HIST 220: U.S. HISTORY TO 1877

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Student Learning Outcomes:

Brigham Young University: https://learningoutcomes.byu.edu/

General Education: https://learningoutcomes.byu.edu/#college=G7J84TjksLF7&department=bq-a_GEN1_g9

History Department: http://learningoutcomes.byu.edu/#college=HC3r2qmK9h2_&department=lFLwnk4sk4fQ&program=0drD9HnXoMUZ

HIST 220: http://history.byu.edu/Pages/220outcomes.aspx

The Course: The course both introduces you to U.S. history before 1877 and to the processes of thinking historically—that is, thinking about the world in terms of change over time. It pushes you to read, write, think, and speak critically. I consider each a "transportable" skill that should be honed in a course like ours. To do this, we engage documents relating to the peoples, places, institutions, and ideas in the American past: how have different groups of people related to each other over time? How did things come to be the way they are in the United States? How have questions of power and human agency shaped national development? Students who put forth the requisite time and effort (i.e., reading, writing, speaking, listening) will be able to (1) describe the peoples who shaped the social, political, and cultural development of the United States to 1877 (2) identify major events, trends, and transformations in the nation's history over that span, (3) critically examine period documents, (4) offer informed perspectives on the ways scholars have understood U.S. history, and (5) demonstrate the critical skills involved in historical scholarship. Examinations assess students’ mastery of the various course materials (readings, lectures, films). Several writing assignments given throughout the semester relate to course readings. Students will read roughly 1,400 pages and write some 40 total pages—the heavy reading and writing loads ensure that students will be doing each more or less daily.

Required Texts:


Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812 (Vintage, 1991)

Assessment: Final grades are based on a midterm exam, a final exam, several brief writing responses, two longer essays, and attendance and participation in class discussion. Students should keep track of test dates and assignment deadlines—you may or may not be reminded. The exams are worth 100 points; the writing responses are worth 5 points each (100 points total); the two longer essays are worth 20 points each; attendance and participation is worth 15 points. A final grade will be determined by calculating a percentage of the earned points and possible points on the following scale:

- 94 – 100% A
- 90 – 93% A-
- 87 – 89% B+
- 84 – 86% B
- 80 – 83% B-
- 77 – 79% C+
- 74 – 76% C
- 70 – 73% C-
- 67 – 69% D+
- 64 – 66% D
- 60 – 63% D-
- 0 – 59% E
Submitting Written Work: All written work will be submitted via file upload in Learning Suite. Each assignment is due one hour before the beginning of class.

Late Work: Papers received later than one hour before class on the day they are due are assessed a two-point penalty (8 points on the longer two essays; consider this the “I had a crazy week and this class doesn’t matter as much to me as my other classes” penalty). Papers submitted the following day (note: not “following class day”) receive a three-point penalty (12 points on the longer two essays). Work turned in thereafter receives no credit. Exams taken late (except in cases of genuine emergencies, as determined by me) are assessed a similar penalty (to be determined on a case-by-case basis).

Extra Credit: To add 10 points to your final total, read one of the following texts during the semester and submit an 800-word review of the book that answers the following questions: (1) What is the author’s main argument(s)? (2) What are the book’s strengths? (3) Weaknesses? (4) How did the book shape or enrich your understanding? Students are responsible for securing extra credit titles and can do so through HBLL checkout, interlibrary loan, or personal purchase.

T.H. Breen, American Insurgents, American Patriots: The Revolution of the People (Hill and Wang, 2010)
John L. Brooke, Columbia Rising: Civil Life on the Upper Hudson from the Revolution to the Age of Jackson (North Carolina, 2010)
Richard Carwardine, Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power (Knopf, 2006)
Erskine Clarke, Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic (Yale, 2005)
Drew Gilpin Faust, This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War (Knopf, 2008)
Eric Foner, A Short History of Reconstruction (Harper Perennial, 1990)
Karen Halttunen, Confidence Men and Painted Women (Yale, 1983)
Pekka Hämäläinen, The Comanche Empire (Yale, 2008)
Walter Johnson, Soul By Soul: Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market (Harvard, 1999)
Linda K. Kerber, Women of the Republican Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America (North Carolina, 1980)
Pauline Maier, Ratification: Americans Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788 (Simon and Schuster, 2010)
Paul W. Mapp, The Elusive West and the Contest for Empire, 1713-1763 (North Carolina, 2011)
Carla Gardina Pestana, Protestant Empire: Religion and the Making of the British Atlantic World (Penn, 2009)
Daniel K. Richter, Facing East From Indian Country: A Native History of Early America (Harvard, 2001)
Peter Silver, Our Savage Neighbors: How Indian War Transformed Early America (Norton, 2007)
Christine Stansell, City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860 (Knopf, 1986)
Alfred F. Young, The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution (Beacon, 2000)
Recording Lectures: You may make audio recordings of lectures, but under no circumstances should you distribute them publicly in any format. I take your continued registration in the course as an agreement that you will not distribute or broadcast lectures, even after the course has concluded.

FHSS Writing Lab: If you are struggling with academic writing or simply want to improve, the College of Family, Home, and Social Sciences offers a writing lab to help. To improve your paper’s organization, structure, focus, tone, and documentation style, you can visit the lab in 1049 JFSB to meet with a peer advisor. All advisors are students from our college and are trained in APA, Turabian, and ASA styles. To prepare for a tutorial, take (1) a copy of the assignment, (2) a hard copy of your draft, whatever stage it may be in, and (3) a list of questions and concerns you have about your paper. Walk in Monday – Friday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. or make an appointment online: http://fhsswriting.byu.edu.

Note on Class Participation: I reserve the right to adjust borderline grades up or down according to attendance and participation in class discussion. Some thoughts on historic problem areas: 1. Each cell phone ring not only derails my train of thought, depending on the ring tone, it gets you thinking about things other than U.S. history. 2. Texters occupy a special place of contempt in my heart, worlds without end. Simply tell your “homegirlz” and/or “homeslices” that The Man has repressed your texting rights for a few hours each week. 3. Electronic devices should be used for course work only, in other words. Other activities—watching videos of bears falling out of trees, adjusting fantasy football rosters, reading up on celebrity gossip—are egregious violations of class policy and will be answered with a cup of steaming wrath, filled to the brim and overflowing.

Tips for Success/Disclaimers/Fair Warnings: This information probably summarizes what you found on RateMyProfessor.com. (I wouldn’t know; I only looked once and, after some quiet sobbing and suffocating thoughts of inadequacy, I swore I’d never go back. And I haven’t.)

1. I talk fast.
2. I sometimes use big words.
3. Students have described my exams as “ridiculously hard.” Other students have described those students as underachievers.
4. Everything that flies out of my yapper is testable.
5. Everything you read for class is testable.
6. My lectures have a “fluid” quality that some students find dizzyingly prone to tangents.
7. I reserve the right to use whatever analogies come to mind when explaining concepts, be they related to college football, 1980s sit-coms, or smoked meats.

Honor Code: In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. It is the university’s expectation that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about these standards.

Preventing Sexual Harassment: Sexual discrimination or harassment (including student-to-student harassment) is prohibited both by the law and by Brigham Young University policy. If you feel you are being subjected to sexual discrimination or harassment, please bring your concerns to the professor. Alternatively, you may lodge a complaint with the Equal Employment Office (D-240 CAYB) or with the Honor Code Office (4440 WSC).

Students With Disabilities: If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, you should contact the University Accessibility Center (2170 WSC). This office can evaluate your situation and assist the professor in arranging for reasonable accommodations.

Lecture and Reading Schedule:

Week 1: Introductions
August 28 Introduction to HIST 220
August 30 Defining “America” and “History”

Week 2: Conquest & Colliding Worlds
September 4 The New World Before "Discovery"
Reading: Major Problems, 1-15
Response 1 (450 words): What cultural assumptions or distinctive worldviews are expressed in these documents?

September 6 Empires, Conquest, and Settlement
Reading: *Major Problems*, 15-32

Response 2 (450 words): Describe what you consider to be the biggest difference between the two authors' arguments. Which do you find more convincing? Why?

Week 3: The Southern Colonies in British America

September 11 Masters …
Reading: *Major Problems*, 34-48

Response 3 (450 words): Record your general reactions to the documents. What surprised you? What intrigued you? Why?

September 13 … and Slaves
Reading: *Major Problems*, 49-68

Response 4 (450 words): According to these authors, what are main differences between what they call "patronage" and "paternalism."

Week 4: New England and the Middle Colonies in British America

September 18 New England
Reading: *Major Problems*, 69-82

Response 5 (450 words): Using specific examples from the documents, how would characterize the role of religion in Northern society?

September 20 Middle Colonies
Reading: *Major Problems*, 82-100

Response 6 (450 words): Which authors' argument do you find more convincing, Hall's regarding religion or Breen's relating to economics? Why?

Week 5: Protest and Revolution

September 25 Protests
Reading: *Major Problems*, 102-114

Response 7 (450 words): In your view, was the American Revolution conservative (preserving something, looking back) or liberal (looking forward, focused on change)? Use specific examples from the documents to support your response.

September 27 War
Reading: *Major Problems*, 114-133

Response 8 (450 words): Describe the differences between the authors' descriptions of the Revolution as "radical."

Week 6: Making a Nation and Citizens

October 2 Constitutions
Reading: *Major Problems*, 134-162; Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*

Response 9 (450 words): Using examples from the documents and articles, describe what was at stake for various groups during the debates over national formation.

October 4 Competing Political Visions in the Early Republic
Reading: *Major Problems*, 164-94; Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*

Response 10 (450 words): Using examples from the documents and articles, detail what you regard as the most significant differences between the political vision of the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans.

Week 7: Foreign Entanglements, Western Migration, and Indian Removal

October 9 Foreign Entanglements
Reading: *Major Problems*, 196-229, Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*

October 11 Indian Removal
Reading: Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*

**Essay 1 (at least 1,250 words)**: Describe the ways Martha Ballard's life both reflects and departs from the broader themes of national development offered in readings and lectures.

**Week 8: Revolutions, Cont.**

**October 16**
Markets
Reading: *Major Problems*, 231-246

Response 11 (450 words): Using examples from the documents and articles, describe the effects of the "market revolution" that you consider positive. Negative?

**October 18**
Transportation and Communication
Reading: *Major Problems*, 246-262

**October 19-22** Midterm Examination Period

**Week 9: Nation, Section, and an Expanding West**

**October 23**
Jacksonian Politics

**October 25**
Nationalism and Expansion
Reading: *Major Problems*, 263-94

Response 12 (450 words): What questions or tensions seem to have most animated the debates over "democracy" in the 1820s through 1840s?

**Week 10: Awakenings and Reform**

**October 30**
Awakenings
Reading: *Major Problems*, 295-308

Response 13 (450 words): How would you characterize the relationship between religious and political thought in this period?

**November 1**
Reform
Reading: *Major Problems*, 308-325

Response 14 (450 words): How do you account for two authors coming to such different conclusions about the role of religion in antebellum America?

**Week 11: Societies North and South**

**November 6**
Northern Commerce and Immigration
Reading: *Major Problems*, 326-357; Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies*

Response 15 (450 words): How did economics shape politics, and vice versa, in the antebellum North?

**November 8**
Southern Agriculture and Slavery
Reading: *Major Problems*, 358-382; Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies*

Response 16 (450 words): Assess how various groups of Southerners—masters, slaves, non-slaveholding whites, free people of color—were affected by the institution of slavery.

**Week 12: Thunderclouds**

**November 13**
The Fall of the Second Party System
Reading: *Major Problems*, 383-400; Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies*

**November 15**
Rattling Sabers
Reading: *Major Problems*, 400-413; Ayers, *In the Presence of Mine Enemies*

Essay 2 (at least 1,250 words): Drawing on examples from class lectures, *Major Problems* readings, and Ayer's *In the Presence of Mine Enemies*, discuss the causes of the Civil War. What was at stake for various Americans? What propelled various groups to war?

**Week 13: No Class**

**November 20**
No Class: Friday Instruction

**November 22**
No Class: Thanksgiving Break
**Week 14: Civil War**

**November 27**  
War  
Reading: *Major Problems*, 414-427  
**Response 17 (450 words):** What meanings did various Americans attach to the war? How did they differ? Use specific examples from the documents.

**November 29**  
Emancipation  
Reading: *Major Problems*, 427-444  
**Response 18 (450 words):** In your view, who deserves primary credit for emancipation? Why?

**Week 15: Reconstruction**

**December 4**  
Reconstruction  
Reading: *Major Problems*, 445-461  
**Response 19 (450 words):** In your reading of the documents, how, specifically, did the Civil War shape the dozen or so years thereafter?

**December 6**  
The Price of Reunion  
Reading: *Major Problems*, 462-480  
**Response 20 (450 words):** Place Reconstruction in the larger context of our course's discussion of race and politics. How does the period connect with the earlier periods of American history?

**December 7**  
Exam Preparation Day

**December 10-14**  
Final Examination Period