

**History 315K, Unique: 39177**

**Spring 2012**

**The United States, 1492-1865**

**Prof. Neil Kamil**

**Office: GAR 2.146**

**Office Hours: MW 3-4 (and by appointment)**

**TA: Storm Miller (office hours and location to be posted on *Blackboard*)**

**Lectures: MWF 12-1 in BUR 112**

This course is a survey of 400 years of American history, from the Age of Exploration to the Civil War. It meets three times each week for lectures. Your TA Storm Miller at the beginning of class every Friday for about 20 minutes will lead discussion of required readings. Readings are available at the UT Coop, via online sources, and on PCL Reserve. Primary documents will be assigned most weeks on *Blackboard* (check *BB* Wednesday afternoons for the following Friday) from Michael P. Johnson, ed., *Reading the American Past, Vol. 1: to 1877*. Other required readings will include the revolutionary war history *Minutemen and Their World* by Robert A. Gross, and William Freehling's civil war history, *The South Versus the South*. Exact dates these books will be discussed in class will be posted on *Blackboard*; however, provisional dates by week are listed below. **Optional (that is, unassigned) reading** is available from the textbook *Experiencing History: Interpreting America's Past: Volume 1 to 1877*. You needn't buy this expensive book but it may prove useful as a general resource with a good index for those with limited backgrounds.

**Requirements** include midterm and final exams (both essay format), and a quiz on *Minutemen*. Attendance will not be taken at lectures but students who do not attend regularly will naturally find those absences reflected in their grades, which are usually much lower than students who do attend regularly. Study questions will be provided in advance of both exams. Exams will test knowledge of both lectures and readings. There will be a question devoted to *South v. South* on the final. Grades will be calculated according to the following percentages: Final exam 50%, Midterm 40%, Quiz 10%. Plus / minus grades will be assigned. To learn more about this system, go to this link: <http://www.utexas.edu/provost/planning/plus-minus/>. Be aware that the assignment of grades has always been, and remains, up to the discretion of the instructor. Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

Please note that makeup exams will not be given except in extraordinary instances and a physician's letter is usually required. **The final exam date for this course is Saturday, 12 May (7-10 pm)** so ill considered end-of-semester travel plans will not be a valid reason for requesting a makeup. Occasional quizzes that are not listed on the syllabus are optional at the discretion of the instructor or the TAs. **Please note that weeks assigned to specific lectures on the syllabus are flexible as are the lectures themselves and**

**may vary at the instructor's discretion. Failure to complete any single assignment will constitute automatic failure for the course.**

Approximate order of lectures / readings:

**Week one-three** (Friday readings in M. Johnson, check *Blackboard*)

Nature of the Colonial Enterprise; Regional histories of early America; Spain and Columbus; Humanism and the New World; The transatlantic Reformation; Puritanism and Personality in New England

**Week four-six** (Friday readings in M. Johnson; *Minutemen and Their World*, pp xv-170, check *Blackboard*)

**Quiz on Minutemen (Friday, 2 March): 20-minutes.**

Slavery and Staple Crops: British Caribbean and Chesapeake; American Revolution; Forging a New Government: Articles of Confederation and the Constitution; Federalists and anti-Federalists; Washington and Hamilton; Hamilton's Report on Public Credit.

**Midterm (Friday, 16 March): 50-minute essay question.**

**Week seven-nine** (Friday readings in M. Johnson, check *Blackboard*.)

Thomas Jefferson's legacy; Ambiguity of Jeffersonian Republicanism; War of 1812; Westward expansion; Industrial Revolution; Andrew Jackson and what is meant by Jacksonian Democracy; Compromise of 1820; early talk of disunion.

**Week ten-eleven** (Friday readings in M. Johnson, check *Blackboard*.)

Slavery and Abolition; Election of 1848 (Pro-slavery arguments); Compromise of 1850; the continuing vexing question of Slavery and its Expansion west; sectional politics (the census and redistricting); secessionism and the south.

**Week twelve to end of course** (Friday readings in M. Johnson and all of *South v. South*, check *Blackboard*)

Sectional Politics: John Brown; Lincoln, Free Soil, and the Election of 1860; was the south "monolithic", the North? Slavery and Disunion, Civil War, postwar America.

**Final: 3 hrs Saturday, 12 May (7-10 pm)**