



Fritz Scholder, Native American (1937-2005) *Bicentennial Indian*, Lithograph, 1974.

**History 151 Fall 2025
American History to 1877**

Dr. Dawn G. Marsh

Description

This course is designed to provide students with an introduction to the major political, economic, social, and cultural developments in the United States from before European contact through the end of Reconstruction. The principal themes of the class will be the effect of contact among peoples of three different continents, the creation of an “American” people, and the evolving definitions of freedom and equality. Throughout the semester we will explore America’s history from a variety of different perspectives thus broadening (and challenging) our interpretation of who was an American, looking for patterns of change and continuity over time.

Course Objectives

- The primary objective of this course is to dispel stereotypes, crush racism, develop empathy for the human condition and encourage you to value the history and culture of the United States.
- Clearly articulate historical analysis in written responses, while demonstrating a strong understanding of historical concepts and terminology.
- Present the results of collaborative historical research. Work with team members during weekly workshops and share responsibilities for presenting the analyses and evidence discovered.

- Distinguish between primary and secondary sources, evaluate their reliability and bias.
- Evaluate historical evidence, identify cause-and-effect relationships, and analyze the complexities of historical events within their broader context.
- Reflect on the ethical implications of historical interpretation and the potential biases present in historical narratives.

Required Texts

The American Yawp, Volume 1 and 2, <https://www.americanyawp.com/>

Other assigned readings, links provided in syllabus.

Videos, Kanopy: <https://www.kanopy.com/en/purdue/>

Course Brightspace

The syllabus (and any updates), weekly reading assignments, workshop assignments, PPTs (after the class presentation), links to assigned readings, images, or videos, the midterm and final will all be available via Brightspace. Announcements and other updates as necessary will be emailed or messaged through Brightspace. Exams will be uploaded to Brightspace as **Word** documents. **Pdfs will not be graded.**

Course Preparation

Each Tuesday you are required to read and/or view the content assigned for the day *before* you come to class. The assigned content is the foundation for the lecture and discussion that day. Your ability to participate in class discussions depends on your preparation. If I sense that students are not completing the readings, I will use **random quizzes** to “inspire” your preparation.

Attendance

I will take roll at the beginning of each class meeting. More than **five absences** without notification will **impact your final grade**. Repeated tardiness or early departure will also be noted and **ultimately impact your final grade**. If you participate in university-sanctioned extra-curricular activities that will cause you to miss class, it is your responsibility to inform me as far in advance as possible.

Class Ethics

This class is intended to encourage open, informed discussions and I hope to protect and foster a classroom atmosphere that will encourage open and enlightened discourse in the class. Respect, open-mindedness, and tolerance will be the standard for all classroom discussions. If you encounter any bullying, unfair treatment, or have any negative experiences in my classroom or beyond due to other students, please consider my office, BRNG 6108, a place where you can voice those concerns to me.

Academic Integrity

Students are required to abide by the rules of academic honesty and integrity provided by Purdue University. Plagiarism and/or cheating will not be tolerated at any level in my classroom. Students who do so will receive an "F" for the course and will be adjudicated to the History Department Head.

Assessments

Midterm (100 pts)	Due: Thursday 10/16/2025
Final (100 pts)	Due: Tuesday 12/16/2025
Workshops (15-20 pts)	Variable dates (Thursdays)
Unannounced Quizzes	Variable points, variable dates

Workshop Assignments

Thursdays will be devoted to workshops and the associated assignments. Students will be organized into teams that will be assigned a task to complete. Groups will work together on the tasks, but each student will be responsible for their work in the class. If you do not complete the assignment or if you are absent

on a Workshop Thursday, you forfeit those points. If you have university related extracurricular activities, you can submit the assignment **before the class meets** and receive credit. If you are absent due to illness, you can submit the assignment **within 24 hours** of the class meeting and receive credit. **Hardcopies of the assignments will be submitted for grading at the end of the class. Do not upload Workshop assignments in Brightspace.**

Midterm and Final

Both assessments will be comprehensive assignments that demonstrate your mastery of the course content relative to the dates they are scheduled. The assignments are due on the dates identified in the schedule and **submitted via Brightspace.**

- The Midterm assignment will be posted on Brightspace one week before the due date. Students who submit the Midterm late will be docked **5 points for each day late.**
- The Final assignment will be posted on Brightspace one week before the due date. **No late submissions of the Final assignment will be accepted.** If you fail to submit the Final by the deadline you will receive a 0 score. No exceptions.

Course Schedule

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule as needs arise. Students will be informed about these changes through class emails, in-class announcements, and/or postings on Brightspace. Several class meetings will be cancelled due to professional obligations. Content and assignments will be made available through Brightspace for those course hours as needed.

Week 1 8/26-28

Tues: Admin, syllabus

Thurs: Workshop—Teams



Week 2 9/2-4 Indigenous America

Tues: Read Ch 1, Yawp Vol 1

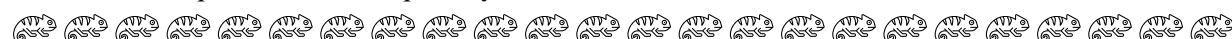
Thurs: Workshop 1 Origin Stories



Week 3 9/9-11 Colliding Cultures

Tues: Read Ch 2, Yawp Vol 1

Thurs: Workshop 2 Historical Map Analysis

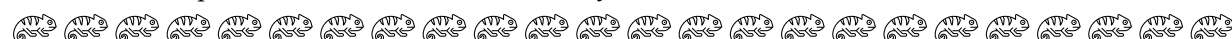


Week 4 9/16-18 British North America, Colonial Society

Tues: Read Ch Yawp Vol 1 Sections: Intro, 2, 4, 5, 6

Read Ch 4 Yawp Vol 1 Sections 5, 6

Thurs: Workshop 3 Native Voices Document Analysis



Week 5 9/23-25 American Revolution

Tues: Read Ch 5, Yawp Vol 1

Thurs: Workshop 4 Making Sense of Common Sense



Week 6 9/30-10/2 A New Nation

Tues: Read Ch 6 Yawp Vol 1

Thursday: Workshop 5 Document Analysis Northwest Ordinances



Week 7 10/7-9 The Early Republic

Tues: Read Ch 7 Yawp Vol 1

Thurs: Workshop 6 Native American Resistance: Prophetstown Revisited



Week 8 10/16 Fall Break

No class Thursday 10/16

Midterm Due Thursday 10/16



Week 9 10/21-23 Manifest Destiny

Tues: Read Ch 12 Yawp Vol 1

Thurs: Workshop 7 American Gold Rush



Week 10 10/28-30 Western Expansion

Tues: Read: Ch 7, "Machine," in Robert V. Hine, *The American West: A New Interpretive History*.

Reading available on Brightspace.

Thurs: Workshop 8 Interpretations of Little Big Horn



Week 11 11/4-11/6 Civil War

Tues: Read Ch14 Yawp Vol 1

Thurs: Workshop 9 Images of the Civil War



Week 12 11/11-13 Reconstruction

Tues: Read Ch15 Yawp Vol 1

Thurs: Workshop 10 Political Cartoon Analysis



Week 13 11/18-20 American West Part 1

Tues: Read Ch 17 Yawp Vol 2

Thurs: Workshop 11 Little Bighorn Perspectives



Week 14 11/25-7 Holiday Break

Tues: How the West was Filmed (no class)

Read: Carter, Matthew. "Introduction," in *Myth of the Western: New Perspectives on Hollywood's Frontier Narrative*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014, 1-25.

<https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/purdue/reader.action?docID=1698591&ppg=31>

Thurs: No class



Week 15 12/2-4 American West Part 2

Tues: Read Ch 17 Yawp Vol 2

Workshop: Film Workshop



Week 16 12/9-11 Study Week

Extended Office Hours



And here endeth the lesson . . . *

*Elliot Ness, “The Untouchables”