

## HIS 315K-HONORS

### THE UNITED STATES BEFORE 1865

This class will survey American history through the Civil War, keeping a collective mind open to which and why certain facts, stories, events, and people are key to understanding our past. It draws on two popular American history books that offer complementary, sometimes conflicting, interpretations of the American story to illuminate the rich textures of the nation's history as well as the particular challenges faced in its writing. Using these authorities as a starting point, participants will work collaboratively to expand their understanding of American history and to engage in the type of thinking required to "do" history.

#### Professor

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Office hours: Monday 1-3 pm and Tuesday 1-2 pm

#### REQUIRED

Any edition of the following books may be used:

David Blight, ed., *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass an American Slave*

This book will be at the Coop, but you can also easily find used copies, or download this file [http://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Douglass/Narrative/Douglass\\_Narrative.pdf](http://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Douglass/Narrative/Douglass_Narrative.pdf)

Johnson, *History of the American People*

Zinn, *A People's History of the United States* (available free online, but without page numbers)

Additional readings, available as posted on Canvas.

Optional: These books are available for 1¢ (Foner) and free (*Outline*). It is strongly suggested you have a good grasp of the basic historical narrative before reading Zinn and Johnson.

Foner, *Give Me Liberty*.

*Outline of U.S. History* <http://www.america.gov/publications/books/history-outline.html>

#### COURSE WEBSITE

Reading and research assignments, the course syllabus, announcements, course revisions, grades, and other course-related material will be posted on Canvas.

<https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1020171> Check the site frequently for updates (Note: Firefox tends to be more responsive, although Canvas has been working well on Chrome.)

#### CIVILITY, EXAMINATIONS, GRADING, ABSENCES, ETC.

You are expected to attend each class, be on time, and stay for the entire class. Late arrival, early departure, ringing cell phones, texting, tweeting, surfing, FB'ing, sleeping, etc. distract and disrupt the entire class. Your courtesy is necessary and appreciated. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259

<http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>. Students seeking assistance with writing may wish to contact The Undergraduate Writing Center <http://uwc.utexas.edu/handouts>. Medical assistance/counseling services are available at <http://www.cmhc.utexas.edu/>. If you have concerns about the behavior or well-being of another member of the campus community, call BCAL at 512-232-5050. [www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal](http://www.utexas.edu/safety/bcal)

**ACADEMIC HONESTY.** It is your personal responsibility to be honest and aware of what constitutes dishonesty. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person or your own previous work without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student. Plagiarism or any action that violates the letter and intent of the policy of academic integrity is explained fully here [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/spot\\_honorcode.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/spot_honorcode.php) and here [http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/history/about/academic\\_integrity/](http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/history/about/academic_integrity/). Any violation will be punished to the fullest extent possible, up to and including failing the course and suspension from UT.



**NOT EVEN PAST** [www.notevenpast.org](http://www.notevenpast.org) is the UT History Department blog. Consider submitting a brief article or book review for the editors' consideration.

#### **GRADES and ABSENCE.**

Grading will be determined Grades will be determined on the basis of individual quiz grades (20%), four in-class essays (35%), team work: journal preparation, templates, peer evaluation (20%), and a final exam (25%). Additional information about each of these categories is in the Course Structure. Grades will not be posted on Canvas, however you are welcome to visit the instructor to view them during office hours or by appointment as often as you wish. Plus and minus will be used in assigning a course grade.

You must complete all essays and take the final exam to pass the course. Missed quizzes may *not* be made up and will be recorded as a 50. Permission to write an in-class essay other than on the date scheduled is left solely to professor's discretion and convenience, and will be allowed without penalty *only* in the instance of a valid, officially documented medical condition or an absence from Austin on official and documented university business, preferably before the missed day. Missing a quiz or other assignments is discussed in the Course Structure. The final is scheduled for **Saturday, December 14, 7:00-10:00 pm**, location to be announced. Make any plans for the upcoming break with this date in mind. Please do not ask for an exception.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Students will be able to

Construct a basic, meaningful, and intellectually honest narrative of America's history from colonial settlement through Reconstruction.

Execute a basic set of moves that constitute critical, historical thinking.

Comprehend, ponder, discuss, and write about key ideas, events, and interpretations relating to the history of the period.

Work effectively as a team.

#### **THEMES**

The development democratic practices and institutions

The development of new ideas to meet new situations

The development of sectional and national awareness

The development of economic opportunities

The role of religion, idealism, and perfectionism

## ASSIGNMENTS and SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

All assignments will be posted on the course website. These are to be completed before coming to class on the date they are listed. This syllabus is a general guideline; the sequence, topics, and dates are subject to change.

### WEEK I            Aug 27

a. (Tu) -----

b. (Th) A Philosophy of History

*Note:* Begin reading now to prepare for the ungraded quiz next meeting, and for the graded quiz (on Unit 1) that will be given the following class meeting

### WEEK II           Sep 3

a. Introduction: Quiz (ungraded) on "The Strange Death of Silas Deane"

Journal: What did you find most interesting, vexing, puzzling, stimulating, weird (or choose your own verb) about the reading?

Start a journal on Canvas. As a general practice, post the date and prompt at the top of your journal entry. Be succinct (do not exceed 50 words), thoughtful, and write your best.

b. Read Zinn, pp 1-9 (re historical bias and Columbus) and Johnson, pp. 1-4

Journal: Describe the attitudes Z and J appear to hold toward American history. Write one sentence for each author.

### UNIT 1. SETTLING IN: COLONIAL TIMES TO 1750

Read: Johnson, part 1+ Zinn, chapters 1 & 2

### WEEK III           Sep 10

a. Quizzes: Individual and Team

b. Lecture: Why couldn't they just be British?

### WEEK IV           Sep 17

a. Part 1.1 Read: "Slavery and Freedom: the American Paradox," Edmund Morgan

Review: Zinn, chapter 2, concerning Virginia and development of slavery and representational government.

Journal: Make a list of the reasons Zinn offers to explain why the American colonists conceived of slavery as an answer to their labor problems.

b. Part 1.2 Read: "The Visible and Invisible Worlds of Salem"

Journal: Summarize (see Course Structure). A good summary will provide the details and argument that help you recall the article in conversation—and in essay writing. You may be allowed to use journal entries when writing in-class essays.

### WEEK V           Sep 23

a. Part 1.3: Heyrman, "First Great Awakening"

Journal: Notes in preparation for discussion.

**Essay**

**UNIT 2. REVOLUTION AND A NEW NATION, 1750-c.1800**

Read: Johnson, Part 2, to p. 234; Zinn, chapters 4, 5, & 6, through p. 112

b. Quizzes

WEEK VI Oct 1

- a. Lecture: Finding the Balances  
b. Part 2.1: Read: "Empire of Goods."  
Journal: Summary. See Canvas.

WEEK VII Oct 8

- a. Part 2.2: Tracking the causes (and events) of the American Revolution.  
Journal: Construct a chronology of the 5 most significant events or ideological conditions that lead to the Revolution. Bring this list to class.
- b. Part 2.3: Order v. Liberty. Re-read and mark passages in Z and J.  
Journal: Hamilton and Jefferson are often offered as two exemplars of opposing theories of government. What are the main qualities, actions, beliefs of both men that reveal these theories?  
**Essay**

WEEK VIII Oct 15

**UNIT 3. JACKSON AND THE BEGINNINGS OF A "SUPERNATION," 1800- c.1850**

Read: Johnson, Part 2, beginning p. 234, Part 3, pp. 283-370; 388-396, Zinn, chapter 6, beginning p.112, & chapter 7.

a. Quizzes

- b. Lecture: Turning into a Democracy  
Begin reading Frederick Douglass, *Narrative* NOTE: The essay relating to this book will be in-class, part 4.2.

WEEK IX Oct 22

- a. Part 3.1 Reform and Awakening.  
Be prepared to discuss, in particular, Johnson's ideas about the role of religion in the nation.  
Journal: In our discussion concerning the first Great Awakening we talked about the relationship of social change (or even upheaval) and religion. Cite a quote from Johnson (include page numbers) that caught your attention. Write one or two sentences responding to it.
- b. Part 3.2: Cherokee Removal.  
Journal: Write the two most important arguments you believe your team should use in articulating your team's assigned position on the Cherokee Removal.

WEEK X Oct 29

- a. Part 3.3: Cult of Domesticity  
Journal: The "cult of domesticity" emphasized four qualities: piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity. Comment on one of these qualities as it is revealed in the documents you read.

**UNIT 4: MANIFEST DESTINY AND THE FATE OF THE NATION, 1845-1860**

Read: Johnson, Part 3, pp. 370-388; 396-423; Part 4, through p. 450; and Zinn, chapters 8 & 9, to p. 188.

b. Quizzes

WEEK XI      Nov 5

a. Lecture: The Meaning and Complications of "Go West"

b. Part 4.1: Manifest Destiny.

Journal: Based on "your" document, speculate on the implications of westward expansion for national unity (or, perhaps, dis-unity.) Keep in mind that your texts will provide you additional (and useful) context.

WEEK XII      Nov 12

a. Part 4.2: Discuss: Douglass, *Narrative*. See Canvas.

**Essay**

b. Part 4.3:

Journal: Write two good sentences explaining what you see as the significance of the West in respect to growing animosity between the North and South.  
Turn in hardcopy of Journal.

WEEK XIII      Nov 19

**UNIT 5: Civil War, and Putting the Nation Back Together, 1860-1876**

Read: Johnson, Part 3, beginning at p. 450, & Part 4, and Zinn, chapter 9, pp. 188-210.

a. Quizzes: Individual and Team

b. Lecture: What Happened to National Unity?

WEEK XIV      Nov 26

a. Part 5.1: Slave Narratives. See Canvas.

b. THANKSGIVING No Class

WEEK XV      Dec 3

a. Part 5.2: Slave Narratives, cont.

b. Part 5.3: Choose one of the course themes and write a 5-point chronology that show its development. PRINT (no emails!) and bring to class.

**FINAL EXAM: Due: Saturday, December 14, 5:00 PM.**

*The syllabus, lectures, and exams that comprise this course are the property of P. Restad and are for the exclusive use of those enrolled in this specific class for use in this specific class. They may not be shared, reproduced or summarized in any form, including electronically, partially or in full, without the professor's express, written permission.*