

U.S. History to 1865
Mon., Wed., Fri. 1:10-2:00pm

Syllabus

Prof. Marcus McArthur
Location Humanities 111

Office hours: Wed., 2:00-3:00pm
and by appointment
mcarthmj@slu.edu

This course explores American history from its native and European origins until the close of the Civil War. Using lectures, primary and secondary source readings, film and audio clips, we will examine social, cultural, economic and political aspects of the nation's founding and development. At the conclusion of the course, students will have a grasp of the general contours of American history, including its chronology, key personalities, and major events. The primary objective of this course is to provide you with a solid basis in American history that will assist you in any further work in the Humanities you may pursue by providing opportunities for critical thought and exploration of the topics central to the nation's history.

Required Course readings:

Text: Alan Brinkley, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People, Vol. I: to 1877*, 5th ed.

Richard Godbeer, *Escaping Salem*

Harriet Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*

James McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*

Class Preparation: Students are expected to attend every class and participate in class discussions of the weekly readings. Each week's reading assignment will be due by the first class of the week. The only absences that will be excused will be documented emergencies. I reserve the right to determine whether an absence will be excused.

Term Paper: The paper is an extended study (7-8 pages) of a topic concerning some aspect of American history through 1865. I will discuss the papers in greater detail at a later date. Every student must receive my approval of your topic in order to earn credit for the assignment. Paper topics are due in class or via email no later than **Wednesday, Feb. 11**. Paper outlines are due in class on **Friday, April 3**. The paper is due in class on **Monday, May 4**. No late papers will be accepted without a legitimate documented excuse.

Exams: There will be two exams, a midterm on **Friday, March 6**, and a final on **Wednesday, May 6**. The exams will consist of two parts: identifications and essays. In addition, there will be three in-class quizzes on the readings worth fifty points each.

Academic Honesty: Please keep copies of notes and sources used for your research paper until the date of the final exam. **If you cannot show the notes / sources upon request you will automatically receive a grade of zero for the term essay.** Any assignment, whether written or verbal, that does not meet the University's standards of academic honesty will receive a grade of zero and may be liable to other University penalties, including a failing course grade.

Course Grading, Outline, and Readings

Grading:	Participation/Attendance	150 points
	Tests on readings	150 points
	Midterm exam	200 points
	Term Paper	300 points
	Final exam	200 points

1000 Total

Week	Topics/Assignments	Readings	Textbook
1. Jan. 12-16	America Before European Contact	Godbeer	
2. Jan. 19-23	European Context/Contact No class on Monday, Jan. 19 (MLK Day)	Godbeer	Text, ch. 1
3. Jan. 26-30	Colonization and Conflict	Godbeer	Text, ch. 2
4. Feb. 2-6	Transatlantic Slavery	Godbeer	
5. Feb. 9-13	Colonial North America Paper topics due on Wed., 2/11 Quiz, Fri. 2/13: Godbeer (50 points)	Godbeer	Text, ch. 3
6. Feb. 16-20	Imperial Breakdown	Jacobs	Text, ch. 4
7. Feb. 23-27	American Revolution	Jacobs	Text, ch. 5
8. March 2-6	A New Republic Friday, March 6: MIDTERM EXAM NO CLASS week of March 9-13 (Spring Break)	Jacobs	Text, ch. 6
9. March 16-20	Jeffersonian Republicanism	Jacobs	Text, ch. 7-8
10. March 23-27	Slavery and the South Quiz, Fri., 3/27: Jacobs (50 points)	Jacobs	Text, ch. 11
11. Mar. 30-Apr. 3	Jacksonian Democracy Paper outline due on Friday, 4/3	McPherson	Text, ch. 9

12. Apr. 6-10	Antebellum Reform	McPherson	Text, ch. 12
	NO CLASS on Friday, 4/10 (Good Friday)		
13. Apr. 13-17	Territorial Expansion	McPherson	Text, ch. 10
	NO CLASS on Monday, 4/13 (Easter Monday)		
14. Apr. 20-24	Sectional Conflict	McPherson	Text, ch. 13
	Quiz, Mon., 4/24: McPherson (50 points)		
15. Apr. 27-May 1	The Civil War		Text, ch. 14
16. May 4	Last Day of Class		

Paper due on Monday, May 4

Final exam: Wednesday, May 6, 1:10-2:00pm