

State University of New York at Oswego – Course Outline

- I. **Course Number and Credit:** HIS 202, 3 S.H.
- II. **Course Title:** History of the United States to 1865
- III. **Course Description:** This course explores the making of American society and culture—the product of cooperation and conflict among peoples from three continents (North America, Africa, and Europe)—from the 1500s to the end of the Civil War. The focus will be upon recognizing the diversity of the American experience and highlighting the agency of all historical actors involved in the struggle across time to make America a place of greater opportunity, equality, and justice for both individuals and communities living within a range of identities. These key themes will be addressed by employing multiple analytic categories, including, but not limited to: economics, politics, culture, race, ethnicity, and gender.
- IV. **Prerequisites:** None
- V. **Justification:** History 202 is designed to satisfy the General Education requirements in American history and the Diversity, Identity, and Social Justice in the U.S.. History 202 addresses the following learning outcomes in these two General Education categories (see Objectives)

As a course that satisfied the Diversity, Identity, and Social Justice in the U.S. General Education requirement, History 202 focuses on the continuing struggle among different groups over resources, social status, and political power. American society grew out of both consensus and conflict between these diverse groups, the most important instances of which revolved around the problem of systemic marginalization and the associated fights to either preserve or overthrow those systems. Two watershed events of this period—the Revolution and the Civil War—serve as focal points, when Americans of myriad backgrounds struggled -- often successfully, often not -- to create a common set of beliefs that could guide the nation into the future. While both the Revolution and the Civil War arguably furthered the causes of social justice within in their own difficult historical contexts, they also perpetuated many inequalities between Americans, whose legacies we inhabit today, and of which students should gain a critical understanding.

As an introductory course for history majors or minors, History 202 provides a basic grounding in the essentials of American history and of historical inquiry and critical thinking.

Several sections of the course will be offered each semester, with enrollments varying depending upon student demand. Enrollments may range from 19 to 90 or more.

- VI. **Course Objectives:**

As a survey course, emphasis will be placed upon teaching methods of historical inquiry, critical thinking, and basic content. While historiography and interpretative disagreements are noted, this is not a theory-laden course. However, certain broad areas of early American scholarship over the past several decades form the basis for this course and makes it an appropriate option for both the American History and Diversity, Identity, and Social Justice in the United States General Education categories. The first has been the reframing of race and gender to better understand oppressed people(s) as historical agents. The work of Eric Foner, John W. Blassingame, and more recently Claudio Saunt and Thavolia Glymph are central to this project. Second is the increasing focus upon the impact people of color and self-described “radicals” have had in fundamentally influencing the course of early American history (see Marcus Rediker, Brian DeLay, etc.). Third, over the past decade historians like Sven Beckert and Walter Johnson, among others, have examined how the rise of capitalism was inextricably tied to African slavery and other systems of oppression. Fourth is what scholars

often call “whiteness studies.” David R. Roediger, Nell Irvin Painter, and others describe the immense economic, social, and culture consequences slavery and Jim Crow have had in creating a system of racial oppression (and ordering) that continues to this day.

Upon completing this course, the student will be able to:

1. place important events, developments, and persons in the basic narrative of American history (LO#1 American History);
2. students will be able to exhibit and understanding of America’s evolving relationship with the rest of the world (LO#2 American History);
3. analyze or investigate power and oppression in early America, as a pluralistic and increasingly democratic society took shape, with special attention to the role complex networks of social structure and systems play in individual and group identity formation and the creation and perpetuation of dynamics of power, privilege, and oppression in the United States (LO #2 American History, LO#1 Diversity, Identity);
4. distinguish the ways in which Native Americans, African Americans and religious minorities such as Quakers, Jews, Roman Catholics, and Mormons confronted the customs and values of the broader community (LO#2 Diversity, Identity);

## VII. Course Outline:

- I. The First Americans
  - a. African and Asian origins
  - b. Paleo-Indian hunters
  - c. Agricultural settlements and chiefdoms
- II. Native Americans in the 1490s
- III. Meso-American Culture and Mississippian Culture. Focus upon the similarities and differences between large scale urban Native societies in the Americas and their contemporaries in Europe (dispelling the stagist myth of European “civilization” vs. Native “savagery” subsequently created by colonial powers)
- IV. Europe in the Age of Exploration
  - a. Mediterranean trade and European exploration
  - b. Portuguese Exploration
    - i. The Portuguese in Africa
    - ii. African resistance confined expeditions to coastal trading posts (see learning objectives)
    - iii. The rise of chattel slavery (compare to earlier forms of slavery in Africa, Asia, and Europe)
- V. Spanish exploration and conquest (Mexico, etc.)
  - a. The toll of Spanish conquest and colonization
    - i. By 1560 major centers of native civilization conquered
    - ii. Emphasis devastating impact of “old world” diseases
    - iii. Beginning of importation of African slaves to redress need for laborers
    - iv. Wealth taken from Aztecs and Incas propels Spanish power
- VI. English colony in Chesapeake
  - a. Cooperation and conflict between Natives and English. Here and elsewhere in the course differences between Native and European political systems, social structures, economic patterns, and religious beliefs will be addressed in order to see early American history from an ethnohistorical, or Native, perspective.
  - b. Impact of tobacco cultivation in Chesapeake
    - i. Servant labor system

- ii. Expansion leads to more violence between English and Natives (see learning objectives)
- c. Bacon's Rebellion and declining morality rate
- d. The growth of a slave labor system by late 17<sup>th</sup> century
- VII. The Pueblo Revolt and Native resistance to Spanish exploitation (see learning objectives)
- VIII. The settlement of the Carolinas—colonies based upon African slavery from inception
- IX. Puritanism and the English Reformation
- X. Puritans and the Settlement of New England
  - a. The evolution of New England society
  - b. Religious controversies and economic changes
  - c. Native resistance with a focus upon King Philip's War as a seminal moment in early American history where Natives created new forms of political and cultural union to oppose their dispossession. These forms would endure into the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, allowing Native peoples to remain central agents in the colonial, revolutionary and early republic periods. (see learning objectives)
- XI. The founding of the Middle Colonies
- XII. The colonies and the British Empire
  - a. Economic and political policies
- XIII. Growing population and expanding economy in British North American (18<sup>th</sup> century)
  - a. New England: from Puritan settlers to Yankee traders/farmers
  - b. The Middle Colonies: immigrants, wheat, heterogeneity
  - c. Plantation colonies: land of slavery
    - i. Slave labor and African-American culture (see learning objectives)
    - ii. Note ways slaves resisted their bondage
      - 1. Stono Rebellion (1739)
    - iii. Tobacco, rice, and wealth
      - 1. Domination of slaveholding gentry over poorer whites and, of course, slaves
  - d. Unifying experiences across British North America
    - i. Commerce and consumption
    - ii. Religion, Enlightenment, revivalism
  - e. Borderlands and colonial politics in British Empire
    - i. Seven Years' War (1754-1763)
    - ii. Central participation of diverse Native groups in the struggle. Focus upon Algonquian and Iroquoian efforts to preserve a multipolar continent in which Native peoples could maintain their lands and cultures alongside expanding Euro-American populations.
    - iii. The consequences of the war
      - 1. Proclamation of 1763
      - 2. Impact of Pontiac's Rebellion: further efforts by diverse Native peoples to maintain North America as a multi-polar space despite the growing power of the British Empire. Focus upon the Delaware prophet, Neolin, as a spiritual leader later emulated by other figures of Native resistance and agency.
- XIV. The British Empire, colonial crisis, and revolution
  - a. British economic policies (taxation acts, etc.)
  - b. Violence between colonists and British authorities
  - c. Domestic insurrections, 1774-75
    - i. Lexington and Concord
    - ii. The impact of Lord Dunmore's Proclamation in Virginia

1. The significance of Dunmore's "Ethiopian Regiment" in Virginia for the future of African slavery and white support for the Revolution (see learning objectives)
2. Slave rebellions (or planned rebellions) elsewhere in British North America
- d. The war for America, 1775-1783 (detail how the Revolution played out)
- XV. Building a Republic, 1775-1789
  - a. The Articles of Confederation (note problem of western land)
  - b. The sovereign states
  - c. Equality and slavery
    - i. Note that the ideals of the Revolution about natural equality and liberty presented challenges to the institution of slavery.
    - ii. Northern enslaved blacks challenged their bondage in multiple ways
      1. Petitioning state governments for their natural right to freedom. (see learning objectives)
      2. Bargaining with owners to purchase their freedom
      3. Freedom suits, whereby enslaved blacks took their owners to court to challenge the legality of their bondage
      4. "Slave quitting," whereby enslaved blacks left an unjust/abusive owner for another
      5. Running away with no intention of returning to their owners
      6. Truancy, a form of temporary escape whereby enslaved blacks could recoup some of their "time"
    - iii. Note that the ideals of the Revolution about natural equality and liberty presented challenges to the institution of slavery.
    - iv. Northern enslaved blacks challenged their bondage by petitioning state governments for their natural right to freedom. (see learning objectives)
  - d. Problems with the Confederation and creating of the U.S. Constitution
    - i. Democracy versus republicanism
    - ii. Ratification of the Constitution
- XVI. New nation takes form, 1789-1800
  - a. Washington's administration
  - b. Bill of Rights
  - c. Republican Motherhood
    - i. Women's exclusion from political activity did not mean they had no civic role or responsibility. (see learning objectives)
  - d. Hamilton's economic policies
  - e. Conflicts West, East, and South
    - i. Conflict with Native Americans on frontier
      1. Shawnee and Miami defeat American troops (see learning objectives)
      2. American break Native resistance at Battle of Fallen Timbers
    - ii. Impact of Treaty of Greenville
    - iii. U.S. challenges with France and England
  - f. The rise of the first party system
- XVII. The Early Republic
  - a. Jefferson's Presidency
    - i. Republican visions and reality
    - ii. Gabriel's revolt, fears over slave insurrections, and white violence (see learning objectives)
    - iii. The promise of the West

1. Louisiana Purchase
    2. Lewis and Clark Expedition
  - iv. Challenges overseas
    1. The Barbary Wars
    2. Impressment and embargo
  - b. Madison's Presidency
    - i. Continuing conflict in the West
      1. Pan-Native cultural revitalization movement led by the Shawnees Tenskwatawa and Tecumseh, drawing from previous efforts dating back to King Philip's War. Focus upon Tecumseh's vision for an independent Native land in the Ohio River Valley (see learning objectives)
      2. U.S. policy of divide and conquer with treaties
      3. Battle of Tippecanoe
    - ii. The War of 1812—winners and losers
  - c. Women's status in the Early Republic
    - i. Women and the law (legal doctrine of *feme covert*)
    - ii. Women and church governance
    - iii. Female education
  - d. Status of free blacks (North and South)
    - i. Racist assumptions about (i.e. racially inferior to whites)
    - ii. Segregation of (i.e. housing)
    - iii. Exclusion of (i.e. trades and commerce)
    - iv. Restrictions on voting and mobility (white male preserves)
    - v. Community institutions (built as a response to white exclusion and repression)
      1. Independent churches and mutual aid societies
      2. Dance Cellars (New York City)
  - d. Monroe and Adams
    - i. Expanding democracy for white men and the implications for free blacks, slaves, and women (see learning objectives)
    - ii. The Missouri Compromise and the dividing line between free and slave states
    - iii. The Monroe Doctrine
      1. The First Seminole War and native resistance in Florida (see learning objectives)
      2. The U.S. posture towards Europe and South America
- XVIII. The Expanding Republic, 1815-1840
- a. The Market Revolution
    - i. Factories, working women, and wage labor
    - ii. Banks and lawyers
    - iii. Booms and busts
  - b. Popular politics and partisan identity
  - c. Jackson defines the Democratic Party
    - i. Indian policy and the Trail of Tears
    - ii. Indian Removal Act of 1830
    - iii. Native resistance in Wisconsin and across the South
    - iv. The Second Seminole War (see learning objectives)
    - v. Jackson and SCOTUS – *Worcester v. Georgia*
  - d. The Tariff of Abominations and Nullification
  - e. The Bank War
  - f. Cultural shifts, the Second Great Awakening, and Reform
    - i. The family and separate spheres

- ii. Education and training children
  - iii. The temperance movement and moral reform
- g. Organizing against slavery (the rise of Immediate Abolitionism)
  - i. The critical role of free black communities in the North challenging slavery (note critical impact of David Walker, Maria Stewart, and others) (see learning objectives)
  - ii. William Lloyd Garrison and *The Liberator*
  - iii. Prominent role women play in the movement (The Grimke sisters, etc.)
- h. Van Buren and the politics of slavery
- i. Two panics and the election of 1840 – the Second Party System
- XIX. The New West and Free North, 1840-1860
  - a. Economic and industrial revolution
  - b. Free Labor: promise and reality
    - i. Economic inequality
    - ii. Immigrants and Free Labor
  - c. Westward movement – “Manifest Destiny” (essentially captures the ideology of a white settler democracy)
    - i. Oregon and overland trail
    - ii. Mormon exodus
    - iii. Mexican borderlands
      - 1. Texas, the U.S., and Comanche power (see learning objectives)
  - d. Expansion and the Mexican-American War
    - i. The role of slavery in the Texas annexation
  - e. California and Gold
  - f. Reforming self and society
    - i. Utopian experiments
    - ii. Women’s rights activists
      - 1. Seneca Falls 1848
      - 2. Abolitionist connections (see learning objectives)
    - iii. Abolitionists and the American ideal
      - 1. Tension between white and black abolitionist (ex. Frederick Douglass and the question of political activity)
      - 2. Types of actions taken (see learning objectives)
- XX. The Slave South, 1820-60
  - a. Increasing distinctiveness of the South
  - b. The plantation economy – a system predicated on violence
  - c. Plantation masters and mistresses (the enslavers)
  - d. The world the slaves made
    - i. Work regime
    - ii. Family, religion, and community
    - iii. Resistance and rebellion – note the wide spectrum of slave resistance, from day-to-day actions (slow work, breaking tools, running away) to rebellions like that led by Nat Turner. (see learning objectives)
  - e. Free blacks and poor whites in the antebellum South
  - f. The politics of slavery
- XXI. The Dividing House, 1846-1861
  - a. The Wilmot Proviso and the expansion of slavery
  - b. The Compromise of 1850
    - i. The Fugitive Slave Act (1850)
  - c. The impact of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*

- d. The Kansas-Nebraska Act
  - e. The realignment of the party system – the rise of the Republicans
  - f. Know-Nothings and nativism
  - g. “Bleeding Kansas” and bloody violence on the Senate floor
  - h. The *Dred Scott* decision
  - i. The Lincoln-Douglas debates
  - j. John Brown’s Raid and the collapse of the Union
- XXII. The Civil War, 1861-65
- a. Attack on Fort Sumter
  - b. The Combatants and their expectations/goals
  - c. 1861-1862
    - i. Stalemate in the East
    - ii. Union victories in the West
    - iii. The war on the Atlantic and international diplomacy
  - d. Union and Freedom
    - i. From slaves to contrabands – how slaves helped subvert the CSA by fleeing to Union lines (see learning objectives)
    - ii. From contrabands to free people
      - 1. The Emancipation Proclamation and the changing meaning of the war
      - 2. Black soldiers’ critical role in meeting Union manpower needs
      - 3. The role these soldiers and their families played in the destruction of slavery in the South. (see learning objectives)
  - e. Political and economic developments in the North and South
  - f. Union Victory, 1863-65
    - i. Vicksburg and Gettysburg
    - ii. Grant takes command
    - iii. The election of 1864
    - iv. The Confederacy collapses
  - g. Lincoln’s assassination and the challenges facing an uncertain people going forward

VIII. **Methods of Instruction:** This course will use lectures, discussions, films, and a variety of active learning exercises.

IX. **Course Requirements:** This course will require exams, quizzes, and papers.

X. **Means of Evaluation:** There will be exams, quizzes, and papers.

XI. **Resources:** The History Department has the faculty resources and expertise to offer this course. We have verified with computing services that they have ~~(or will have)~~ sufficient resources available to enable us to offer this course. The department also confirms that additional equipment and facilities required to offer this course ~~(such as multimedia equipment)~~ are available ~~or will be available before this course is offered.~~

XII. **Bibliography** (selected):

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