2014

143-02A Understanding America Historically I: 1400-1865

Karim Tiro
tiro@xavier.edu

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1. Course overview

When Columbus arrived in the Caribbean, he unwittingly brought millennia of hemispheric isolation to an end. The result in the Americas was a “new world” for both natives and newcomers.

Europeans projected an array of hopes and dreams on to the American landscape, and strove to make these become realities. Whether their goals were morally pure societies, highly lucrative ones, or both, they established patterns within which American culture developed, and which continue to exert an influence on American culture today.

Native Americans were confronted by unknown diseases and land-hungry Europeans, but also with opportunities to gain power through trade and alliance with the newcomers. Africans found themselves in harsh circumstances in an unfamiliar land, and struggled to create coherent lives for themselves and their families. By challenging Europeans plans that marginalized them, those peoples were able to alter the patterns of early American life in significant ways.

We will study how and why Euro-American colonists articulated an expanded vision of personal liberty that was unprecedented in their traditions, and the role of this vision in their fight for independence from Great Britain. Paradoxically, however, the American Revolution took place against a backdrop of slavery. Liberty and slavery were closely entwined. This paradox stalked the young United States as it expanded and developed through the first six decades of the nineteenth century, and then propelled the nation into a civil war. The course closes with this bloody conflict and the mix of trauma and liberation it brought to Americans.
2. Readings (in order of appearance):

Alan Taylor, *American Colonies*  
Eric Nellis, *The Long Road to Change*  
Bruce Levine, *Half Slave and Half Free*  
James McPherson, *What They Fought For*

Primary source readings will be available on the course Canvas page.

3. Course schedule (subject to revision)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>Quiz?</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01.12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction: When Worlds Collide: the Encounter of European and Native American Worlds in the 15th century</td>
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<tr>
<td>01.18</td>
<td></td>
<td>Colony-Making in 17th-century Anglo-America: the Chesapeake and New England ACx-49, 117-86, 264-72 + Winthrop, Smith, Penn</td>
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<tr>
<td>01.25</td>
<td>Q!</td>
<td>Colonial and Imperial Development in the 18th century                AC276-362 + Mittelberger, Equiano</td>
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<tr>
<td>02.01</td>
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<td>Revolution                                                           AC420-43, LRC49-145 + Common Sense</td>
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<tr>
<td>02.08</td>
<td>Q!</td>
<td>Republic                                                             LRC147-232 + Federalist 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>02.15</td>
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<td>The Market Revolution and the Development of Sectionalism           HSHF3-94 + Lowell Mill Girls</td>
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<tr>
<td>02.22</td>
<td>Q!</td>
<td>Cotton, Slavery, and American Expansionism                          HSHF95-144 + Slave Narratives</td>
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<tr>
<td>03.01</td>
<td></td>
<td>Toward Separation                                                    HSHF145-255 + Mexican War</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>03.08</td>
<td>Q!</td>
<td>Race, Slavery, and Civil War                                         WTTFF + Masters, slaves, and Sherman</td>
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4. Evaluation

Participation \hspace{1cm} 30%
Quizzes (4) \hspace{1cm} 40%
Primary source papers (2 x 1000 words) \hspace{1cm} 30%

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Due to the abbreviated nature of the class, students may miss only one meeting. Students should contact the instructor to make arrangements to make up material they have missed.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Core Curriculum Goals for this course

**GOAL 1:** Students will be effective communicators in writing and orally
1. Students will organize and express their ideas in writing and orally.
2. Students will formulate clear and arguable theses, supported by evidence drawn from appropriate sources.
3. Students will utilize an effective writing process guided by audience, purpose, cultural context, and disciplinary standards.

**GOAL 2:** Students will be critical thinkers
1. Students will analyze and interpret texts, images, objects, artifacts, and quantitative and qualitative data.
2. Students will describe the historical, cultural, mythological, and social contexts of texts, works of art, and theories.
3. Students will evaluate the strength of an argument or claim and its evidence.
4. Students will discuss fundamental questions that arise from the human condition, such as questions about the grounds of morality, the essence of justice, the nature of reality, the possibility of certainty, the nature of beauty, or the reasonableness of religious faith.
5. Students will evaluate the use of science and mathematics in society and everyday life in an informed manner.

**GOAL 4:** Students will be able to understand and appreciate the arts, humanities and science disciplines, and reflect on connections among these studies
1. Students will engage in critical, theological reflection by the method developed in Jesuit and Catholic practice, using human experience and religious traditions as resources to address issues or questions arising in today’s world.
2. Students will articulate and engage with great ideas in the history of Western thought through the writings of great philosophers.
3. Students will think historically in order to understand the past on its own terms and to understand how societies have changed over time.
4. Students will recognize and interpret artistic and literary expression.
5. Students will apply social science methodology to relevant social issues.

**GOAL 6:** Students will be aware global citizens
1. Students will recognize relationships among diversity, inequality, and social, economic, and political power both in the United States and globally.
2. Students will describe contributions made by individuals from diverse and/or underrepresented groups to local, national, and global communities.
3. Students will consider perspectives of diverse groups when making decisions.
4. Students will interact with sensitivity as members of society and as professionals with people who have ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors that are different from their own.