**HIST 151—American History to 1877**

*“To remain ignorant of things that happened before you were born is to remain a child.”*—Cicero

**Instructor:**

Dr. Jeffrey Perry

**Spring 2016 Course Info:**

MWF: 8:30-9:20 (PHYS 223)

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Office: UNIV 225, MW 11-12:00

**Teaching Assistant:**

Max Campbell

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Office Hours: REC 410, W 1:30-2:30

[](http://withfriendship.com/images/i/40076/Patriot-(American-Revolution)-picture.jpg)[](http://teachers.ewrsd.k12.nj.us/gray/abigail_adams.jpg)[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=american+slavery&view=detail&id=79C0A29CFDC00AAE245741F06F5AD91D6652ABA0&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR)[](http://www.bing.com/images/search?q=little+turtle+indian+chief+pictures&view=detail&id=4372B515113FCF407376324AB06A9CDCEDEE0617&first=0&FORM=IDFRIR)

**Course Introduction:** This course is designed to introduce you to American history from the initial contact of Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans on the North American continent through the Civil War Era. We will follow a chronological path, interweaving economic, political, and cultural change, in order to better understand how these forces interacted in the American past. For instance, how did change in the political structure from the colonial period to the post-Revolutionary era affect the lives of individuals: men and women, black and white, native and foreign? How did expansion of the United States westward during the early 19th century exacerbate sectional tensions between North and South? By focusing on larger structural transformations as well as the actions of individuals and groups, we will see how change emanated from different levels of society, and how a disparate group of colonies (and then states) defined an American identity. Memorization of facts and dates—though at times valuable—is not what historians do, nor is it the main goal of this course. Instead, we will read both primary and secondary source materials to highlight how historical processes affected the lives of ordinary individuals. Hopefully, this will demonstrate to you how your life is shaped by (at times empowered, and other times limited by) historical forces. History surrounds us, and not simply in the guise of historical monuments and restored buildings, but in the way we think, act, believe, work, eat, and play.

Class meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays will consist primarily of lectures. Friday classes will be a mix of discussions, films, quizzes, and exams. I encourage you, however, to participate, ask questions, and instigate relevant discussions in any of our class meetings.

**Course Objectives:** This course is designed to help students develop:

1. A basic factual and thematic knowledge of this historical place and time period.

2. A stronger ability to assess and think critically about historical problems/issues and the ways in which

they might be interpreted.

3. An understanding of why history is important and why it matters.

**Textbook:** Tindall and Shi, *America: A Narrative History, Brief 9th Edition, Volume 1*. W. W. Norton &

Company, ISBN: 978-0-393-91266-1. (e-book is available at wwnorton.com)

**Readings Posted on Blackboard (BB) for Discussions:**

Selections From:

Bartolome de Las Casas, *In Defense of the Indians* (c. 1550)

Paul Le Jeune and Jerome Lalemant, *The Jesuit Relations* (1640)

John Locke, *The Second Treatise on Civil Government* (1692)

Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776)

James Chalmers, *Plain Truth* (1776)

Henry Clay, *Speech about the Mexican War* (1847)

Hinton Helper, *The Impending Crisis of the South* (1857)

“Lincoln-Douglas Debates” (1858)

Frederick Douglass, *The Reasons for Our Troubles* (1862)

**Assignments:** **Students should complete each week’s readings prior to coming to class on Monday.**

**In-class Assignments:** There will be fourteen unannounced, in-class assignments throughout the semester. Make-ups for these assignments will only be given with written documentation of illness, family emergency, etc. Your two lowest scores on these assignments will be dropped, for a total of **120 points**. These assignments are open-note, open-book—so be sure to bring your textbook and other assigned readings to class.

**Discussions**: There will be five Friday discussions based upon primary source documents that will be posted on Blackboard. In weeks that a discussion is scheduled, you must post a discussion question (based on the assigned documents) in your Blackboard group discussion forum. Questions should bring together class lectures, textbook readings, and perhaps even other primary documents. For full credit, you questions certainly needs to be more than simply: “What is Henry Clay saying about the Mexican-American War?” These questions are due each week by Wednesday at 11:59 PM. In addition, you should reply to at least one other student’s post by Thursday at 11:59 PM. The discussion and replies are worth 10 points each, for a total of **50 points**.

**Exams:** There will be three exams, worth a total of **150 points**. The exams will consist of multiple choice, short identifications, and one essay question. The essay question will be provided to you ahead of time (along with a more general review sheet) and will draw from the assigned primary sources, textbook, and class lectures. Make-up exams will not be given unless you have a written excuse for medical issues, special needs, or family tragedy.

**Attendance/Participation**: It is your responsibility to attend all class meetings (there will be 14 in-class short assignments, remember, totaling 120 points). Attendance and participation in Friday discussions will benefit you and your **participation grade**, which is worth **30 points**. Please turn off or silence all handheld devices. Laptops are allowed, but individual restrictions may apply if they are used inappropriately.

**Grading:** Grades will be based on a total of **350 possible points**.

325-350 = A

315-324 = A-

304-314 = B+

290-303 = B

280-289 = B-

269-279 = C+

255-268 = C

245-254 = C-

234-244 = D+

220-233 = D

210-219 = D-

0-209 = F

**Classroom Etiquette:** Each voice in the classroom has something of value to contribute. Please respect the different experiences, beliefs and values expressed by everyone involved in this course. Individuals of all ages, backgrounds, citizenships, disability, sex, education, ethnicities, family statuses, genders, gender identities, geographical locations, languages, military experience, political views, races, religions, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, and work experiences are welcomed and valued. If you have any comments or concerns about the classroom environment, please contact Dr. Perry or the Teaching Assistant, Max.

**Preferred Names and Pronouns:** If you have a preferred name and/or preferred pronouns that you would like me to use, please let me know. Preferred names should appear in the database I receive from the Registrar and I will use those. If your preferred name does not appear in the database or if you have questions, please see me. FYI – In order for your preferred name to appear in the database supplied by the registrar and on Blackboard, you have to put your preferred name in the MyPurdue system online.

**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 University Regulations for details.

**Disclaimer:** 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.  Any such changes in this course will be posted once the course resumes on Blackboard or can be obtained by contacting the professor via email.

**Lectures and Weekly Readings:**

Week One—January 11-15th

* Readings: *America: A Narrative History*, Chap. 1; Las Casas, “In Defense of the Indians” and Le Jeune and Lalemant, “The Jesuit Relations”
  + Monday—Introduction
  + Wednesday—Life in the Old and New Worlds **(Discussion Question due on BB by 11:59PM; 1 reply post due by Thursday 11:59 PM)**
  + Friday—Discussion of Las Casas and Jeune/Lalemant

Week Two—January 18-22nd

* Readings: *America*: Chap. 2
  + Monday—**MLK Day (No Class)**
  + Wednesday—Religion and Exploration
  + Friday—Film: Selections of *The New World*

Week Three—January 25-29th

* Readings: *America*: Chap. 3
  + Monday—Death and Cannibalism in Jamestown
  + Wednesday—The Puritan Vision and the Early South
  + Friday—Film: *God in America*, Episode 1

Week Four—February 1-5th

* Readings: John Locke, *Second Treatise on Civil Government* (BB); *America:* pp. 55-65, 86-91.
  + Monday—The Middle Colonies
  + Wednesday—Enlightening, Refining, and Awakening the Colonies (**Discussion Question due by 11:59 PM; 1 reply by Thursday 11:59 PM)**
  + Friday—Discussion of Locke

Week Five—February 8-12th

* Readings: *America:* Review Chaps. 1-3
  + Monday—The Awakening Continues
  + Wednesday—The Colonies in the Mid-18th Century and Exam Review
  + Friday—**EXAM #1**

Week Six—February 15-19th

* Readings: *America:* Chap. 4; selections from Paine, *Common Sense* and Chalmers, *Plain Truth* (BB)
  + Monday—Seven Years’ War and Beyond
  + Wednesday—Discontented Subjects **(Discussion Question due by 11:59 PM; 1 reply by Thursday 11:59 PM)**
  + Friday—Discussion of Paine and Chalmers

Week Seven—February 22-26th

* Readings: *America*: Chaps. 5 & 6
  + Monday—Society in Revolution continued
  + Wednesday—Creating a New Nation
  + Film: *Shay’s Rebellion*

Week Eight—February 29-March 4th

* Readings: *America*: Chap. 7
  + Monday—Politics and the Early Republic
  + Wednesday—Securing the Nation
  + Friday—**No Class!**

Week Nine—March 7th-11th

* Readings: *America*: Chaps. 8 - 9
  + Monday—Jefferson/War of 1812
  + Wednesday—Expansion, Nationalism, and Good Feelings
  + Friday—**EXAM #2 (ALL MEET IN WTHR 320 at 9:30)**

**Week Ten—Spring Break: No Class March 14 – March 18th!**

Week Eleven—March 21-25th

* Readings: *America*: Chaps. 10 & 13
  + Monday— Era of Good Feelings cont./The 2nd Party System
  + Wednesday— Awakened Again: Religion and Reform
  + Friday—Film: *God in America*, Episode 2

Week Twelve—March 28-April 1st

* Readings: *America*: Chap. 12
  + Monday—The Old South and the Slave institution
  + Wednesday—Slave Life and Rebellion
  + Friday—Film: *Slavery and the Making of America*, Part 3

Week Thirteen—April 4-8th

Readings: Henry Clay, “Speech on the Mexican War” (BB); *America*: Chap. 11 & 14

* + Monday—Politics of the 1830s
  + Wednesday— Manifest Destiny and the Mexican War **(Discussion question due by 11:59 PM; 1 reply due by Thursday 11:59 PM)**
  + Friday— Discussion of Clay

Week Fourteen—April 11-15th

* Readings: *America:* Chap. 15; Helper, *The Impending Crisis of the South* (BB); The Lincoln-Douglas Debates (BB)
  + Monday—Sectional Crisis and the 1850s
  + Wednesday—The End of the 1850s **(Discussion question due by 11:59 PM; 1 reply by Thursday 11:59 PM)**
  + Friday—Discussion of Helper, Lincoln-Douglas Debates

Week Fifteen—April 18-22nd

* Readings: *America*: Chap.16;Excerpt from Frederick Douglass, *The Reasons for Our Troubles* (BB)
  + Monday— Lincoln and the Election of 1860
  + Wednesday—The War
  + Friday—Discussion of Douglass

Week Sixteen—April 25-29th

* Readings: *America:* Chapter 17
  + Monday—End of War and Reconstructing the South
  + Wednesday—Radical Reconstruction
  + Friday—The 1870s and the End of Reconstruction

\*\***FINAL EXAM DATE AND TIME—TBA\*\***