

University of North Texas
Department of History

History 4490: The American Revolution – Causes and Consequences, 1607-1800

INTERNET CLASS

Dr. Chet

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When emailing, please type “HIST 4490” in the subject line.

The outbreak of the American War of Independence (1775-1783), and the formation of the United States as a democratic political entity, ushered in a new era in the history of the West. By couching their grievances against Britain in the popularized political philosophy of the Enlightenment, the Patriots turned British North America into a practical testing ground for European liberalism. Thus, the American Revolution set the stage for the French Revolution not only by bankrupting and weakening the French Crown, but also by providing European liberals and republicans with a model of a viable and enlightened republic.

The rejection of the mother country by its colonists was, and still is, a remarkable and curious aberration for some, while for others it was the culmination of a long-term natural progression. This course will trace social, cultural, economic, and political ties and tensions between Britain and its American colonies. The class will examine to what degree these developments can explain the acrimony of the early 1770s and Americans’ willingness to wage war against the British Empire for political independence. The class will also examine the aftermath of the war, gauging the Revolution’s impact on Americans’ lives.

There are no prerequisites for this course.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Recognize historical narratives as arguments which can be evaluated based on evidence.
2. Know the general history of colonial and Revolutionary America.
3. Analytical skills – compare and evaluate competing analyses of the American Revolution.
4. Identify competing narratives of the Revolution in the two US constitutions (the Articles of Confederation and Federal Constitution).
5. Construct an independent interpretation of the causes and consequence of the American Revolution.
6. Writing skills – learn how to compose an argumentative essay, in which one formulates an analytical argument, lists relevant evidence, and then explains how the evidence supports the argument.

COMMUNICATION: Internet courses are reading- and writing-intensive – all learning content will be delivered through the textbooks and materials posted online. Because of how important communication is in an online class, students are expected to log onto the course at least three evenly spaced times a week. Please check the Announcements area first for updates and other important information. This course is delivered via Blackboard Learn. Students must use their UNT accounts to log into the course from the UNT Blackboard Learn page. The course is delivered in a Unit format. Each Unit folder contains the necessary directions for students to navigate and complete that week's assignments. Students are expected to work through Unit folders according to a schedule, but may advance at a faster pace. However, discussions and exams can be submitted **ONLY** during their availability period. To correspond with me, please use email (guy.chet@unt.edu), rather than Blackboard. It is too easy for me to miss Blackboard messages; please use email.

GRADING: Students are expected to perform the reading assignments, post three discussion responses on the readings, comment on other students' posts, and complete two exams. Assignments are graded on a scale of 0 to 100, with the final course grade assigned according to the following scale: A (90-100), B (80-89), C (70-79), D (60-69), F (0-59). In grading the exams, I pay close attention to both substance and form (grammar, spelling, and clarity). In evaluating substance, I examine whether the author has demonstrated a critical, historical understanding of the material by presenting and substantiating a thesis (a historical argument). In order to compute the final course grade, I will add the relative values of each student's number grades for the 3 online discussions (10% each), mid-term (30%), and the final examination (40%). Grades will be listed in Blackboard's "My Grades" tab for students.

LATE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK: Assignments must be completed by the due date for full credit. Due to the nature of online discussions, late submissions are not possible and will not be accepted for any reason. Exams submitted after the deadline will incur a 5-point late-penalty for the first hour, and 5 additional points for every hour thereafter.

TIME COMMITMENT: Online courses are often more time intensive than traditional courses. Students should anticipate at least 12 hours per week for studying materials and completing discussions and exams as applicable. Falling behind schedule in this course will be detrimental to a student's final grade, since the concepts covered are cumulative – not becoming proficient with information in a particular Unit folder will lead to low scores for that week's assignment and also in subsequent weeks.

INTERACTION AND NETIQUETTE: Communication online is different from face-to-face communication in class. Be sure to use proper "netiquette" when communicating with classmates. Remember that your fellow students cannot see your gestures and facial expression, nor hear the tone of your voice. All these elements figure prominently in our face-to-face communications without us really noticing them. Please keep this in mind when commenting on others' work or just interacting with classmates. Students are expected to treat others in this class with courtesy and respect, as they themselves would like to be treated. Remember that although you may never meet many of your classmates, you can still create lasting friendships in the online environment. Moreover, some classmates might live nearby. During your

introductions, take a minute to let others know what town you live in. You may find that you can meet classmates at a local coffee shop for ongoing conversation on your coursework. To learn more about online etiquette, visit the following Website:

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM: As a student-centered public research university, the University of North Texas promotes the integrity of the learning process by establishing and enforcing academic standards. Academic dishonesty breaches the mutual trust necessary in an academic environment and undermines all scholarship. Students are held accountable for understanding UNT's policy on academic integrity. Any violations of this policy may result in a 0 or F on the particular assignment or an F in the course.

STUDENT SUCCESS AT UNT: Students who have trouble keeping up with assignments should inform the professor as early as possible. "Succeed at UNT" provides students support services and resources for success. Moreover, the History Department's Help Center (WH #220, 940-565-4772) and the History Department Library (WH #267, 940-369-7681) are staffed by graduate students who can assist students with tutoring and essay writing advice.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students with special circumstances covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act should register with the Office of Disability Accommodation, and also inform the instructor of the class. Reasonable adjustments will be made to accommodate the special needs of students with disabilities where such adjustments are necessary to provide equality of educational access.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

George Tindall & David Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, Vol. I (Norton, ISBN 978-0393265941). This is the FULL – not the brief – edition. Any edition of this textbook is good and acceptable for this class, as long as it is the full, rather than the brief edition. If you buy a new copy (i.e. the latest edition), you should take advantage of the support website for *America: A Narrative History*. In it you will find outlines, essays, self-evaluation quizzes, points of interest, and further research.

Guy Chet, *The Colonists' American Revolution: Preserving the Constitution of English Liberty, 1607-1783* [posted online].

Jack Greene, "The Glorious Revolution and the British Empire 1688-1783" [posted online].