

History 151
United States History to 1877
Spring Semester 2019

J. L. Larson
phone: 494-4127

Office: Univ. 225
e-mail: larsonjl@purdue.edu

Objectives: This introductory course is intended to explore how the world we live in has come to be. It is my first working hypothesis that certain basic human motivations stimulate people and communities to organize their lives in particular ways, to take calculated actions, to construct institutions and cultural concepts, to define others as “like” or “unlike” themselves, and to tell stories about this whole process, stories we call “history.” It is my second working hypothesis that the way we have taught history for the last 100 years *does not* work very well

I have come to think of these basic motivations in terms of four broad themes: race, money, sex, and salvation. Accordingly, I have arranged our material around these four themes within three big chronological units: 1) the colonial era; 2) the American Revolution; 3) the republican experience through the Civil War. In the first and third periods we will look for evidence of how these motivations interacted in particular times and places, and how the results of those interactions were different from—or similar to—the world we live in today. The revolutionary era we will treat as a time of intentional destruction and re-creation.

In the end, it is my first objective to try to *expose* the way these fundamental motivations interact to construct and define our world. It is my second objective to suggest ways to *understand* these interactions in order to recognize how they may be shaping us in the present. It is not the names, dates, or battles of the past that interest me; instead *I want to look at how the world worked then and how our sense of history affects how the world works now*. It is my hope you may begin to find that history can be a resource for knowing your world.

Strategies: To accomplish these objectives I have selected a textbook and some additional readings, designed lectures, organized discussion sessions, and developed a series of writing assignments. Executed in good faith, these assignments, readings, and class sessions ought to introduce you to new information about the past and, more importantly, new ways of thinking about the past—and the present. However, these strategies are inherently interactive and require a significant commitment from you to read, write, study, puzzle, ask questions, and engage in discussion. For the process to be important to your education you ought not take my word for these things but should see and understand them yourself.

Readings: I am using a new textbook this year to help establish a coherent narrative. We will discuss sections of it in our weekly discussion session on Fridays. The text is available for purchase in paper or free as an e-book from University of Chicago Press. I also want you to get *My Brother Sam Is Dead*.

Building the American Republic, by Harry Watson
My Brother Sam is Dead, by Collier and Collier

Discussions: For each discussion I will present some new material in class and ask you to write a brief response to the discussion question. You can earn up to **2 points** for each discussion up to a total of **18 points**.

Paper: You will write one short paper (3-4 pages) after reading *My Brother Sam is Dead*. This paper is worth **10 points** and will be due in class February 27.

Exams: There are 2 unit exams and a final. These are in-class essay tests taken during the class hour. Unit exams count **50 points**, the **final 75**. The exams will test you over the reading assignments as well as lectures. Some points will come from short answer questions drawn from reading only.

Grades: Your final grade will be based on your percentage of earned points out of a total of 203 according to the following scale:

93-100%	= A	73-76	= C
90-92	= A-	70-72	= C-
87-89	= B+	67-69	= D+
83-86	= B	63-66	= D
80-82	= B-	60-62	= D-
77-79	= C+	< 60%	= F

Attendance and courtesy: You are expected to attend all class sessions, and you will find it difficult to do very well in this course if you do not. However, I do not take attendance at lectures. I expect you to be quiet and attentive in class and respect the rights of others to a constructive learning environment. **I will ask you to leave** if you are disturbing me or others in the room. Turn off cell phones and all such handheld devices. I do not allow laptops in class; you will do better by taking notes. You will find lecture materials on the Blackboard after they have been delivered in class.

Emergency Announcement: *In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Here are ways to get information about changes in this course:*

email larsonjl@purdue.edu
my office phone 494.4127 my cell phone 765.412.9166.

Additional Information

Cheating / Plagiarism:

Plagiarism refers to the reproduction of another's words or ideas without proper attribution. University Regulations contains further information on dishonesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are serious offenses, and will be treated as such in this class. You are expected to produce your own work and to accurately cite all necessary materials. Cheating, plagiarism, and other dishonest practices will be punished as harshly as Purdue University

policies allow. Any instances of academic dishonesty will likely result in a grade of F for the course and notification of the Dean of Students Office. See:

https://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/resources/documents/responding_to_academic_dishonesty.html
[Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities \(OSSR\).](#)

Emergency preparedness:

In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Once the course resumes any such changes will be posted on Blackboard or can be obtained by contacting the professor via email or phone.

See these links for further information:

https://www.purdue.edu/ehrs/emergency_preparedness/

https://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/flipchart/index.html

http://www.purdue.edu/ehrs/emergency_preparedness/warning-system.html

History 151 Calendar of Assignments

Week 1	
Jan 07	Introduction and orientation
Jan 09	Perspectives on Discovery and Conquest
Jan 11	Discussion: what do you care?
Week 2	Read: Watson, chapter 1
Jan 14	Watch “Black Robe” in the evening—7-9 pm—or at home online
Jan 16	Discuss “Black Robe”
Jan 18	Race 1
Week 3	Read: Watson, chapter 2
Jan 21	MLK Day—no classes
Jan 23	Race 2
Jan 25	Discuss race in colonial period
Week 4	Read: Watson, chapter 2-3
Jan 28	Money 1
Jan 30	Money 2
Feb 01	Discuss money in Atlantic commerce
Week 5	Read: Watson, chapter 4
Feb 04	Sex 1
Feb 06	Sex 2
Feb 08	Discuss sex in early America
Week 6	Read: Watson, chapter 4
Feb 11	Salvation 1
Feb 13	Salvation 2
Feb 15	Discuss salvation in early America
Week 7	Read: Watson, chapter 5
Feb 18	Exam I
Feb 20	Empire reimagined
Feb 22	Republicanism 1
Week 8	Read: <i>My Brother Sam is Dead</i>
Feb 25	Republicanism 2
Feb 27	Discuss <i>My Brother Sam</i> (papers due)
Mar 01	Founding 1
Week 9	Read: Founding docs, Watson, chapter 6
Mar 04	Founding 2
Mar 06	Discuss founding documents
Mar 08	Reading day

Week 10	SPRING BREAK
Week 11	Read: Watson, chapter 7 (to p.258)
Mar 18	Federalists and Jeffersonians
Mar 20	Liberty Is . . .
Mar 22	Exam II
Week 12	Read: Watson, chapter 7 (finish) plus chapter 10-11
Mar 25	Race 3
Mar 27	Race 4
Mar 29	Discuss new work of race
Week 13	Read: Watson, chapter 8-9
Apr 01	Money 3
Apr 03	Money 4
Apr 05	Discuss money and capitalism
Week 14	Read: Watson, chapter 9
Apr 08	Sex 3
Apr 10	Sex 4
Apr 12	Discuss changing sexual norms
Week 15	Read: Watson, chapters 9, 12-13
Apr 15	Salvation 3
Apr 17	Salvation 4
Apr 19	Discuss salvation
Week 16	Read: Watson, chapters 14-15
Apr 22	To the Precipice
Apr 24	The Union Preserved
Apr 26	The Union Reconstructed?
	FINALS