

United States History Survey 121 Syllabus
Dr. T. McCord, Fall 2010; Section 001
TR 9:00-10:15 am, Robinson A 248

CLASSROOM TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

TEXTS: Tindal and Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, Vol. I. 8th ed.

Robert Rutland, *George Mason Reluctant Statesman*

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, as American Slave*

<u>Week of</u>	<u>General Topic</u>	<u>Tindall Chapters. Etc.</u>
Aug 31	Introduction and Native Americans; European Discovery	1-2
Sept. 7	Spanish Borderlands and English Arrival	1-2
14	Virginia and Southern Colonies (last add day and drop w/o penalty)	2-3
21	New England and the Middle Colonies	2-3
28	18 th century Anglo America (10/1 last drop day w/67% penalty)	4
Oct. 5	Revolutionary Era	5-6
12	NO CLASS 12 TH ; Mid-term Exam	
19	Constitution and Federalist Era; Rutland Quiz	5-7
26	George Washington lecture; Federalist Era cont.	8
Nov. 2	Jeffersonians and Nationalism; NO CLASS 4 TH	9-10
9	Jacksonian Era	11-13
16	Western Expansion and Slavery	14-15
23	Toward Civil War; Douglass Quiz ; Thanksgiving 25 th .	16-17
30	Civil War	17
Dec. 7	Reconstruction	18
16	Final Exam 7:30 am	

NATURE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE

John Smith and his fellow adventurers founded the first permanent English colony at Jamestown, Virginia in 1607, but they were only the second Europeans to settle in the future United States. The Spanish had been in St. Augustine, Florida since 1565 and would settle Santa Fe, New Mexico just two years after Jamestown. In 1608 the French established Quebec and in 1624 the Dutch took possession of the Hudson River Valley. Thus, ethnic diversity was an American characteristic from the early days. Also, diverse people were found within the English colonies as Native Americans and Africans added to the mix. By the end of the seventeenth century, these colonies included Swedes, Finns, Germans, Jews, French Huguenots, and Scotch-Irish. Within thirty years after Jamestown, the transition toward a new American culture had begun. Regional economic systems were established early and continued for over 300 years as the South became agricultural and rural, while the North became commercial and eventually industrial and urban. In 1619 African slaves came into Virginia—a tragedy that contributed to the great national ordeal of civil war in the 1860s. Virginia was founded for profit, but the Pilgrims and the Puritans sought their brands of religious freedom, an idea that by 1786 evolved into Thomas Jefferson's bill separating church and state. In 1619 the roots of representative democracy were planted in Virginia and were extended through the New England town meeting. Democratic principles were expressed nationally in the Federal Constitution and were advanced, in theory, during the Reconstruction Era.

In cooperation with Mount Vernon Mansion, a special lesson will be presented on George Washington. It will relate Washington's personal qualities and his significance in the French and Indian

War, the American Revolution, the framing of the Constitution, and during the Federal period. Finally, there will be a mandatory field trip to Mount Vernon, the details of which will be announced.

Because this is a general education course in the Social and Behavioral Sciences, students are expected to have demonstrated the following outcomes: “key concepts, terminology, principles or theories within the field,” “methodological approaches to the field,” and “how individuals, groups or institutions are influenced by contextual factors appropriate to the field.”

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION

To a great extent this is a lecture course that will be supplemented with films and with discussion of both the films and the assigned readings. The student must develop a style for taking notes and students are encouraged to ask pertinent questions and to make relevant comments on any material then before the class.

EXAMINATIONS

The student will be responsible for all material covered in lectures, texts, and class discussions. There are three examinations and two quizzes listed in the syllabus. There will be no make-up examinations without a medical doctor's written excuse, or, without being cleared with the professor ahead of time.

ATTENDANCE

Full attendance is expected and is necessary because lectures will cover points that not in the readings, nor do the themes exactly follow the textbook chronology. It will be considered in the final grade. According to the university catalogue, “students are expected to attend the class periods of the course for which they register. In-class participation is important to the individual student and to the class as a whole. Because class participation may be a factor in grading, instructors may use absence, tardiness, or early departure as de facto evidence of non-participation.”

ATTENDANCE AND GRADING

For every two unexcused absences, there will be a full grade drop in your participation grade. Any combination of being tardy or leaving class early four times without an adequate reason will result in a full grade drop. An excused absence must be supported with a written note from a medical doctor, or, through consultation with the professor. At no time will an e-mail message constitute a valid excuse.

HONOR CODE

This code applies to all examinations and written work. This means that you may neither give nor receive any information during an examination. It also means that you may not use any material, written or oral, during an exam. Guidelines for assigned papers will be discussed as the projects arise, but at all times the student must guard against plagiarism.

COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

In this survey class, computer skills are not required to complete the work; however, it is helpful to use e-mail, and it is virtually essential to know word processing.

CELL PHONES, ETC.

Cell phones, earphones, cameras, radios, or any communication devices are not to be used in class at any time! Please turn off your cell phones before the start of class. Lap top computers may be used in the front rows for taking notes, but not for exams or anything else; the professor and his assistant will inspect screens at random.

GRADING

Each exam is worth 20% of your final grade; the two quizzes are worth 20% combined; and participation is worth 20%.

OFFICE HOURS, E-MAIL ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBERS

My office is in Robinson B 226C, second floor

Office hours: Tuesday 1:15-3:00 pm; Wednesday 3:00-4:30 pm

Telephone: History Department 703.993. 1250; home 703.222.7338; no office phone

E-mail: tmccord@gmu.edu (Avoid using it if our message is urgent, for I am not always in the office!)