

# US History I

## Course Text

Brinkley, Alan. *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People, Volume I*, 8th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2016. ISBN: 9780073513331 [This text is available as an etextbook included in your enrollment. Students may find used, new, or rental print copies at this [link](#)]

## Course Description

This course focuses on the characteristics of societies existing in the Americas prior to 1877. Students learn about European exploration and colonization of the New World and they examine the impact on Europe, Africa, and the young United States. The emergence of political, religious, economic, and social institutions is discussed. Specific causes of the American Revolution are examined, as is the resulting impact on politics, the economy, and society. Students learn how the Industrial Revolution and Western movement changed the lives of Americans, they examine the causes and events of the Civil War, and they evaluate how Reconstruction plans succeeded or failed.

## Course Objectives

After completing this course, you will be able to:

- Apply historical research skills to major themes in American History to 1877.
- Detect the causes of European exploration and colonization in the New World and assess the impact of these activities on Europe, Africa, and the New World.
- Understand how political, religious, economic, and social institutions emerged in the American Colonies.
- Specify the causes of the American Revolution and evaluate the impact of the Revolution on politics, the economy, and society.
- Recognize how the institutions and practices of government evolved to create the foundation of the American political system.
- Explain territorial expansion from 1801 to 1877 and assess its effects on relations with Native Americans and external powers.
- Synthesize and assess developments in political democracy after 1800.
- Recognize how the Industrial Revolution and Western movement changed the lives of Americans.
- Specify the major causes and events of the Civil War and assess the impact of the war on the American people.
- Summarize the sources and character of cultural, religious, and social reform movements in the antebellum period.
- Explain how various Reconstruction plans succeeded or failed.

## Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites to take U.S. History I.

## Important Terms

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In this course, different terms are used to designate tasks:

- Proctoring: all final exams require proctoring which can be completed conveniently from your home. A webcam is required.
- Tutoring: memberships include online tutoring for students to access with any content/subject related questions in the place of faculty. If your tutor is not able to answer your questions please contact a student advisor.
- Review Activities: non-graded activities to test your knowledge of terms and glossary entries relevant to the topic's content.
- Homework: A non-graded assignment to assist you in practicing the skills discussed in a topic.
- Exam: A graded online test.

## Course Evaluation Criteria

StraighterLine provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. See [Academic Questions](#) section in FAQ for further details on percentage scores and grading scale. A passing percentage is **70%** or higher.

If you have chosen a Partner College to award credit for this course, your final grade will be based upon that college's grading scale. Only passing scores will be considered by Partner Colleges for an award of credit.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Topic	Assessment	Points Available
4	Graded Exam #1	125
8	Graded Exam #2	125
8	Midterm Exam	200
12	Graded Exam #3	125
15	Graded Exam #4	125
16	Final Graded Exam	300
Total		1000

## Course Topics and Objectives

Topic	Topic	Subtopics	Objectives
1	Old and New Worlds Meet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Before Columbus</li> <li>• Looking Westward</li> <li>• The British Connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the origins, distribution, and cultures of societies in the Americas before 1492.</li> <li>• Explain the causes of European voyages of exploration and colonization to the New World.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the impact of the exchange of goods, cultures, diseases, and ideas among Europe, Africa, and the New World that resulted from European exploration and colonization.</li> <li>Describe the causes, successes, and failures of British voyages of exploration and colonization in North America.</li> </ul>
2	Early Settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chesapeake Colonies</li> <li>New England Colonies</li> <li>British, Spanish, and French Colonies Elsewhere</li> <li>British Authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze the growth of the tobacco economy in the Chesapeake area and assess its social and political impact, including relations with Native Americans and the introduction of slavery.</li> <li>Describe the role of religion and economics in the growth of New England colonies.</li> <li>Describe and explain the relationship of the New England colonies to the Native Americans.</li> <li>Compare the origins and growth of colonies in the Caribbean, Southwest, South, Middle-Atlantic area, and in Canada.</li> <li>Analyze the factors that contributed to increased British dominance in North America.</li> </ul>
3	Living in Colonial America	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demographics and Social Patterns</li> <li>Commerce and Consumerism</li> <li>Enlightenment and Great Awakening</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analyze changes in population and social characteristics in Colonial America, for example, the growth of slavery and indentured servitude and changes in the roles of women and the structure of families.</li> <li>Compare the economies of the colonial regions.</li> <li>Describe and explain the growth of commerce and consumerism in the colonies.</li> <li>Explain the impact of the Great Awakening and Enlightenment ideas on colonial society.</li> </ul>
4	Road to Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seven Years' War</li> <li>Imperialism in Peril</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the impact of the Seven Years' War on the move to independence.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On the Brink of Revolt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify measures and events after the Treaty of 1763 that led to revolt.</li> <li>Explain how the decisions of the First Continental Congress moved the Colonies towards independence.</li> </ul>
5	The American Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Decision for Independence</li> <li>War of Independence</li> <li>Impact of the War</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the events that led to the signing of the Declaration of Independence.</li> <li>Identify the fundamental ideas of the Declaration of Independence.</li> <li>Identify and assess the significance of major events and players in the American Revolution.</li> <li>Specify the effects of the Revolutionary War on American political, social, and economic life, for example, on Native Americans, women, slaves, Loyalists, and on the ideology of "republicanism".</li> </ul>
6	The Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State Constitutions</li> <li>Confederation</li> <li>From Confederation to Constitution</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the significance of the state constitutions created after 1776 to the eventual establishment of a federal republic.</li> <li>Identify and assess the strengths and weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation.</li> <li>Identify and explain key events, including the Federalist—Anti-Federalist debates and the issue of a national bill of rights, that led to the ratification of the Constitution in 1787.</li> </ul>
7	The New Republic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New Government</li> <li>National Sovereignty</li> <li>Political Parties</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify the steps taken to complete the structure of the federal government under the United States Constitution.</li> <li>Describe the successes and failures in America 's efforts to extend control over the West.</li> <li>Explain the origin, development, and characteristics of the Federalist and Republican political parties.</li> </ul>

8	Jeffersonian Era	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early Nineteenth Century Life</li> <li>• President Jefferson</li> <li>• Expansion and Conflict</li> <li>• American Nationalism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe the events and assess the significance of the Second Great Awakening.</li> <li>• Describe and assess the key events and decisions of Jefferson 's presidency.</li> <li>• Analyze the causes and consequences of conflict with Native Americans, the Spanish, and the British in the early Nineteenth Century.</li> <li>• Identify and assess key events during the period of nationalism following the War of 1812.</li> <li>• Explain the main issues, decisions, and consequences of the U.S. Supreme Court in <i>Maybury v. Madison</i> (1803).</li> </ul>
9	Jacksonian Era	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Politics</li> <li>• Andrew Jackson</li> <li>• Two Parties Emerge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain why the election of Andrew Jackson was considered a victory for the "common man."</li> <li>• Describe and assess the significance of key events and decisions of the Jackson presidency, such as Indian Removal, Nullification and the Bank Veto.</li> <li>• Compare the views of Democrats and Whigs on government, economics, religion, and ethics.</li> </ul>
10	Economic Revolution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population Changes</li> <li>• Transportation and Communication</li> <li>• Commerce, Agriculture, and Industry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe changes in population characteristics and distribution that occurred in the first half of the Nineteenth Century.</li> <li>• Identify and assess the impact of transportation and communication innovations in the first half of the Nineteenth Century.</li> <li>• Describe and evaluate the impact of developments in commerce, agriculture, and industry on such issues as the nature of work, the role of women, and the distribution of wealth in the first half of the Nineteenth Century.</li> </ul>
11	The Old South	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• King Cotton</li> <li>• White Society in</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze and assess the social and environmental impact of the</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the South</li> <li>The "Peculiar Institution"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>growing dominance of cotton in the South.</li> <li>Describe the plantation system and the roles of their owners, their families, and white workers.</li> <li>Analyze the institution of slavery as both an economic and a social system.</li> </ul>
12	Antebellum Period	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revivalism and Romanticism</li> <li>Reform</li> <li>Abolitionism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Define Transcendentalism and analyze the ideas about the individual, society, and nature expressed in the literary works of the major Transcendentalists.</li> <li>Assess the impact of the Second Great Awakening on antebellum issues such as public education, temperance, women's suffrage, and utopianism.</li> <li>Describe the fundamental beliefs of abolitionists and compare how the positions of African American and white abolitionists were similar and different.</li> </ul>
13	Build Up to War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Western Expansion</li> <li>Sectionalism</li> <li>Time of Crises</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain the concept of Manifest Destiny and its relationship to the western movement of settlers and territorial expansion into areas such as Texas, Oregon, and California.</li> <li>Assess the effects of sectional differences on the stability of the Union.</li> <li>Analyze the causes and effects of events leading to the Civil War, such as, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott Case, and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates.</li> </ul>
14	The Civil War	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The War Begins</li> <li>The Union and Confederacy at War</li> <li>The Course of the War</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the events, developments, and players during the initial stages of the Civil War.</li> <li>Compare the impact of the Civil War on the daily lives of people in the Union and in the Confederacy.</li> <li>Describe and assess the importance of key events and developments in the Civil War.</li> </ul>

15	Reconstruction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementing Reconstruction</li> <li>• Impact of Reconstruction on the South</li> <li>• Abandoning Reconstruction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe and assess the policies and practices of Reconstruction, including the 14th and 15th Amendments to the U. S. Constitution and the Black Codes.</li> <li>• Explain and evaluate the short and long term social and economic consequences of Reconstruction for the South.</li> <li>• Identify the reasons for and assess the consequences of abandoning Reconstruction.</li> </ul>
16	Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review and Final Assessment</li> </ul>



