

HISTORY 1501

United States History to 1877 | Fall 2016 | University of Connecticut-Hartford

Tuesday and Thursday,
2:00pm-3:15pm,
Undergraduate Building 314

Professor Melanie Newport

melanie.newport@uconn.edu

860.570.9258

@melanienewport

Office Hours: Tuesday and
Thursday, 3:15-4:15pm, or by
appointment, Undergraduate
Building 119

Course Texts

Required: Dunbar-Ortiz, *An
Indigenous Peoples' History of
the United States*.

Free online textbook:
www.americanyawp.com

Free online primary sources:
[www.americanyawp.com/
reader](http://www.americanyawp.com/reader)

Additional documents will be
posted on HuskyCT.

Optional: Foner, *Give Me
Liberty!* vol. 1



Course Description

This course surveys political, economic, social, and cultural developments in American history from colonization through Civil War and Reconstruction. This class explores evolving relationships between Europeans, Native Americans, and Africans and the role of agriculture, slavery, and commerce in establishing American capitalism. By 1776, the United States of America emerged with promises of liberty, equality, property rights, and tolerance. But who would benefit? Who should rule? This class addresses how struggles to answer these questions— manifest in the Early Republic, westward expansion, industrialization, slavery, and demands for political power— created preconditions for Civil War and failed attempts at reconstruction by 1877.

Of vital importance:

Face to face communication is best; it allows me to put a name with a face and to get to know you. You may meet with me before or after class or during office hours. You are required to make one visit to office hours but you are not limited to it. I do not discuss grades over email. I will respond to most emails within 24 hours. Check the syllabus before emailing. If you are new to emailing professors, check out this guide: <http://tinyurl.com/hvlgyab>. Brevity and formality go a long way.

Assignments: You must turn in assignments on time.

Assignments are due on HuskyCT by 11:59pm on the due date. If you require an extension for a catastrophic reason, you must contact the professor at least 24 hours *in advance* of the due date. Set up a meeting with the professor if you fall behind.

Extra Credit: There isn't any. Don't ask.

Course Objectives

In this course, students will:

- Learn about events and actors that shaped the settlement of North America, the founding of the United States, and debates over the destiny of the nation and its peoples through Reconstruction.
- Appreciate the varied experiences and ideals of people who lived in America up to 1877.
- Apply methods of historical analysis to primary sources.
- Learn about how narratives of American exceptionalism, revisionism, and settler-colonialism shape understandings of early American history.
- Make connections between past events and our current context.
- Practice humanistic thinking and cultivate informed habits of mind.

Readings

This course uses two textbooks— one, a mass market synthesis, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*— and two, a free online textbook, *American Yawp*. A print textbook is optional and made available for those needing a hard copy. The content is essentially the same as *American Yawp*, which is why I have required a free textbook. The textbooks are intended to complement the lectures and provide you with written study aids.

A primary source reader— *American Yawp Reader*— includes documents from the past. It is also free. Other documents may be posted on HuskyCT under “course content.”

As a rule, purposefully skim book chapters and closely read primary sources. For tips on managing the reading:

www.dartmouth.edu/~acskills/success/reading.html. If you are struggling with the reading load, prioritize (1) *American Yawp Reader* (2) *Indigenous Peoples' History* (3) *American Yawp*.

Grade Distribution

Participation: 10%	Participate in office hours once: 5%
Midterm: 20%	Contemporary Issue Presentation: 10%
Final: 25%	Primary Source Analysis 1 & 2: 15%
Syllabus Quiz: 5%	Compare and Contrast Essay: 10%

Assignments

Participate in office hours once: This is as easy as it sounds. You can fulfill this assignment at any point in the semester.

Syllabus Quiz: A brief quiz to make sure you have read the syllabus. No notes allowed. No makeups will be provided; do not miss it. This quiz is on September 1.

Contemporary Issue Presentation: With a small group, you will present and / or lead a discussion on how the material from the week connects to the present. You do not need to cover *all* the material; you might choose to emphasize a particular topic, individual, or event. Rather than detailing an arc of progress, make the case for the contemporary relevance of your subject, lessons people in the present might draw from it, or ongoing legacies of the issue or questions its actors raised. You must submit a completed self and peer evaluation as part of this assignment. Your self and peer evaluation for your Contemporary Issue Presentation is due the Monday after you present at 11:59pm. You will be evaluated based on your evaluations and the substance of your presentation. I am happy to provide research support for this assignment. We will have an in-class workshop on September 8 so that you have time to meet with your group early on.

Primary Source Analysis 1 & 2: Part of being a historian is working with sources from the time period you are studying. write a short (600-700 words) essay about it. You should address the document's argument, and the purpose of its authors. You need only analyze one document for each essay. For Primary Source Analysis 1, choose any document from *American Yawp Reader* chapters 1-6; for Primary Source Analysis 2, choose any document from *American Yawp Reader* chapters 7-15.

I strongly to encourage you to submit your essay when we discuss its particular subject in class. The last day to submit Primary Source Analysis 1 is October 6. The last day to submit Primary Source Analysis 2 is December 6.

Be sure also to describe how the author(s) make their argument. What evidence do they use? What kind of logic or rhetoric do they use to frame their argument? Next, you should put the document in historical context, explaining what it tells us about American society, politics, and culture during the time it was written. Here you should also connect your document to your contextual knowledge from this course. Finally, your essay should highlight any prejudices, exaggerations, or key omissions on the part of the author.

Compare and Contrast Essay: Over the course of the semester, you will read from two textbooks: *American Yawp* and *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*. To complete this essay, you will respond to an open-ended prompt in 800-900 words. The prompt will be posted on HuskyCT. This essay is due November 29.

Participation: The Participation Rubric is posted on HuskyCT.

Tests

A reality of historical scholarship is that accuracy matters; as such, evaluation in this course includes mastery over content. Two blue book exams will ask you to answer a mix of identification, short answer, and essay questions. 1 single-sided page of handwritten notes is allowed; your notes must be submitted with your test. There are no trick questions and no surprises. The best way to prepare for the tests is to come to class, take notes, do the reading, study, and do the assignments.

The midterm will cover material from weeks 1-6. The final will cover material from weeks 7-15 as well as a comprehensive question.

A makeup test is not available for the midterm; do not miss it. If you do miss it, you will have to write a 10 page research paper on a topic determined by the professor. In accordance with UConn policy, students are required to be available for their final exam. If you have a conflict with this time you must obtain official permission to schedule a make-up exam with the Office of Student Support and Advocacy (OSSA). If permission is granted, OSSA will notify the instructor.

University & Course Policies

Grade information: <http://catalog.uconn.edu/academic-regulations/grade-information/>

Academic integrity: I expect that you will turn in original work. I will prepare you to act in accordance with the Guidelines for Academic Integrity at the University of Connecticut by teaching you proper methods of citation. You will contact me if you have questions before submitting assignments. You will not plagiarize, copy, steal, cheat, lift, or fail to cite; if you do so, you will fail the course. To learn about the onerous process accompanying “academic misconduct”: <http://>

community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-appendix-a/. If you decide to cheat or plagiarize, keep in mind that you are committing to costing yourself, the professor, and a number of people across the University countless hours of their valuable time. Don't do it.

Students with disabilities: This course follows principles of “universal design” and should be accessible to all students. The [Center for Students with Disabilities \(CSD\)](http://www.csd.uconn.edu) at UConn provides accommodations and services for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a documented disability for which you wish to request academic accommodations and have not contacted the CSD, please do so as soon as possible. The CSD is located in Wilbur Cross, Room 204 and can be reached at (860) 486-2020 or at csd@uconn.edu. Detailed information regarding the accommodations process is also available on their website at www.csd.uconn.edu

Academic freedom: To quote the UConn Student Code, “The ‘spirit of inquiry’ lies at the heart of our community. It is the realization that the act of learning is essential to personal growth. The desire to know and the willingness to explore require the strength to resist the false promises of shortcuts and substitutes in the process of learning. The spirit of inquiry is the passion and the patience to commit oneself to a continual journey toward understanding. Incorporating the spirit of inquiry into one’s life as a student is not easy. It calls for curiosity, stamina, vulnerability, honesty, grace, courage, and integrity. A student needs to look beyond comfortable assumptions in search of new perspectives and seek the very information that might change his or her mind. ...The spirit of inquiry can only flourish in an environment of mutual trust and respect.” <http://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-preamble/>

Policy Against Discrimination, Harassment and Related Interpersonal Violence: The University is committed to maintaining an environment free of discrimination or discriminatory harassment directed toward any person or group within its community – students, employees, or visitors. Academic and professional excellence can flourish only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. All members of the University community are responsible for the maintenance of an academic and work environment in which people are free to learn and work without fear of discrimination or discriminatory harassment. In addition, inappropriate amorous relationships can undermine the University’s mission when those in positions of authority abuse or appear to abuse their authority. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, the University prohibits discrimination and discriminatory harassment, as well as inappropriate amorous relationships, and such behavior will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University. Additionally, to protect the campus community, all non-confidential University employees ([including faculty](#)) are required to report sexual assaults, intimate partner violence, and/or stalking involving a student that they witness or are told about to

the Office of Institutional Equity. The University takes all reports with the utmost seriousness. Please be aware that while the information you provide will remain private, it will not be confidential and will be shared with University officials who can help. More information is available at equity.uconn.edu and titleix.uconn.edu

Copyright: My lectures, notes, handouts, and displays are protected by state common law and federal copyright law. They are my own original expression and I've recorded them prior or during my lecture in order to ensure that I obtain copyright protection. Students are authorized to take notes in my class; however, this authorization extends only to making one set of notes for your own personal use and no other use. I will inform you as to whether you are authorized to record my lectures at the beginning of each semester. If you are so authorized to record my lectures, you may not copy this recording or any other material, provide copies of either to anyone else, or make a commercial use of them without prior permission from me. You may not take photographs during class.

Technology: Devices may be used in class for note-taking or accessing course documents only. However, be mindful that studies show that people who take handwritten notes usually do better (see <http://tinyurl.com/jmjc7yd>). Unapproved uses such as texting or social media will lead to a semester-long ban on all devices for all members of the class.

Course Schedule

posted on HuskyCT