

HIST 0131 UNITED STATES HISTORY AND GOVERNMENT TO 1865



image source: <http://www.benfranklin300.org>

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Office location: Bates 104

Office hours: W 11:00 to 1:00, TH 11:00 to 12:00, and by arrangement online

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This is an introductory survey course in United States history from the pre-contact period to the earliest European settlements through the conclusion of the American Civil War. Topics covered in the course include exploration, colonization, Native American communities, the rise of labor systems including race-based slavery, the American Revolution, the creation of the early republic, Anglo-American expansion, the origins of industrialization, antebellum reform and religious movements, and the Civil War.

Credits: This is a three (3) credit core course requirement at Westfield State College.

Required Readings:

The books are available in the Westfield State College Bookstore, but also may be found through various online vendors.

*Robert Marcus, et. al., *America Firsthand*, Volume One (textbook)

*Kelly Schrum, et. al., *U. S. History Matters: A Student Guide to U. S. History Online*

*Jonathan Earle, *John Brown's Raid on Harper's Ferry, A Brief History with Documents*

*Ambrose Bierce, *Civil War Stories*

*Various photocopied primary and secondary source readings will be distributed online and discussed during class as necessary.

This asynchronous course does NOT emphasize fact and date memorization, but instead will be based upon a thematic conception of history in which the major ideas of early American history are analyzed and debated. Students will learn about the ideas, people, and events that have effected historical change in American history. The course will help students develop an understanding of the general and major trends in early American history, many of which resonate even today. The course is both chronological and thematic in its approach. Class discussion boards as well as "virtual face to face" forums will incorporate both large and small group discussions. Explanatory lectures will be delivered by the professor as well as by peers.

Readings should be completed before the class for which they are assigned. Please keep your reading materials

(handouts or texts) near whatever computer terminal you are using. Students should be prepared to engage in thoughtful discussions on the assigned reading materials. Students should feel free to ask the professor (either on the “Ask Dr. Nick” thread or during office hours or via a PLATO mail message) for clarification on any questions they may have concerning the reading materials.

- * Discussion participation is required. Regular, punctual “attendance” along with classroom discussion participation online is necessary for students to succeed in this course. Athletes and others with planned or unavoidable “absences” from our online environment are expected to provide the professor with a schedule ahead of time and to remind the professor before the absence occurs.
- * Weekly student participation via class blogs, discussion forums, etc. will account for 30% of a student’s grade. This course will also have two tests (a mid term and a final) valued at 50% of the grade. The remaining 20% will be determined by a student presentation or paper.
- * Disclaimer: Please note that this is a generic interaction plan. The official course syllabus will be available to you once the course begins.