

History 151 Spring 2026 American History to 1877

Dr. Dawn G. Marsh
Office: BRNG 6108
Office Hours: TTH 2:00-3:00

TTH 4:30-5:45
WALC 3090
dmarsh@purdue.edu

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 Text

Eric Foner, et al. *Give Me Liberty*, 8th edition, W.W. Norton, 2025.

Available as either Paperback: ISBN 9781324103721 or Ebook: ISBN 9781324103790

Other assigned content will be provided as links or pdfs

Course Brightspace

The syllabus (and any updates), weekly reading assignments, workshop assignments, PPTs (after the class presentation), links to assigned readings, images, or videos, quizzes, the midterm and final will all be available via Brightspace. Announcements and other updates as necessary will be emailed or messaged through Brightspace.

Course Organization

Tuesdays will be devoted to a lecture based on your assigned readings for that week. Thursdays will be devoted to diving deeper into that content through workshops. This may vary due to holidays and other calendar changes.

Course Preparation

It is your responsibility to come to class prepared. You are required to read the assigned content *before* coming to class on Tuesday. This is not a suggestion. It is a requirement. To encourage this, you will **complete a chapter quiz on Brightspace** that is due on Mondays (11:59 pm). No late submissions or make-up work will be accepted.

Preparation for Thursdays workshops will vary. Sometimes you will be required to complete the assignment before coming to class, other times your workshop will be completed during class. Again, completing the reading assignment is essential to your successful completion of the course.

Attendance

I will take role 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. I do not require medical excuses, not elaborate details of your illness or cause for absence. A brief email notifying me will suffice.

Communication

Most communication outside of the classroom will be through emails. When sending me an email, please do me the courtesy of identifying the course you are enrolled in. My office hours are posted above. If those hours interfere with your schedule, I can schedule a time that works.

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, 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
Final	100 pts
Workshops (12)	15 pts each (180 pts)
Chapter Quizzes (12)	15 pts each (180 pts)
Total	560 pts

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 examinations that demonstrate your mastery of the course content relative to the dates they are scheduled. The midterm and final 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.

Course Schedule

Week 1 Jan 13-15

Tues: Intro, Admin

Thurs: Historical Analysis

Week 2 Jan 20-22

Tues: Foner Ch 1

Complete Quiz 1

Thurs: Workshop 1 Historical Map Analysis

Week 3 Jan 27-28

Tues: Foner Ch 2-3

Complete Quiz 2

Thurs: Workshop 2 English Settlements

Week 4 Feb 3-5

Tues: Foner Ch 4

Complete Quiz 3

Thurs: Workshop: Changing Identities

Week 5 Feb 10-12

Tues: Foner Ch 5

Complete Quiz 4

Thurs: Workshop: American Revolution

Week 6 Feb 17-19

Tues: Foner Ch 7

Complete Quiz 5

Thurs: Workshop: Northwest Ordinances

Week 7 Feb 24-26

Tues: Foner Ch 8

Complete Quiz 6

Thurs: Workshop: Jefferson's Lies

Week 8 Mar 3-5

Tues: Foner Ch 9

Complete Quiz 7

Thurs: Workshop Western Expansion

Week 9 Mar 10-12

Tues: TBD

Thurs: Midterm Due

Week 10 Mar 17-19 Spring Break

Week 11 Mar 24-26

Tues: Foner Ch 10

Complete Quiz 8

Thurs: Workshop Democracy Denied

Week 12 Mar 31-Apr 2

Tues: Foner Ch 11

Complete Quiz 9

Thurs: Workshop Slave Narratives

Week 13 Apr 7-9

Tues: Foner Ch 13

Complete Quiz 10

Thurs: Workshop Race and Manifest Destiny

Week 14 Apr 14-16

Tues: Foner Ch 14

Complete Quiz 11

Thurs: Workshop Civil War Photographs

Week 15 Apr 21-23

Tues: Foner Ch 15

Complete Quiz 12

Thurs: Workshop Political Cartoon Analysis

Week 16 Apr 28-30 Quiet Week

Extended office hours

Final due: Tues May 2