

# HH 1010

## The Unrealized Dream: An Introduction to U.S. History

Instructor: Assistant Professor Miles Powell  
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Office: HSS-05-24  
Office hours: By appointment

Pre-requisites: None

Academic Units: 3

Meeting time: Lectures: Thursdays, 9:30-11:30 am; Tutorials: Thursdays, 12:30 – 1:30 pm, 1:30-2:30 pm, and 2:30-3:30 pm.

Venue: Lectures: SPMS-LT5; Tutorials: LHS-TR+42

### Course Aims

Aimed at history students but also suitable for anyone with an interest in American history, this elective course will provide you with a general overview of American history from the colonial period through the War on Terror. This class will also introduce you to some of the key theoretical approaches and debates in the writing of US history. Upon completion of this course, you will have a better understanding of the historical development of America's political, social, cultural, and economic systems. You will additionally be stronger writers and thinkers.

### Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Investigate and explain** the role of a range of historical processes in the political, cultural, and societal formation of the modern United States.
2. **Compare and contrast** the major historical approaches and theories to US history.
3. **Analyze and interpret** primary and secondary historical sources relating to American history.
4. **Formulate** compelling historical arguments about US history that effectively deploy primary and secondary source evidence.
5. **Present** historical ideas and evidence concerning US history to a specialist audience

### Course Content

In this class, students will contemplate what some historians term "The American Irony" – the fact that American citizens have often acquired independence, freedom, and affluence by conquering, enslaving, and impoverishing other peoples. Students will explore the major events that shaped the development of the United States, from the

colonial period through the War on Terror. In the process they will learn how the United States rose to a position of global hegemony, and question whether that situation is likely to endure. This class will focus particularly on issues of race, class, and gender, which carry relevance beyond the boundaries of the United States.

### **Required Books:**

This course has no textbook, so students are encouraged to attend all lectures. Tutorial readings will be available on the NTULearn course site. To help you follow along, you may wish to consult the following book, copies of which are on reserves at the Library Outpost:

Boyer, Paul S. *American History: A Very Short Introduction* (USA: Oxford University Press, 2012)

### **Student Assessment:**

In-Class Participation:	10%
Midterm Exam:	15%
Essay Outline:	5%
Argumentative Essay:	20%
Final Exam:	50%

### **In-Class Participation:**

Students must attend every tutorial prepared to discuss that week's assigned readings. I will also encourage student participation during lectures. Outstanding participants will demonstrate a thorough and critical understanding of the assigned material by offering perceptive comments and asking informed questions.

### **Midterm Exam:**

Students will write an in-class midterm exam on Week VII. This will include three ID and significance type short answer questions (I will explain what these are in lecture), and one essay question. You will be able to choose from multiple prompts for both components. I will draw questions from lectures and readings.

### **Essay Outline:**

At the start of lecture on Week X, students will submit an outline of their essay (see essay prompt below), so that I can make sure you are on the right track. This outline

must include a thesis statement, a list of sources, and an overview of the essay's structure.

### **Argumentative Essay:**

At the start of the final lecture, students will submit an argumentative essay (1,800-2,000 words) responding to the following prompt: **What is the American Irony? How does this term apply to ONE of the following topics—the American Revolution; Antebellum economic growth; nineteenth-century westward expansion; the pursuit of markets in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; the Second World War; or the Cold War?** Every essay must contain a clear thesis, and must incorporate properly cited evidence from at least two tutorial readings, plus at least four additional scholarly sources.

### **Final Exam:**

You will need to complete five ID and significance type questions, one short essay, and one long essay. You will be able to choose from multiple prompts for all of these components. I will draw questions from lectures and readings.

### **Course Outline and Readings:**

Week I (18/01): Prehistory to Colonial Period

No Tutorial Readings:

**\*\*\*Writing workshop in tutorial\*\*\***

Week II (25/01): Revolution and Constitution

Tutorial Readings:

Gordon S. Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution* (New York, 1992), 3-8, 325-69.

"Forum," *WMQ*, LI (Oct. 1994), 677-717.

Week III (01/02): The Promise and Perils of Nationhood

Tutorial Readings:

Kevin M. Gannon, "Escaping 'Mr. Jefferson's Plan of Destruction': New England Federalists and the Idea of a Northern Confederacy, 1803-1804" *Journal of the Early Republic* 21(3) (Autumn, 2001): 413-443.

Mary Hershberger, "Mobilizing Women, Anticipating Abolition: The Struggle against Indian Removal in the 1830s" *Journal of American History* 86(1) (June, 1999): 15-40.

Week IV (08/02): Westward Expansion

Tutorial Readings:

Peter Guardino, "Gender, Soldiering, and Citizenship in the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848" *American Historical Review* 119(1) (Feb 2014): 23-46.

Brian Delay, "Independent Indians and the U.S.-Mexican War" *American Historical Review* 112(1) (Feb 2007): 35-68.

Week V (15/02): Slavery and the Civil War

Tutorial Readings:

Emily West, "'Between Slavery and Freedom': The Expulsion and Enslavement of Free Women of Colour in the US South before the Civil War" *Women's History Review* 22(3) (June 2013): 460-477.

Manisha Sinha, "The Caning of Charles Sumner: Slavery, Race, and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War" *Journal of the Early Republic* 23(3) (7/1/2003): 233-262.

Week VI (22/02): The Indian Wars

Tutorial Readings:

Richard White, "The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteen and Nineteenth Centuries." *Journal of American History* 65 (September, 1978): 319-343.

David D. Smits, "The Frontier Army and the Destruction of the Buffalo: 1865-1883" *The Western Historical Quarterly* 25(3) (Autumn 1994): 312-338.

Week VII (01/03): **Midterm Exam**

No tutorial readings. **Optional film screening of *Glory* (1989). Venue TBD.**

**\*\*\*Recess Week\*\*\***

Week VIII (15/03): Industry and the Search for Markets

Tutorial Readings:

Thomas J. Osborne, "Trade or War? America's Annexation of Hawaii Reconsidered" *Pacific Historical Review* 50(3) (Aug., 1981): 285-307.

Erika Lee, "The Chinese Exclusion Example: Race, Immigration, and American Gatekeeping, 1882-1924" *Journal of American Ethnic History* 21(3) (Spring, 2002): 36-62.

Week IX (22/03): World War I and the Roaring Twenties

Tutorial Readings:

Russel Lawrence Barsh, "American Indians in the Great War" *Ethnohistory* 38(3) (Summer, 1991): 276-303.

Lizabeth Cohen, "Encountering Mass Culture at the Grassroots: The Experience of Chicago Workers in the 1920s" *American Quarterly* 41(1) (Mar., 1989): 6-33.

Week X (29/03): The Depression and the New Deal

Tutorial Readings:

Marsha Weisiger, "Gendered Injustice: Navajo Livestock Reduction in the New Deal Era" *The Western Historical Quarterly* 38(4) (Winter, 2007): 437-455.

Eric Rauchway, "New Deal Denialism" *Dissent* (Winter 2010): 68-72.

**\*\*\*Essay Outline Due\*\*\***

Week XI (05/04): World War Two

Tutorial Readings:

Beth Bailey and David Farber, "The 'Double-V Campaign' in World War II Hawaii: African-Americans, Racial Ideology, and Federal Power" *Journal of Social History* 26(4) (Summer, 1993): 817-843.

Connie Chiang, "Imprisoned Nature: Toward an Environmental History of the World War II Japanese American Incarceration" *Environmental History* 15(2) (April 2010): 236-67.

Week XII (12/04): Cold War, Consensus, and Protest

Tutorial Readings:

Mary L. Dudziak, "Brown as a Cold War Case" *The Journal of American History* 91(1) (June 2004): 32-42.

Michael Kazin, "Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Meaning of the 1960s" *The American Historical Review* 114(4) (October 2009): 980-989.

Week XIII (19/04): Conservative Backlash and the War on Terror

Tutorial Readings:

Hugh Heclo, "George Bush and American Conservatism" in Michael Nelson and Barbara Perry, eds., *41: Inside the Presidency of George H. W. Bush* (Cornell University Press, 2014): 48-77.

T. Christopher Jespersen, "Analogies at War" *Pacific Historical Review* 74(3) (August 2005): 411-426.

**\*\*\*Argumentative Essay Due\*\*\***