

American Civilization I

Sussex Tech High School/Widener University
HIST121E ST
Fall 2015

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Course Goals:

This course surveys American history from the beginning of British colonization to the end of the Civil War. It is designed to help you absorb the knowledge and learn the skills that history teaches:

- Basic factual knowledge about and interpretive understanding of American history for the 1607-1865 period, structured around the major themes below.
- Historical analytical skills: critically studying primary and secondary sources, placing historical events in chronological and critical context, creating historical narratives and analyses, supporting analyses with persuasive facts, and understanding historical agency and causation.
- Expository writing skills: creating clear arguments based on specific primary and secondary sources written in a standard essay form.

Major Themes:

We will tie together the history we study through the following themes. They are meant to not only make the course coherent, but also allow us to put particular trends, events, people, and institutions into context with each other.

Colonization and imperialism

U.S. Expansionism

Slavery

Nation-building: the creation of the United States

Early industrialization

Race, class, gender, and ethnicity

Preparation for Class:

In order to succeed in this class, students should:

- Complete all readings during the week that they are assigned: Set aside 60-90 minutes to complete the readings for each unit, take notes, and write down any questions you may have about the readings.
- Log into WebStudy at least once every other day to check your email, review messages from the instructor, and read forum comments from your classmates.
- Plan extra time for written assignments and exam preparation.
- Stay organized: Reserve a whole notebook, or a section of a notebook, for this course. Keep all reading notes, printouts, and graded work together in the notebook.
- Contact the instructor with any question as soon as they arise (see below)

Plagiarism Policy

- Plagiarism is unacceptable and is treated as a serious violation of academic integrity. Students submitting plagiarized work will receive **NO SCORE** for the assignment. If a student repeatedly commits plagiarism during the semester, the student will automatically receive an **"F"** grade for the course and will be reported to the Sussex Tech administration for further disciplinary actions.
- Plagiarism consists of copying **more than two consecutive words** from an original source. Avoid plagiarism by using proper citation methods in all your written work. We will discuss proper citation methods in class.

Required Books:

- Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History*, Vol. 1: To 1877, 2nd Seagull Edition. 978-0-393-93255-3
- Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave, Written by Himself* (Any complete edition)
- Documents and Articles Available For Download Through WebStudy

Assessment Measures and Course Requirements:

- Grading will be based on the following work:
 - Short Primary-Source Document Analysis Assignments: 20%
 - Reading Quizzes: 30%
 - Midterm Exam: 20%
 - Final Exam: 30%
- Exam Makeups: Makeups will be given only upon presentation of valid documentation demonstrating a medical or family emergency. There will be no makeups for the final exam.
- I do not accept late assignments except in the case of documented medical or family emergencies
- If documented medical or family emergencies prevent you from participating in the class, or completing assigned work, please contact me as soon as possible to discuss the situation
- An incomplete, or "I" grade, will only be given to students if they cannot complete all course requirements due to exceptional and documented personal circumstances. Students must have completed the majority of assignments for the course. Incompletes will not be given to students if they fall behind in their work due to poor time management practices.

Detailed Description of Assessment Measures:

- Course Participation: **Participation is mandatory** for History 121. You must log into WebStudy multiple times per week to review assignments, complete online activities, and submit work.
- Document Analysis Assignments: These are short written assignments that will help you prepare for the midterm and final exams. You will be asked to answer questions about historical documents and use information from the textbook readings to analyze the historical documents. You will also discuss the historical documents with your classmates in the weekly discussion forums.
- Reading Quizzes: These short weekly quizzes will assess your understanding of the assigned readings. You must complete the readings in order to succeed on the quizzes. The quizzes will be multiple-choice and you will have 20 minutes to complete them.
- Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will consist of essay questions based on primary-source documents. The exam will be open book and will be timed. In order to earn the best possible grade on the exam, you will need to use information and ideas from the readings, lectures, and class discussions to present an analysis of the historical documents. Your midterm grade will be based on your grade for the midterm exam plus your document analysis and weekly reading quiz scores.
- Final Exam: The final will consist of essay questions based on primary-source documents and will be similar in format to the midterm exam.

Course Schedule

Week of August 31

- Course Introduction
- The Columbian Exchange
READING: Foner, Ch. 1 (pp. 1-24)
- Early European Exploration and Settlement
READING: Foner, Ch. 1 (pp. 24-44)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Working with Online and Primary Sources

Week of September 7

- Early English Settlement Efforts
READING: Foner, Ch. 2 (pp. 45-82)
- The Chesapeake Region and New England
READING: Foner, Ch. 2 (pp. 45-82)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: English Colonization Document Analysis

Week of September 14

- The English Civil War and the Expansion of Colonies During the Restoration
READING: Foner, Ch. 2 (82-87)
Ch. 3 (88-97)
- The British Empire and the Crisis of the Late 17th Century
READING: Foner, Ch. 3 (pp. 105-117)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: 17th-Century Colonial Society Document Analysis

Week of September 21

- Origins of African Slavery in the Atlantic World
READING: Foner, Ch. 3 (pp. 97-104)
- Slavery in the Atlantic World
READING: Foner, Ch. 4 Ch. 4 (pp. 130-145)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Slavery in 18th Century America

Week of September 28

- Life in the American Colonies in the Early-18th Century
READING: Foner, Ch. 3 (pp. 117-127)
Ch. 4 (pp. 145-161)
- The Growing Colonial Crisis
READING: Foner, Ch. 4 (pp. 161-175)
Ch. 5 (pp. 176-190)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Colonial Society in the 18th Century

Week of October 5

- Independence
READING: Foner, Ch. 5 (pp. 190-210)
- External and Internal Revolutions
READING: Foner, Ch. 6 (pp. 211-246)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Making Sense of the American Revolution

Week of October 12

- Founding a New Republic and Creating a New Constitution
READING: Foner, Ch. 7 (pp. 247-280)
- **MIDTERM EXAM (Due by October 19)**
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: The Constitution

Week of October 19

- The Early Years of the Republic—The Federalists
READING: Foner, Ch. 8 (pp. 281-301)
- The Early Years of the Republic—The Democratic Republicans
READING: Foner, Ch. 8 (pp. 301-316)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Early Republic Politics

Week of October 26

- Transformations—Economic and Technological
READING: Foner, Ch. 9 (pp. 317-337)
- Transformations—Social and Cultural
READING: Foner, Ch. 9 (pp. 337-351)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: National Transformations

Week of November 2

- The Rise of Andrew Jackson
READING: Foner, Ch. 10 (pp. 352-375)
- The Age of Jackson
READING: Foner, Ch. 10 (pp. 375-390)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Jackson's Legacy

Week of November 9

- Slavery and the South
READING: Foner, Ch. 11 (pp. 391-414)
- Slavery and the South Continued
READING: Foner, Ch. 11 (pp. 414-426)
Douglass, *Autobiography*, Preface, Ch. 1-3
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Slavery in the 19th Century

Week of November 16

- An Age of Reform
READING: Foner, Ch. 12 (pp. 427-439, 450-460)
- Abolitionism
READING: Foner, Ch. 12 (pp. 439-450)
Douglass, *Autobiography*, Ch. 4-7
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Reform

Week of November 23

- **THANKSGIVING BREAK (No Classwork Due)**

Week of November 30

- Slavery and Abolitionism
READING: Douglass, *Autobiography*, Preface, Ch. 8-12
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Abolitionism

Week of December 7

- Westward Expansion in the 1830s and 1840s
READING: Foner, Ch. 13 (pp. 460-475)
- Rising Sectional Tensions
READING: Foner, Ch. 13 (pp. 475-498)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: Origins of the Civil War

Week of December 14

- The Civil War
READING: Foner, Ch. 13 (pp. 498-502)
Ch. 14 (pp. 503-522)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: The Civil War

December 21-January 2

- **WINTER BREAK (No Classwork Due/Use the Time to Review)**

Week of January 4

- The Civil War Continued
READING: Foner, Ch. 14 (pp. 522-545)
- DUE: Reading Quiz
- ONLINE DISCUSSION: The Civil War and FINAL EXAM REVIEW

Week of January 11

- **FINAL EXAM (Must be completed by January 15)**