United States History I:

The Civil War and Reconstruction



C.T. Henry
henryc@oes.edu
Room: 82
Office Hours: G, A, D, and
by appointment after school

First Semester

Unit 1:
Causes of Disunion

Unit 2:
The Mission of the

"IF THERE IS NO STRUGGLE, THERE IS NO PROGRESS"
- Frederick Douglass

"History...is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us, are unconsciously controlled by it in many ways, and *history is literally present in all that we do.*"
- James Baldwin

The Historian's Toolbox

How to Think and Write Like a Historian

War

Unit 3: Reconstruction

What will you learn?
The study of history is an ongoing conversation between the present and the past from which we all have much to learn.

The Civil War was the central drama of 19th century America. It's the story of how we became a pluralistic, multi-ethnic society living under the umbrella of the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. was the first nation publicly to declare all men to be created equal and in possession of unalienable rights. It did this while, nonetheless, nearly half a million members of its population were enslaved. The paradox of that reality has profoundly shaped our nation and its most cherished ideals and ideologies.

America's issues of race and equality are still with us today. Though the Civil War ended 158 years ago, recent events, from the 2017 white supremacist rally in Charlottesville to the storming of the U.S. Capitol in 2021, demonstrate that the Civil War is still being fought. As long as we politicize race, we are likely to politicize how we remember and contest the meaning of the Civil War. How did 750,000 Americans lose their lives, and why does this era continue to be so misunderstood? What was the real cause of the war, according to the historical documents? Why did the soldiers fight? Our study of the Civil War considers the perspectives of ordinary soldiers, both white and black, as well as extraordinary leaders such as Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln, and how they fought to remake the nation. We end the course with an in-depth look at the social, political, and constitutional history of Reconstruction and the violent reaction that it elicited.

How will you learn?
Historians also engage in a methodical process, just like OES's inquiry cycle:

- You will *Explore* the stories of the past, case studies, concepts, and the latest scholarship.
- You will *Connect* with your peers through discussion and make meaningful insights between historical concepts and the contemporary world.
- You will *Create* arguments by synthesizing what you know from a variety of sources.
- You will *Commit* or arrive at your own conclusions.
- You will *Reflect* after receiving feedback from others and revise your theory in the hopes of making better iterations and allowing deeper understanding to emerge.

What will you be able to do at the end of the course?

What People Expect from Historians

How to cite properly

Policies

Expectations and Approaches to Learning

The History Department's Academic Policies

The main goal is improve your ability to *develop and defend evidence-based interpretations of the past*.

To master this essential skill of a historian, you must demonstrate these Learning Outcomes:
1. UNDERSTAND the basic knowledge and key terms of the historical period under study.
2. THINK CRITICALLY by breaking down information and making relevant connections to create meaning.
3. ASK meaningful questions and LOCATE authoritative sources.
4. COMMUNICATE effectively orally and in writing.

Learning Outcomes are the general skills, and therefore each unit and assessment will have *specific indicators* to help break down the learning outcomes into clear and measurable parameters.

Required Reading:
Foner, Eric. *Give Me Liberty! An American History*. Brief 6th Edition Volume 1. New York:. W.W. Norton, 2020.

This course will also include an in-depth study of Frederick Douglass' speeches and writings. Often thought of as a political activist, orator, or statesman, we will read Douglass's work to discover novel insights into the nature of freedom, power, equality, race, and citizenship.

Classroom Citizenship and Communication Agreements
The history of the United States includes voices from the past that inspire people to be their best selves; unfortunately that same history includes voices that express hate, bigotry, and use language that is dehumanizing. The work we do in this class will be guided by the principle that all students deserve to feel safe and supported. We will therefore not only follow the Social Studies Department Citizenship and Communication Agreements but we will also use tools such as journaling, class agreements, and reflection to ensure that we all actively work to create what the writer Micky Scott Bae refers to as a "Brave Space" for learning. In addition, teachers and students will never explicitly say or use any hate language in class. If dehumanizing language is included in class material, students will be given warning ahead of time. We will also leave it out of our writing and discussion of the content, using silent pauses or the first-initial of the word instead.

Policies that Support Your Learning:

- All major assessments must be completed to receive a grade for the course.
- If you need an extension, contact the teacher *at least* 24 hours before the assignment is due.
- Late work will be graded down one-third of a grade (Example: from B to B-) for each day it is not turned in.
- If a major assessment is not turned in within two days of the due date, the student will receive an interim.
- If a student is suspected of violating the major school rule of Academic Integrity the student's work will, at the least, lead to receiving an incomplete until the work is updated. There might also be a possible meeting with the Dean, which might lead result in Honor Code proceedings.
- Please see the US History Department Policies for more information.

Assessment and Feedback:

You will receive both formal and informal feedback during the course. During our class time, you will have ample opportunity to hear from me and your peers. It's important to take risks and test your ideas out in class before graded, formal assessments. Assessments may include quizzes, multiple-choice, short responses, document-based assessments, essays, and tests. Each unit will end with a major assessment that will test your understanding and skills.

Unit 1 - Causes of Disunion
Unit 2 - Mission of the War
Unit 3 - Reconstruction

Your grade in this course is dependent on your level of achievement. For more information, please read "Expectations and Approaches to Learning."