

HH 1010

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

Instructor: Assistant Professor Miles Powell

Email: miles.powell@ntu.edu.sg

Office: HSS-05-24

Office hours: By appointment

Pre-requisites: None

Academic Units: 3

Meeting time: Lectures: Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30 am; Tutorials: Wednesdays, 9:30 – 10:30, 10:30-11:30, and 11:30 – 12:30.

Venue: Lectures: LHS-LT; Tutorials: LHS-TR+40

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 concerning 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 (a situation, it should be noted, that is by no means unique to the United States). 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 VIII, 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 (see detailed assignment instructions below, following course outline).

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 (see detailed assignment instructions below, following course outline).

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 (Lec: 15/01; Tut: 16/01): Prehistory to Colonial Period

No Tutorial Readings:

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

Week II (Lec: 22/01; Tut: 23/01): 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 (Lec: 29/01; Tut: 30/01): 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 (Classes cancelled for CNY; complete readings): 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 (Lec: 12/02; Tut: 13/02): 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 (Lec: 19/02; Tut: 20/02): 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 (Lec: 26/02; Tut: 27/02): **Midterm Exam**

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

*****Recess Week*****

Week VIII (Lec: 12/03; Tut: 13/03): 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.

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

Week IX (Lec: 19/03; Tut: 20/03): 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 (Lec: 26/03; Tut: 27/03): 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.

Week XI (Lec: 02/04; Tut: 03/04): 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 and Environmental History of the World War II Japanese American Incarceration" *Environmental History* 15(2) (April 2010): 236-67.

Week XII (Lec: 09/04; Tut: 10/04): 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 (Lec: 16/04; Tut: 17/04): Conservative Backlash and the War on Terror

Tutorial Readings:

Hugh Hecla, "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*****

Assignment Instructions

Essay Outline:

This outline should be no more than 600 words (not including footnote citations, but **including** the annotated bibliography). The outline should introduce your thesis statement, and then lay out the structure of your essay. Your thesis statement should be written in proper academic English. You can plot out the structure of your essay using point form. You should also include an annotated bibliography identifying the sources you will use and briefly explaining why you selected them (one or two sentences per source). Primary source research is not required, but you may of course draw on primary sources if you wish. You may use a slightly different research question, but your essay must ultimately clearly define the American Irony, and explain how it applied to your selected theme.

Argumentative Essay:

Your paper should be 1,800-2,000 words, double-spaced, and in 12-point Times New Roman or a similar-sized font. No cover page is required. Likewise, no bibliography is necessary, but your paper should use Chicago-style footnote citations. Your paper must have a thesis (an argument) that explains whether the American Irony was evident in your chosen topic. Your paper should draw on at least two tutorial readings, plus at least four additional scholarly sources.

Course Policies and Student Responsibilities

(I) General

Students are expected to complete all assigned pre-class readings and activities, attend all seminar classes punctually and take all scheduled assignments and tests by due dates. Students are expected to take responsibility to follow up with course notes,

assignments and course related announcements for seminar sessions they have missed. Students are expected to participate in all seminar discussions and activities.

(2) Absenteeism

Absence from class without a valid reason will affect your overall course grade. Valid reasons include falling sick supported by a medical certificate and participation in NTU's approved activities supported by an excuse letter from the relevant bodies.

If you must miss a lecture, you should inform the course instructor via email prior to the start of the class.

Academic Integrity

Good academic work depends on honesty and ethical behaviour. The quality of your work as a student relies on adhering to the principles of academic integrity and to the NTU Honour Code, a set of values shared by the whole university community. Truth, Trust and Justice are at the core of NTU's shared values.

As a student, it is important that you recognize your responsibilities in understanding and applying the principles of academic integrity in all the work you do at NTU. Not knowing what is involved in maintaining academic integrity does not excuse academic dishonesty. You need to actively equip yourself with strategies to avoid all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, academic fraud, collusion and cheating. **Serious cases of any of the above will be reported to administrators and result in an automatic score of zero for the assignment in question.** If you are uncertain of the definitions of any of these terms, you should go to the academic integrity website for more information. Consult your instructor(s) if you need any clarification about the requirements of academic integrity in the course.