

History 151: American History to 1877

Spring 2026

Instructor: Dr. Dawn G. Marsh

Class Meetings: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4:30–5:45 PM

Classroom: WALC 3090

Office: BRNG 6108

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00–3:00 PM

Email: dmarsh@purdue.edu

Syllabus Note:

I reserve the right to adjust this syllabus with advance notice.

Course Description

This course introduces major **political, social, economic, and cultural developments** in the United States from before European contact through the end of Reconstruction.

We will examine:

- Contact among peoples in North America, Europe, and Africa
- The creation of an “American” people
- Changing ideas of **freedom** and **equality**
- Patterns of continuity and change over time
- Diverse perspectives shaping American history

Our goal is to broaden, complicate, and challenge traditional narratives of the nation’s past.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Identify and challenge stereotypes; recognize racism; build empathy; and appreciate the depth and diversity of U.S. history and culture.
- Clearly articulate historical analysis in writing while using accurate historical terms and concepts.

- Conduct and present collaborative historical research during workshops.
 - Distinguish between **primary** and **secondary** sources and evaluate their reliability and bias.
 - Identify cause-and-effect relationships and analyze historical events in context.
 - Reflect on ethical issues in historical interpretation and recognize bias in narratives.
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Required Text

Eric Foner et al., *Give Me Liberty!*, 8th Edition (W.W. Norton, 2025)

- Paperback ISBN: 9781324103721
- Ebook ISBN: 9781324103790

Additional assigned content will be provided as links or PDFs in Brightspace.

Course Brightspace

You will find on Brightspace:

- This syllabus and updates
- Weekly reading assignments
- Workshop instructions
- PPT slides (posted after class)
- Assigned readings, images, and videos
- Chapter quizzes
- Midterm and Final exam assignments
- Announcements and course updates

Check Brightspace and your Purdue email regularly.

Course Organization

Tuesdays

Lecture based on the assigned readings for the week.

Thursdays

Workshops to analyze, apply, and expand upon Tuesday's content.
(Workshop scheduling may vary due to holidays or calendar shifts.)

Course Preparation

Reading Expectations

You must complete Tuesday's readings **before class**.
This is required—not optional.

Weekly Quiz on Brightspace

- **Due Mondays at 11:59 PM**
- No late submissions; no make-ups

Thursday Workshops

Preparation depends on the week:

- Some require advance work
- Some are completed during class

Completing readings is essential to your success.

Attendance Policy

- Attendance is taken at the start of every class.
 - More than **five unnotified absences** will lower your final grade.
 - Tardiness and early departures are noted and may impact your grade.
 - For university-approved activities, notify me ahead of time.
 - You do not need to provide medical documentation; a brief email is sufficient.
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Communication Policy

- Most communication will occur through Purdue email.
 - Identify your course ("History 151") when writing.
 - Office hours are listed above; additional meeting times available by request.
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Class Ethics

This class promotes **respect, open-mindedness, and tolerance**.

Open, informed, and inclusive discussion is expected.

If you experience:

- Bullying
- Discrimination
- Harassment
- Negative classroom experiences

Please come to BRNG 6108 to discuss concerns.

Academic Integrity

You must follow Purdue's academic honesty policies.

Plagiarism or cheating will:

- Result in an **F** for the course
- Be reported to the History Department Head

Do your own work. Cite your sources.

Assessments Overview

Total course points: **560 pts**

Assessment	Points
Midterm	100 pts
Final	100 pts
Workshops (12 × 15 pts)	180 pts
Chapter Quizzes (12 × 15 pts)	180 pts
Total	560 pts

Workshop Assignments

- Conducted Thursdays
 - Students work in teams, but each student submits their own work
 - **If absent:**
 - **University-sanctioned events:** submit assignment *before class*
 - **Illness:** submit within *24 hours* of class to receive credit
 - **No online uploads**—submit hard copies in class
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Midterm and Final Exams

Midterm (100 pts)

- Posted one week before due date
- Late submissions lose **5 points per day**

Final (100 pts)

- Posted one week before due date
 - **No late submissions accepted**
 - Missing the deadline results in a **0**
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Course Schedule

Week 1 | Jan 13–15

- Tues: Introduction, Administration
- Thurs: Historical Analysis

Week 2 | Jan 20–22

- Tues: Foner Ch. 1 → **Quiz 1 due**
- Thurs: Workshop 1 — Historical Map Analysis

Week 3 | Jan 27–28

- Tues: Foner Ch. 2–3 → **Quiz 2 due**
- Thurs: Workshop 2 — English Settlements

Week 4 | Feb 3–5

- Tues: Foner Ch. 4 → **Quiz 3 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Changing Identities

Week 5 | Feb 10–12

- Tues: Foner Ch. 5 → **Quiz 4 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — American Revolution

Week 6 | Feb 17–19

- Tues: Foner Ch. 7 → **Quiz 5 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Northwest Ordinances

Week 7 | Feb 24–26

- Tues: Foner Ch. 8 → **Quiz 6 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Jefferson's "Lies"

Week 8 | Mar 3–5

- Tues: Foner Ch. 9 → **Quiz 7 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Western Expansion

Week 9 | Mar 10–12

- Tues: TBD
- Thurs: **Midterm Due**

Week 10 | Mar 17–19

- Spring Break (No classes)

Week 11 | Mar 24–26

- Tues: Foner Ch. 10 → **Quiz 8 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Democracy Denied

Week 12 | Mar 31–Apr 2

- Tues: Foner Ch. 11 → **Quiz 9 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Slave Narratives

Week 13 | Apr 7–9

- Tues: Foner Ch. 13 → **Quiz 10 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Race & Manifest Destiny

Week 14 | Apr 14–16

- Tues: Foner Ch. 14 → **Quiz 11 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Civil War Photographs

Week 15 | Apr 21–23

- Tues: Foner Ch. 15 → **Quiz 12 due**
- Thurs: Workshop — Political Cartoon Analysis

Week 16 | Apr 28–30

- Quiet Week
- Extended office hours
- **Final Due: Tues, May 2**

University Policies

Accessibility

If you need accommodations:

- Disability Resource Center
- Email: drc@purdue.edu
- Phone: 765-494-1247

Mental Health Resources

- CAPS (24/7): 765-494-6995
- Dean of Students: 765-494-1747
- WellTrack, Wellness Coaching via BoilerConnect

Emergency Preparedness

- Keep phones on for Purdue ALERT
- Follow all safety instructions from university channels