

United States History and Government to 1865

History 0131 Course Information / Westfield State University

General Course Information: Professor Nicholas Aieta

Course: "U.S. History to 1865" / History 0131/ meets weekly online

Office Location: Bates Hall 104 Office Hours: online

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Email: PLEASE USE THE MAIL FEATURE IN PLATO

Course Description:

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. This 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.

Course Objectives & Student Learning Goals:

In accordance with the college CORE's course objectives for United States history, students in this class will "acquire a number of interpretive perspectives on United States history and government in order to critically analyze political events past and present." Through online discussion and other written assignments, students will become adept at critically analyzing both primary and secondary source documents; students will be able to recognize, identify, and articulate the varied and often conflicting interpretations in United States history; students will become adept at identifying broad historical themes. In addition, students will better understand significant transformative or "watershed" events in United States history and students will increase their appreciation of the evolving nature of American citizenship along with their own role in the American democracy. Students will demonstrate their grasp, achievement, and command of these important learning goals through both written and verbal based assessments that will evaluate students' critical-thinking skills, analytical skills, synthesis skills, and their general level of comprehension of United States history and government.

Required Readings:

Books & Required Reading:

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

*Kelly Schrum, et al, *U. S. History Matters: A 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