expectations:**

#### a. Attendance and Participation

You are expected to attend all lectures and weekly discussion sections. You should take diligent notes in lecture and on all of your readings. In discussion section, you are expected to participate actively. When thinking about your participation in your discussion section, it might be helpful to imagine yourself as a co-discussion-facilitator; participation means both constructively contributing to discussion *and* actively engaging with your peers. Being a good participant also means being a good listener. Your contributions to discussion should be based primarily on the **discussion reading**, which is explained below.

#### b. Reading

You should take good notes on all the reading you do. If you have questions or are having difficulty taking notes, ask your TA for suggestions. Each week, you will complete two types of reading.

- **overview reading:** a portion (usually a chapter or two) of the course textbook. You should complete this reading by the beginning of each week (i.e. by Monday).
- **discussion reading:** a few primary or secondary source documents from *Reading the American Past* (RAP) and the spiral-bound course pack. These readings will form the basis of your discussions in section with your TA.

c. Exams/Take-Home Essay

For this course, you will complete **one in-class midterm, one take-home midterm (an essay), and one in-class final examination**. The exams and essay will draw on materials covered in lecture, in your discussion sections, and in the course readings. The final exam will be cumulative, meaning that *any material covered during the semester is fair game*. There will be no multiple-choice questions on any of the exams. The two in-class exams will likely have a structure that consists roughly of three parts: factual identifications, short answers, and essays. More information on the exams will be distributed later in the semester.

**Grading (Your grade for this course will be determined by the following components):**

- a. Discussion section participation and weekly assignments (25%)
  - ❖ Your TAs will provide additional information about these weekly assignments on their discussion section syllabi. They may include short writing assignments, film responses, or reading quizzes.
- b. In-Class Midterm (20%): In class, Friday, October 13th
- c. Midterm Take-Home Essay (25%): Due to your TA by 12pm, Tuesday, November 21st
- d. In-Class Final Examination (30%): Friday, December 15th, 8am-10am

This course will follow this grading rubric:

A: 93-100	B-: 80-82	D+: 67-69
A-: 90-92	C+: 77-79	D: 63-66
B+: 87-89	C: 73-76	D-: 60-62
B: 83-86	C-: 70-72	F: 59 and below

**Electronics Policy:** Before coming to class, please silence and put away all electronics, including your cell phone. You may use a laptop to take notes, but please keep in mind that it should not be used for other activities during class. While laptops are not banned, I assure you that you will get a lot more out of this class if you take notes the old-school way (with a pen and a pad of paper!). Not convinced? Check out recent research published in the journal *Psychological Science*:

<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/news/releases/take-notes-by-hand-for-better-long-term-comprehension.html#.WQIXGY5sowQ>

One final note: if your use of electronics proves distracting, you will be asked to put your device away.

**Academic Honesty:** Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with UM's Student Conduct Code and conducting themselves accordingly. Academic dishonesty, including plagiarism and cheating, will result in appropriate disciplinary action and possibly a failing grade. An easy rule to follow is that all work you produce for this class should be your own. Please ask the professor or your TA if you have any questions.

**Students with Disabilities:** As per university policies, appropriate accommodations will be made. To ensure that the proper steps can be taken, please speak with the professor as early in the semester as possible. It is your responsibility to speak with the professor and to provide the proper documentation from Disability Services for Students (DSS). You can visit [www.umt.edu/dss](http://www.umt.edu/dss) for additional details and information.

### Tentative Weekly Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Along with each week's lecture topics and reading assignments, you will find a series of questions to help guide your reading. Please consider these questions before your discussion section. Also included are a few "big picture" questions to help you draw connections between the readings, lecture, and discussion. HINT: These may be helpful as you review for exams.

#### Week 1: Course Introduction

#### Overview Reading: Chapter 1

F (9/1): Introductions and Welcome

#### Week 2: Contact in the "New World"

#### Overview Reading: Chapter 2

M (9/4): NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

W (9/6): A World of Empires and Exploration

F (9/8): The First Americans

#### Discussion Reading (complete by your discussion section):

- Introduction for Students, in *Reading the American Past* (hereafter denoted by RAP), viii-xiv.
- Richard Hakluyt, selections from "A Discourse Concerning Western Planting" (1584), in the spiral-bound course pack (hereafter denoted by [\*\*]) [This first reading will also be available on Moodle, in case you do not yet have your spiral-bound course pack.]

**Reading Questions:** What is a primary source? Why do you think primary sources are so important for historians? When you read or examine a historic document, material artifact, or visual source, for example, what should you make note of? What is the historic context for Richard Hakluyt's "A Discourse Concerning Western Planting"? Who is Richard Hakluyt? Can you decipher what the purpose of this document was? Who was its intended audience?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** What are some of the key characteristics of empires? What costs and benefits have come with imperialism? What are some of the difficulties historians encounter when writing about the history of Native Americans both before and after contact with Europeans?

#### Week 3: Trans-Atlantic Crossings

#### Overview Reading: Chapter 3

M (9/11): Planting the Southern Colonies

W (9/13): The Origins of African Slavery in British North America and the Caribbean

F (9/15): The Godly in Transit: Puritans in the North Atlantic

#### Discussion Reading:

- "Richard Frethorne Describes Indentured Servitude in Virginia," 1623 (RAP, 37-41)
- "Bacon's Rebellion," 1676 (RAP, 48-51)
- Ship registers for Virginia and New England\*\*

**Reading Questions:** Take a look at the ship registers. How would you characterize white immigrants to the seventeenth-century Chesapeake? What is the significance of the demographic make-up of the immigrants? How, for example, might this have influenced family life? What portrait of life as an indentured servant does Richard Frethorne paint in his letters

home? What kind of information does a letter convey that other types of sources do not? What does Nathaniel Bacon's "Declaration" reveal about social and political power in late seventeenth-century Virginia?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** Were economic or social factors more important in explaining the emergence of racial slavery in the southern mainland North American colonies? What was the importance of tobacco as a major crop on the development of the early Chesapeake colonies? When and how did Caribbean slave patterns begin to diverge from mainland North American slave patterns?

**Week 4: Establishing Colonial Societies**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 4**

M (9/18): Growth and Conflict in New England  
W (9/20): A Mixed Multitude: The Middle Colonies  
F (9/22): Educational, Religious, and Scientific Awakenings

**Discussion Reading:**

- "The Arbella Sermon," 1630 (RAP, 56-61)
- "Observations of New England Indians," 1643 (RAP, 61-65)
- "Words of the Bewitched," 1692 (RAP, 73-76)

**Reading Questions:** What type of social organization is John Winthrop describing in his speech "A Model of Christian Charity"? How is this different from the way we talked about society developing in the southern colonies last week? What do Williams's observations reveal about interactions between Puritan colonists and Native Americans? Do you think Williams's account and depictions are "accurate"? What sort of social, economic, political, religious, or environmental anxieties are brought to the surface during the witchcraft trials at Salem, Massachusetts in 1692?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** Who was leaving Britain for New England and why? In other words, what political and religious factors do you think were pushing New England's European colonists from Britain? Were settlers in the Chesapeake, Middle Colonies, or New England the most religiously tolerant? What might account for the answer you gave to the last question?

**Week 5: Slavery and Eighteenth-Century Provincial Culture**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 5**

M (9/25): The Growth of Provincial Culture  
W (9/27): Screening 1: *The Language You Cry In*  
(Stay tuned for short film response assignment due in discussion sections next week.)  
F (9/29): Screening 2: *The Language You Cry In*  
(Stay tuned for short film response assignment due in discussion sections next week.)

**Discussion Reading:**

- "Poor Richard's Advice," 1757 (RAP, 81-85)
- "Advertisements for Runaway Slaves," 1737-1745 (RAP, 90-93)
- David Waldstreicher, "Reading the Runaways: Self-Fashioning, Print Culture, and Confidence in Slavery in the Eighteenth-Century Mid-Atlantic."\*\*

**Reading Questions:** What particular kinds of advice did Father Abraham give readers? Why do you think Franklin's *Poor Richard's Almanac* was so popular in eighteenth-century America? We often think of Benjamin Franklin as a "Founding Father," as a curious man at the end of a kite string with a key, or as an old man in a coonskin cap charming the ladies of Paris. Why is it important to remember that Franklin was first and foremost a printer? How did Waldstreicher's article flesh out your image of Franklin? What important context did Waldstreicher's article help you understand about the runaway slave advertisements you read? What is the thesis or main argument of Waldstreicher's article?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** What were the major differences between religious experiences and practices during the Great Awakening compared to those of the religious reform movements of the seventeenth century? In what ways was Franklin part of the Enlightenment in eighteenth-century America? What are some features of the Enlightenment that make it different from intellectual movements in the seventeenth century? What are three words you would use to describe provincial culture in eighteenth-century America? In what specific ways did *The Language You Cry In* help you understand the possibilities and challenges of studying the history of slavery in North America?

**Week 6:** Empires in Conflict in Colonial America

**Overview Reading:** Chapter 6

M (10/2): The Eighteenth-Century South: The Formation of a Bi-Racial Society

W (10/4): The Seven Years' War and Imperial Unrest

F (10/6): The Stamp Act and the Rise of Resistance

**Discussion Reading:**

- King George III, "Royal Proclamation" (1763)\*\*

- The Declarations of the Stamp Acts Congress (1765)\*\*

- "Daniel Leonard Argues for Loyalty to the British Empire," 1774-1775 (RAP, 110-114)

**Reading Questions:** Why did George III forbid colonial settlement west of the proclamation line? What were American colonists' objections to the Stamp Act? Do you agree with them? In what ways was the context different for the Declarations of the Stamp Act Congress and the document by Daniel Leonard?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** What was the significance of the Seven Years' War for American colonists? For Native Americans? For the larger British imperial picture? What arguments did the Americans deploy in their attempts to resist taxation by the British Parliament between 1764 and 1775? In what ways should the American Revolution come as a surprise to us? In what ways should it not?

**Week 7:** Exam Week

**No New Overview Reading**

M (10/9): NO LECTURE - Study Day & TAs hold extra office hours

W (10/11): NO LECTURE - Study Day & TAs hold extra office hours

F (10/13): In-Class Midterm Exam #1 (will cover material from weeks 1-6)

No new reading or questions for discussion sections this week. Discussion sections will be devoted to review and helping you prepare for the exam.

**Week 8: From Resistance to Revolution**

**Overview Reading: Chapters 7 & 8**

M (10/16): Declaring Independence  
W (10/18): The American People at War  
F (10/20): Meanings of Independence

**Discussion Reading:**

- "Edmund Burke Urges Reconciliation with the Colonies," 1775 (RAP, 114-118)
- "Thomas Paine Makes the Case for Independence," 1776 (RAP, 120-123)
- "Letters of John and Abigail Adams," 1776 (RAP, 124-130)

**Reading Questions:** What arguments did Paine make about the colonists' place in the British Empire that American colonists found so convincing? How do Paine's arguments counter Burke's claims? What is the significance of Paine appealing to Americans' "common sense"? What do John and Abigail Adams's letters reveal about their attitudes toward independence and the future success of the war?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** Would it make more sense to characterize the American War for Independence as a civil war rather than a revolution? Why or why not? Imagine what it would have been like had you been an American colonist in 1776. In what ways could declaring independence from and waging a war against the most powerful empire on earth have seemed like a terrible idea or a brilliant one? Would you have been persuaded by Paine's argument?

**Week 9: A New Nation**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 9**

M (10/23): Forging a New National Government  
W (10/25): The 1790s: Putting Things in a Global Perspective  
F (10/27): Jeffersonian Contradictions

**Discussion Reading:**

- "Making the Case for the Constitution," 1787 (RAP, 155-159)
- "Mercy Otis Warren Opposes the Constitution," 1788 (RAP, 160-164)
- "Judith Sargent Murray Insists on the Equality of the Sexes," 1790 (RAP, 174-177)

**Reading Questions:** How would you condense Madison's argument in *Federalist Number 10* into three sentences? Why were factions so dangerous to a republic? Why was it better to have a larger republic than a small republic? How did Warren view the Constitution differently than Madison? In Murray's eyes, did the American Revolution have a positive outcome for women like her?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** How radical was the American Revolution? Compare and contrast what "independence," "freedom," and "liberty" meant to different social groups in America, such as landless white men, free blacks, slaves, and white women. Was the American Revolution anti-monarchical or anti-imperial? When we view the American Revolution alongside other revolutions at the time, how does its historical significance change? What lessons were learned during the period of the Articles of Confederation? What were the major differences between the Federalist and anti-Federalist causes? In what ways does the

Constitution of 1787 reveal a different republican mindset than the Declaration of Independence of 1776?

**Week 10: Defining Freedom in the Early Republic**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 10**

M (10/30): The Empire of Liberty

W (11/1): War of 1812 and Its Significance

F (11/3): Market Revolution in the Age of Jackson

**Discussion Reading:**

- "Thomas Jefferson on Slavery and Race," 1782 (RAP, 147-151)
- "President George Washington's Parting Advice to the Nation," 1796 (RAP, 182-187)
- "President Thomas Jefferson's Private and Public Indian Policy," 1803-1806 (RAP, 188-191)
- "A Slave Demands that Thomas Jefferson Abolish Slavery," 1808 (RAP, 196-199)
- Thomas Jefferson, "Expedition to the Pacific: Instructions to Capt. Lewis" (1803)\*\*

**Reading Questions:** Why does Washington counsel his fellow citizens to resist foreign entanglements? How did Jefferson's private attitudes towards Native Americans differ from what he said publicly? Why did Jefferson commission the Lewis and Clark Expedition? How do you reconcile Jefferson's writings in the Declaration of Independence with his attitudes toward slaves and freed black Americans?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** What does republicanism mean in the early national years? What about independence? How is America in the early decades of the nineteenth century different from America in the 1780s and 1790s? In what ways is Jefferson a product of the Enlightenment? If you had to explain "Jeffersonian America" to a friend, what would you say? Similarly, how would you explain "Jacksonian America"? What is problematic about these descriptions? Are they useful markers of eras? What is the significance of the War of 1812?

**Week 11: Improvement and Reform**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 11**

M (11/6): Antebellum Reform I

W (11/8): Antebellum Reform II

F (11/10): NO CLASS – VETERANS DAY

**Discussion Reading:**

- "President Andrew Jackson's Parting Words to the Nation," 1837 (RAP, 207-211)
- "Cherokees Debate Removal," 1836-1837 (RAP 211-215)
- "Sarah Grimke on the Status of Women," 1838 (RAP, 223-226)
- "'Susan' Describes Conditions in the Lowell Mills" (1844)\*\*

**Reading Questions:** What were the major problems Jackson had with centralized or growing power of the federal government? Would you say that Jackson's speech is more forward-looking or backward-looking? Compare and contrast the two letters by John Ross and Elias Bourdinot on Cherokee removal policies. What are the most significant areas in which they disagree? According to Sarah Grimke and "Susan," what particular issues were white women facing in the 1830s and 1840s and how do these dovetail with issues of abolition or labor reform?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** In what ways is thinking about the early United States as an empire productive (or not)? What characterizes the Second Great Awakening? What was the implication of the idea of “separate spheres” for women inside and outside the home? When speaking or writing about antebellum America, what do the terms “reform” and “improvement” denote?

**Week 12: Westward Expansion**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 12**

M (11/13): Midterm #2 Prompts Distributed In Lecture/Writing Center Presentation

W (11/15): Westward Expansion and the War with Mexico

F (11/17): Westward Expansion and the Compromise of 1850

**Discussion Reading:**

- “The Anxiety of Gain: Henry W. Bellows on Commerce and Morality,” 1845 (RAP, 231-234)

- “John O’Sullivan Celebrates Manifest Destiny” (1845)\*\*

- “That Woman Is Man’s Equal: The Seneca Falls Declaration,” 1848 (RAP, 239- 242)

- “Party Platforms” (1848)\*\*

**Reading Questions:** In what ways is John O’Sullivan’s Manifest Destiny similar to or different from Thomas Jefferson’s Empire for Liberty? According to Bellows, what were the effects of commerce on morality? What was, as the editors of RAP put it, the “dark side” of free labor policies in Bellows’s opinion? What was the significance of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the women at Seneca Falls choosing the Declaration of Independence as their template? Does it make their case stronger? What factors might be important for a historian to consider when using party platforms as a primary source?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** What major changes in political party structures are taking place at this time and how do they help us understand major debates about American expansion? Does westward expansion reveal more the limits or the possibilities of American democracy in the antebellum period?

**Week 13: Midterm #2 Due and Thanksgiving**

**No New Overview Reading**

M (11/20): NO CLASS –Writing Day!

\*\*\*\*\*Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>: Essays Due by 12 PM (NOON) to your TA\*\*\*\*\*

W (11/22): NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday

F (11/24): NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday

No discussion section meetings this week. Happy Thanksgiving!

**Week 14: Slavery and the Road to Civil War**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 13 &14**

M (11/27): Slavery in Antebellum America

W (11/29): The Old South

F (12/1): Road to Civil War

**Discussion Reading:**

- Frederick Douglass, selections from “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” (1852)\*\*

- "The Kansas-Nebraska Act," 1854 (RAP 266-269)
- "The Antislavery Constitution," 1860 (RAP, 269-271)
- "The Proslavery Constitution," 1860 (RAP, 272-273)

**Reading Questions:** What are Lincoln's major arguments against the Kansas-Nebraska Act? Compare and contrast Jefferson Davis's and Frederick Douglass's arguments about the relationship between the US Constitution and slavery. Are the two men addressing the same audience? Do they seem to be in conversation or talking past one another? According to Douglass, what was the Fourth of July to slaves in 1852? Who was his audience? What in Douglass's rhetoric jumps out at you? What use is history or looking to the past for Douglass?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** How do historians studying plantation life and the daily experiences of slaves know what they know? How can historians identify the agency of individual slaves when so few left written records of their own? In what ways can you apply lessons from the film *The Language You Cry In* to these questions? What was the significance of free labor on the eve of the Civil War? What was the primary cause of the Civil War? What events led to the war?

**Week 15: The Civil War**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 15**

- M (12/4): The Civil War
- W (12/6): Total War
- F (12/8): Beginnings of Reconstruction

**Discussion Reading:**

- "President Lincoln's War Aims," 1862-1863 (RAP 283-286)
- "Carl Schurz Reports on the Condition of the Defeated South," 1865 (RAP 307-311)
- "Klan Violence Against Blacks," 1871 (RAP 324-327)

**Reading Questions:** In reading the three documents in the series "President Lincoln's War Aims," what would you say the most significant developments were in Lincoln's attitudes toward slavery and the goals of the war between 1862 and the end of 1863? How would you characterize the early years of Reconstruction? What particular economic, political, and social challenges did the South face in 1865? How were these different from the challenges faced by the North?

**Big Picture Questions to Consider:** In what ways was Reconstruction a success? In what ways was it a failure? What do historians mean when they talk about "Greater Reconstruction"?

**Week 16: These United States or The United States?**

**Overview Reading: Chapter 16**

- M (12/11): Reconstruction and the Origins of Modern America

No Discussion section meetings this week. Stay tuned for review sessions. Happy end of term!

\*\*\*\*\*FINAL EXAM: Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, from 8:00-10:00AM\*\*\*\*\*