

## **HIST 131: AMERICAN HISTORY TO 1865**

Dr. Jason Sellers

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\*please allow at least 24 hours for me to respond (I will usually be quicker)

Office: 218 Monroe Hall

Class times (Monroe 111): Sec. 02: MWF 1-1:50pm, Sec. 03: MWF 12-12:50pm

Office Hours: MWF 10:30-11:30, TR 2-3, and by appointment

### **Course description:**

This course surveys the transformation of North America from pre-1492 through the American Civil War. It begins with the premise that the ultimate form of the United States and its citizenry could not have been foreseen. It thus begins before the arrival of Columbus, and considers non-English colonization as well as a range of non-European experiences. As we examine American colonies, we consider how Native America, Africa, and Europe impacted colonization efforts and settlers, and how the Americas affected those locales and their residents. With the formation of the United States, we transition to a national history while continuing to address the experiences of all people within the country's expanding borders. We conclude by considering how the Civil War resolved or obscured some of the major issues and debates that characterized the Antebellum Era. Central themes will include the interactions and relations of multiple cultures, the evolving role of government, and the inclusion/exclusion of diverse peoples in the citizen body.

### **Course objectives and outcomes:**

Departmental Learning Outcomes

- Understanding of the discipline's diverse methods and processes.
- Ability to analyze sources and arguments.
- Ability to write with clarity about the past.

General Education Requirements Learning Outcomes—Human Experience and Society

- Students will be able to explain human and social experiences and activities from multiple perspectives
- Students will be able to draw appropriate conclusions based on evidence
- Students will be able to transfer knowledge and skills learned to a novel situation

This course fulfills the Human Experience and Society general education requirement; along with HIST 132, this course meets survey requirements for History majors.

### **Readings:**

Required texts:

1. *The American Yawp: A Free and Online, Collaboratively Built American History Textbook*, <http://www.americanyawp.com> (readings are linked in the weekly schedule below, and include both "textbook" chapters and primary source documents)

\*Additional required readings (academic articles) listed on the schedule below will be accessible through the library website or directly online. Learning to both locate and critically read these sources is a significant element of this course, and will be assessed in class discussions, written assignments, and exams.

Additional resource:

2. *Digital History*, <http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu>, is a searchable online textbook, and a better resource for short definitions and summaries of concepts than many other open online resources, including Wikipedia

### **Class participation:**

Attendance will be taken regularly, and you are expected to attend having completed the assigned reading for that day. After the third absence, additional absences will result in the loss of 1/10 of your participation points, and more than six absences will result in a participation grade of 0. This policy does not distinguish between "excused" and "unexcused" absences--the three "free" absences are in place to allow for illness, etc. If it becomes clear from discussions that students are not completing the readings, I reserve the right to substitute reading quizzes (graded P/F) in place of simple attendance. To avoid quizzes, please actively contribute to conversations with your questions and ideas. I will use PowerPoint to display basic outlines of class sessions, key terms, names that might be difficult to spell, and visual materials, and I will post a simplified version of these PowerPoints online for download. These PowerPoints are constructed to supplement lecture, and to guide and assist your in-class note-taking; they do not provide a substitute for attending lecture, nor should they simply be copied verbatim.

### **Grading:**

Attendance/participation:	10%
Quizzes (2):	5% each/10% total
Primary source assignment:	10%
Secondary source assignment:	10%
Essay (3-5 pages):	20%
Midterm:	15%
Final:	25%

*\*Students must complete all required assignments to receive a passing grade in the class.*

This class will not have additional extra credit assignments. However, you may repeat one written assignment for a higher grade. If you elect to do so, you will need to complete an entirely new assignment, submit the new assignment within one week of the original assignment's return, and *turn in the original work along with the new assignment* (the rewrite will not be graded unless it is accompanied by the original assignment with my written feedback); it is often helpful to meet with me to make sure you understand what needs to be addressed. This option is available only if you have turned in the original assignment by the due date.

If you think you may need an extension, you *must* request it in advance; I will not grant extensions after assignments are due. If you are having printer problems, or for some reason are unable to attend class, email the electronic file to me as a Word document before class time or upload it to Canvas (this is also an acceptable way to submit the assignment). If the assignment is not in my possession in some form at the beginning of the class period on the due date, it will be considered late. Late assignments will receive an automatic deduction of one-third of a letter grade, and an additional deduction every day thereafter, and will not be accepted later than one week beyond the original due date.

While I am willing to discuss assignment grades with students, you will need to wait at least 24 hours and have carefully reviewed my comments on your work. You have one week after the return of graded assignments to speak with me; after one week, grades are final.

Students who have missed more than 6 classes, or who do not submit passing work on the map quiz and primary source assignment will be reported as *unsatisfactory* on mid-semester reports.

Numerical grades in this course (I will use the Canvas Gradebook) correspond to the following letter grades: A (93-100); A- (90-92); B+ (87-89); B (83-86); B- (80-82); C+ (77-79); C (73-76); C- (70-72); D+ (67-69); D (63-67); D- (60-62); F (59 and below). I do not round grades, so for instance, a 79.7% is a C+.

### **Students with Disabilities:**

The Office of Disability Resources has been designated by the University as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through the Office of Disability Resources and require accommodations for this class, make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you have not contacted the Office of Disability Resources and need accommodations, I will be happy to help you contact it. The office will require appropriate documentation of disability. The office is located in 401 Lee Hall, and can be reached at 540.654.1266 or [ods@umw.edu](mailto:ods@umw.edu).

### **Honor System:**

Please write and sign the University of Mary Washington honor pledge (“I hereby declare upon my word of honor that I have neither given nor received unauthorized help on this work”) on every written assignment. More information about the Honor System is available at [http://www.umw.edu/honor/fredericksburg/docs/umw\\_honor\\_guidebook\\_july\\_2011.pdf](http://www.umw.edu/honor/fredericksburg/docs/umw_honor_guidebook_july_2011.pdf) You are welcome to discuss your work on assignments with classmates and work together to refine your writing, but your ideas and language must be your own. Exams will be taken individually and without the assistance of notes and texts.

### **Class and reading schedule:**

\*Please bring your primary source reader to class so that you may refer to it for discussion. Try to read the documents early in the week, since we’ll discuss them in class. Articles should be read by the end of the week unless otherwise noted.

### **Week 1**

M 8/29: Introductions, syllabus, and discussion

W 8/31: Pre-contact Native Americans and Americas

F 9/2: Pre-contact Native Americans and Americas (cont’d)

Readings:

+Documents: Native American creation stories

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-new-world/indian-creation-stories/> , Thomas

Morton on Indians of New England <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-new-world/thomas-morton-reflects-on-indians-in-new-england-1637/>  
+ *American Yawp*, ch. 1: The New World, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/01-the-new-world/>

## Week 2

M 9/5: European explorations and contact in Africa and the Americas

W 9/7: Environmental, ecological, and social impacts

F 9/9: English settlement; Discussion--reading academic articles/Merrell, and library guides to primary source and article citations

Readings:

+Documents: Journal of Christopher Columbus

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-new-world/journal-of-christopher-columbus/> ,

Hakluyt on English colonization <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colliding-cultures/richard-hakluyt-makes-the-case-for-english-colonization-1584/> , John

Winthrop's city on a hill <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colliding-cultures/john-winthrop-dreams-of-a-city-on-a-hill-1630/> , recruiting settlers to Carolina

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/british-north-america/recruiting-settlers-to-carolina-1666/>

+Merrell, James. "The Indians' New World: The Catawba Experience." *William and Mary Quarterly* 41 (1984): 537-565.

+ *American Yawp*, ch. 2: Colliding Cultures, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/02-colliding-cultures/>

## \*Week 3

M 9/12: Spanish, French, and Dutch: Traders, conquerors, missionaries

W 9/14: Catching up

+Map quiz

+Discussion: America as a "new world"

F 9/16: Africans in Africa, and African slavery

Readings:

+Documents: Gaspeian Indian <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colliding-cultures/a-gaspesian-indian-defends-his-way-of-life-1641/> , de las Casas

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-new-world/bartolome-de-las-casas-describes-the-exploitation-of-indigenous-peoples-1542/>

+ *American Yawp*, ch. 3: British North America, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/03-british-north-america/> ; and ch. 4: Colonial Society,

<http://www.americanyawp.com/text/04-colonial-society/> [start working on this--it fits our

content through Week 7]

## Week 4

M 9/19: Race and racial slavery

W 9/21: Slave systems and labor

F 9/23: African American culture and resistance

Readings:

+Documents: Equiano on the Middle Passage  
<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/british-north-america/olaudah-equiano-describes-the-middle-passage-1789/> ,  
+*American Yawp*, chs. 3-4  
+Morgan, Edmund. "Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox," *Journal of American History* 59, no. 1 (June 1972): 5-29.

**\*Week 5**

M 9/26: Native American and European peaceful interactions

W 9/28: Native American and European warfare

\*F 9/30: No class—submit your assignment electronically

+Assignment 1: Primary Source Analysis due in class 9/30

Readings:

+Documents: John Lawson <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colliding-cultures/john-lawson-encounters-north-american-indians-1709/>

+*American Yawp*, chs. 3-4

**Week 6**

M 10/3: Culture crossing and exchange

W 10/5: Religion and the Great Awakening

F 10/7: Witchcraft

+Discussion: How did social relations and institutional arrangements create/uphold/undermine racial and gender hierarchies?

Readings:

+Documents: Jonathan Edwards <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colonial-society/jonathan-edwards-revives-northampton-massachusetts-1741/>

+*American Yawp*, chs. 3-4

+Block, Sharon. "Bringing Rapes to Court." *Common-Place* 3: 3 (April 2003).  
<http://www.common-place.org/vol-03/no-03/block/>

**Week 7**

M 10/10: Colonial households (buildings, property, marriage, and work)

W 10/12: Political culture and mercantilism [this is the last lecture with content for which students are responsible on the Midterm exam]

F 10/14: Imperial conflict

Readings:

+Documents: Eliza Lucas letters <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colonial-society/eliza-lucas-letters-1740-1741/> , 1759 war journal

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colonial-society/extracts-from-gibson-cloughs-war-journal-1759/> , Choctaw on the end of the war

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colonial-society/alibamo-mingo-choctaw-leader-reflects-on-the-british-and-french-1765/>

+*American Yawp*, chs. 3-4

**\*Week 8**

M 10/17: Fall Break

W 10/19: The costs of conflict: Pontiac's War, and Navigation Acts

\*F 10/21: \*Midterm exam

Readings:

+Documents: Pontiac's call for war <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colonial-society/pontiac-calls-for-war-1763/>

+Holton, Woody. "'Rebel against Rebel': Enslaved Virginians and the Coming of the American Revolution." *The Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 105, no. 2 (Spring, 1997): 157-192.

### **\*Week 9**

M 10/24: Revolution and Independence

W 11/26: Social impacts of war

\*F 10/28: Confederation and Constitution

+Discussion: How revolutionary was the revolution?

+Reading quiz on Holton, "Enslaved Virginians"

Readings:

+Documents: Thomas Paine <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-american-revolution/thomas-paine-calls-for-american-independence-1776/> , women in South Carolina <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-american-revolution/women-in-south-carolina-experience-occupation-1780/> , Adamses on women's rights

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-american-revolution/abigail-and-john-adams-converse-on-womens-rights-1776/> , Jefferson on race

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-early-republic/thomas-jefferson-notes-on-the-state-of-virginia-1788/>

+*American Yawp*, ch. 5: The American Revolution,

<http://www.americanyawp.com/text/05-the-american-revolution/> ; ch. 6: A New Nation,

<http://www.americanyawp.com/text/06-a-new-nation/>

### **Week 10**

M 10/31: First Party System and the role of the federal government

W 11/2: Market Revolution and urban growth

F 11/4: Defining middle and laboring classes and cultures

Readings:

+Documents: Washington's Farewell Address <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/a-new-nation/george-washington-farewell-address-1796/> , blacksmith apprentice contract

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-market-revolution/blacksmith-apprentice-contract-1836/> , on the Erie Canal <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-market-revolution/a-traveler-describes-life-along-the-erie-canal-1829/>

+*American Yawp*, ch. 8: The Market Revolution, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/08-the-market-revolution/>

+Steinberg, Theodore. "Dam-Breaking in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Merrimack Valley: Water, social conflict, and the Waltham-Lowell Mills." *Journal of Social History* 24: 1 (1990): 25-45.

### **\*Week 11**

M 11/7: Age of Jackson

W 11/9: Indian Removal and nativist movements

\*F 11/11: Frontier settlement and image, and international affairs

+Discussion posts on Canvas (required participation): Did economic development in early America—including the colonial era—provide or limit opportunities for individuals?

+Assignment 2: Secondary Source Analysis due electronically

Readings:

+Documents: Tecumseh <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-early-republic/tecumseh-letter-to-william-henry-harrison-1810/>, debates about war <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-early-republic/debate-over-the-war-of-1812-1811/>, Andrew Jackson on the bank <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/democracy-in-america/andrew-jacksons-veto-message-against-re-chartering-the-bank-of-the-united-states-1832/>, Cherokee petition <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/manifest-destiny/ Cherokee-petition-protesting-removal-1836/>

+*American Yawp*, ch. 7: The Early Republic, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/07-the-early-republic/>; ch. 9: Democracy in America, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/09-democracy-in-america/>

## Week 12

M 11/14: Reform movements, utopian communities, and the Second Great Awakening

W 11/16: Westward expansion and Manifest Destiny: Texas and California

F 11/18: Westward expansion and Manifest Destiny: Texas and California (cont'd)

Readings:

+Documents: Charles Finney <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/religion-and-reform/revivalist-charles-g-finney-emphasizes-human-choice-in-salvation-1836/>, John L. O'Sullivan on Manifest Destiny <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/manifest-destiny/john-osullivan-declares-americas-manifest-destiny-1845/>, a woman on the Oregon Trail <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/manifest-destiny/diary-of-a-woman-migrating-to-oregon-1853/>

+*American Yawp*, ch. 10: Religion and Reform, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/10-religion-and-reform/>; ch. 12: Manifest Destiny, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/12-manifest-destiny/>

+John Demos, "Viewpoints on the China Trade: A young nation looks to the Pacific," *Common-Place* 5, no. 2 (2005). <http://www.common-place.org/vol-05/no-02/demos/index.shtml>

## Week 13

M 11/21: Catch-up and discussion

+Discussion: To what extent is "American history" global?

W 11/23, F 11/25: Thanksgiving break

[note: this is a good time to get started on Assignment 3]

Readings:

+*American Yawp*, ch. 11: The Old South, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/11-the-old-south/>

+Natalie Joy, "Cherokee Slaveholders and Radical Abolitionists," *Common-place* 10, no. 4 (July 2010). <http://www.common-place.org/vol-10/no-04/joy/>

## **Week 14**

M 11/28: Free African Americans, and domestic slavery

W 11/30: African American culture and resistance, slavery debates

F 12/2: Expansion and slavery in mid-century politics and sectionalism

Readings:

+Documents: David Walker's Appeal <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/religion-and-reform/david-walkers-appeal-to-the-colored-citizens-of-the-world-1829/> , William

Lloyd Garrison <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/religion-and-reform/william-lloyd-garrison-introduces-the-liberator-1831/> , *Uncle Tom's Cabin*

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-sectional-crisis/harriet-beecher-stowe-uncle-toms-cabin-1852/> ,

+*American Yawp*, ch. 11: The Old South, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/11-the-old-south/> , ch. 13: The Sectional Crisis, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/13-the-sectional-crisis/>,

+Anti-slavery Alphabet: <https://m.flickr.com/#/photos/mississippi-dept-of-archives-and-history/sets/72157631225548170/>

## **\*Week 15**

M 12/5: Civil War timeline and military events

W 12/7: Civil War and its social impacts

\*F 12/9: History colloquium, no history classes

+Assignment 3 due 12/9 via email or Canvas, or in the instructor's mailbox

Readings:

+Documents: Republican Party Platform <http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-sectional-crisis/1860-republican-party-platform/> , South Carolina Secedes

<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/the-sectional-crisis/south-carolina-declaration-of-secession-1860/>

+*American Yawp*, ch. 14: The Civil War, <http://www.americanyawp.com/text/14-the-civil-war/>

+ Hodes, Martha, "The Mercurial Nature and Abiding Power of Race: A Transnational Family Story," *American Historical Review* 108, no. 1 (February 2003): 84-118.

**\*Final Exam:** Section 02 (1-1:50), Monday, Dec. 12, 12-2:30pm

Section 03 (12-12:50pm), Friday, Dec. 16, 12-2:30pm