

Fall 2008 | University of North Carolina, Greensboro  
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Office Hours: Mondays, 10:00 to 11:00, and Wednesdays, 11:00 to 12:00

# HIS 211: The United States to 1865

## Course Syllabus

For many years, historians focused on statesmen and other great men as the sole agents of change in American history. This course shifts focus to ordinary Americans and their efforts to shape their own history and the history of their nation. The goals of this course are to introduce students to the controversies, trends, events, and actors in the first half of American history and to familiarize students with the analytical skills employed in the study of history.

**Course Requirements:** The requirements for this course include assigned readings for each class, periodic assignments and quizzes on the assigned readings, two papers, and two exams.

**Sections:** Students are required to sign up for a discussion section. Attendance in section each week is mandatory. The sections are scheduled as follows:

Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 8:50 a.m., CURY 238  
Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 9:50 a.m., CURY 247  
Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 9:50 a.m., CURY 244  
Fridays, 10:00 a.m. to 10:50 a.m., GRAM 310

**Assigned Readings:** There are three books assigned for this class: Peter H. Wood, *Strange New Land: Africans in Colonial America* (1996); Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *The Kingdom of Matthias: A Story of Sex and Salvation in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century America* (1995); and William L. Barney, *The Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir's Civil War* (2007). Each of these books can be purchased at the University Bookstore. Additional readings are on blackboard, e-reserves, and the internet. These readings will be linked to the Syllabus on Blackboard and listed under Course Documents on Blackboard as they become available. The assigned reading list may undergo minor changes, including the addition of primary source readings; students should be sure to consult the most current version of the Syllabus on Blackboard under Course Information.

**Participation, Short Assignments, and Quizzes (20%):** Participation in discussion is mandatory. Students should be prepared to discuss the readings on the day that they are assigned. Attendance alone is not sufficient for full participation credit. Students will be given brief in-class and take-home writing and research assignments based on the assigned readings. Students will also be

periodically quizzed on readings and lectures.

Papers (15% each): Students are required to write two papers, one due on September 29 and one due on November 17.

Exams (20% midterm; 30% final): There will be two exams in this class: one midterm on October 17 and one final exam on December 12.

**Attendance and Late Policy:** You are allowed three absences. After three absences, you will receive a zero for participation for that day. In addition, students will be dropped from the class for excessive absences. Assignments submitted in class are due at the beginning of the class period. Students who submit assignments after the deadline will be penalized with a grade deduction based on the lateness of the assignment. No assignments will be accepted one week after the due date. All assignments must be submitted in hard copy.

**Plagiarism Policy:** The University defines plagiarism as “intentionally or knowingly representing the words of another, as one’s own in any academic exercise.”<sup>1</sup> (See the University’s [Academic Integrity Policies](#) for further information.) All sources (books, articles, documents, internet sites, etc.) used in any paper or assignment must be properly cited or will be considered plagiarism. Any instance of plagiarism will receive a zero and will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for appropriate action, including suspension or expulsion from the University.

## **Unit 1**

### **Week 1:**

#### **01: Monday, August 25: Introduction**

#### **02: Wednesday, August 27: Precontact**

Readings:

- Jack Hitt, “Mighty White of You: Racial Preferences Color America’s Oldest Skulls and Bones,” *Harper’s*, July 2005, pp. 39-55 on [blackboard](#)
- UNCG Library, Chapter 7: [From Research to Writing](#), *First Steps: An Explorer’s Guide to Research*

#### **03: Sections**

### **Week 2:**

#### **04: Monday, September 1: Labor Day Holiday**

## **05: Wednesday, September 3: Creating the Atlantic World**

### Readings:

- Alan Taylor, *American Colonies: The Settling of North America* (New York: Penguin Press, 2002), pp. 23-49 on [blackboard](#).
- Documents: Christopher Columbus, *The Diario of Christopher Columbus's First Voyage to America*, (1492-1493), on [blackboard](#); Bernal Diaz del Castillo, *The Conquest of New Spain*, (1632), on [blackboard](#); *Mexican Accounts of Conquest from the Florentine Codex*, (c. 1547), on [blackboard](#); Bartolomé de Las Casas, *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*, (1542), on [blackboard](#); "Two Views on Columbus Day," (1991 and 2005) on [blackboard](#)

## **06: Sections**

### **Week 3:**

## **07: Monday, September 8: The Atlantic Slave Trade**

### Readings:

- "Why Were Africans Enslaved?" in David Northrup, ed., *The Atlantic Slave Trade, Second Edition* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), pp. 1-29 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: John Hawkins, "An Alliance to Raid for Slaves" (1568), Willem Bosman, "Trading on the Slave Coast" (1700), Olaudah Equiano, "Kidnapped, Enslaved, and Sold Away" (c. 1756) on [blackboard](#)

## **08: Wednesday, September 10: The British Empire in the Americas**

### Readings:

- Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, and Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), pp. 8-35 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: George Peckham, "A True Reporte of the Late Discoveries," (1583); Richard Hakluyt, the Younger, "Discourse of Western Planting," (1584) on [blackboard](#); Richard Hakluyt, the Elder, "Inducements to the Liking of the Voyage Intended towards Virginia," (1585); [Virginia Company], "A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia," (1610) on [blackboard](#)

## **09: Sections**

### **Week 4:**

## **10: Monday, September 15: Encounter**

### Readings:

- Kathleen Brown, “The Anglo-Algonquian Gender Frontier,” in *Negotiators of Change Historical Perspectives on Native American Women*, ed. Nancy Shoemaker (New York: Routledge, 1995), pp. 26-48 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: John Winthrop, “But What Warrant Have We To Take That Land” (1629) (See document collection in “08”); John Smith, “Description of Virginia” on [blackboard](#); Father Paul LeJeune, “Encounter with the Indians” on [blackboard](#)

## **11: Wednesday, September 17: Colonial America: Chesapeake**

### Readings:

- Peter H. Wood, *Strange New Land*, pp. xi-34
- Documents: “Servitude and Slavery in 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Virginia Courts,” (1630-89) on [blackboard](#); James Revel, “The Poor Unhappy Transported Felon’s Sorrowful Account of His Fourteen Years Transportation at Virginia in America,” (c. 1680) on [blackboard](#); “Testimony from Virginia Courts,” (1681) on [blackboard](#)

## **12: Sections**

### **Week 5:**

## **13: Monday, September 22: Colonial America: Lowcountry**

### Readings:

- Peter H. Wood, *Strange New Land*, pp. 35-72
- Document: “The Stono Rebellion in South Carolina, 1739” on [blackboard](#)

## **14: Wednesday, September 24: Colonial America: New England**

### Readings:

- Peter H. Wood, *Strange New Land*, pp. 73-94

## **15: Sections**

## **Unit 2**

### **Week 6:**

## **16: Monday, September 29: Colonial Disorder**

**\*First paper due at the beginning of class.\***

Readings:

- Alfred F. Young, “George Robert Twelves Hewes, A Patriot Shoemaker of Boston,” in *The Way We Lived*, eds. Frederick M. Binder and David M. Reimers (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004), pp. 120-30 on [blackboard](#)
- Document: Ann Hulton, “Loyalist View of Colonial Unrest” (1774) on [blackboard](#)

**17: Wednesday, October 1: Mounting Grievances**

Readings:

- Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, “Sailors and Slaves in the Revolution,” in *The Social Fabric*, ed. Thomas L. Hartshorne (New York: Longman, 2006), pp. 131-49 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*, [Section I](#), [Section II](#), [Section III](#) on blackboard

**18: Sections**

**Week 7:**

**19: Monday, October 6: War and Rebellion**

Readings:

- Documents: Abigail and John Adams, “Remember the Ladies” (1776) on [blackboard](#); Joseph Brant, “Mohawk Loyalty to Britain” (1776) on [blackboard](#); John Dickinson, “A Speech Against Independence” (1776) on [blackboard](#); Slave Petitions for Freedom during the Revolution, 1774-79 on [blackboard](#)

**20: Wednesday, October 8: New State Governments and Articles of Confederation**

Readings:

- Gary B. Nash, *The Unknown Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America*, pp. 306-65 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: William Finlay, “On Democracy, Banks, and Paper Money,” 1786 on [blackboard](#); Shay’s Rebels, “Grievances,” 1786 on [blackboard](#)

**21: Sections**

**Week 8:**

**22: Monday, October 13: Constitutional Debates**

Readings:

- Jack N. Rakove, “The Perils of Originalism,” *What Did the Constitution Mean to Early Americans?*, ed. Edward Countryman (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1999), pp. 141-63 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: Cato’s Letters No. 3 on [internet](#) and The Federalist, No. 10, on [blackboard](#)

**23: Wednesday, October 15: Competing Visions for the Early Republic**

Readings:

- Documents: Governor Thomas Mifflin, “Proclamation on Unlawful Combinations,” 1794; Judge Alexander Addison, “On the Whiskey Rebellion,” 1794 on [blackboard](#)

**24: Friday, October 17: \*Mid-term exam in class at 12:00 a.m.\***

**Unit 3**

**Week 9:**

**25: Monday, October 20: Fall Break Holiday**

**26: Wednesday, October 22: “Age of the Common Man”**

Readings:

- Harry L. Watson, *Liberty and Power: The Politics of Jacksonian America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), pp. 17-41 on [blackboard](#)
- James Tallmadge, “Denunciation of Slavery in Missouri” on [blackboard](#); James Flint, *Letters from America*, pp. 198-202 on [blackboard](#); David Crockett, *Exploits and Adventures in Texas*, pp. 56-59 on [blackboard](#)

**27: Sections**

**Week 10:**

**28: Monday, October 27: American Expansion and Indian Removal**

Readings:

- Document: Tecumseh’s Plea to the Choctaws and the Chickasaws on [blackboard](#)
- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *Kingdom of Matthias*, pp. 3-48

## **29: Wednesday, October 29: The Market Revolution**

Readings:

- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *Kingdom of Matthias*, pp. 49-90

## **30: Sections**

**Week 11:**

## **31: Monday, November 3: The Northern Working Class**

Readings:

- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *Kingdom of Matthias*, pp. 90-126
- Documents: B. Julianna, “Factory Life as it Is” (1845) on [blackboard](#); “Accounts of Urban Riots” (1835) on [blackboard](#); William Sanger, “New York Prostitutes” (1858) on [blackboard](#)

## **32: Wednesday, November 5: The Northern Middle Class**

Readings:

- Paul E. Johnson and Sean Wilentz, *Kingdom of Matthias*, pp. 127-80
- Documents: David Walker’s *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (1829) and William Lloyd Garrison on Slavery on [blackboard](#)

## **33: Sections**

**Week 12:**

## **34: Monday, November 10: Creating the “Old South”**

Readings:

- Stephanie McCurry, “The Two Faces of Republicanism: Gender and Proslavery Politics in Antebellum South Carolina,” *Journal of American History*, Vol. 78, No. 4 (Mar., 1992), pp. 1245-1264 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: Augustus Baldwin Longstreet, from *Georgia Scenes* on [blackboard](#); Daniel R. Hundley, from *Social Relations from Our Southern States* on [blackboard](#); Mary Boykin Chesnut, from *The Private Mary Chesnut* on [blackboard](#); Reverend Thornton Stringfellow, *A Brief Examination of the Scripture Testimony of the Institution of Slavery*, 1841, on [blackboard](#)

## **35: Wednesday, November 12: Life in the “Quarters”**

Readings:

- Brenda Stevenson, “Distress and Discord in Virginia Slave Families, 1830-60,” in *In Joy and In Sorrow: Women, Family, and Marriage in the Victorian South, 1830-60*, pp. 103-124 on [blackboard](#)
- Documents: Harriet Jacobs, from *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* on [blackboard](#); Frederick Douglass, from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* on [blackboard](#)

### **36: Sections**

#### **Unit 4**

#### **Week 13:**

### **37: Monday, November 17: Manifest Destiny and the Mexican War**

**\*Second paper due at the beginning of class.\***

#### Readings:

- Susan Lee Johnson, “‘Domestic’ Life in the Diggings: The Southern Mines in the California Gold Rush,” in Matsumoto and Allmendinger, eds., *Over the Edge: Remapping the American West*, pp. 107-132 on [blackboard](#)
- Document: John O’Sullivan, “Annexation,” *The United States Magazine and Democratic Review* 17 on [blackboard](#)

### **38: Wednesday, November 19: The Political Crisis of the 1850s**

#### Readings:

- Documents: George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All! or Slaves Without Masters*, 1857, on [blackboard](#); Frederick Law Olmsted, *The Cotton Kingdom*, 1861, on [blackboard](#); and Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?,” 1852 on [blackboard](#)
- Secession Era Editorials Project at <http://history.furman.edu/~benson/docs>

### **39: Sections**

#### **Week 14:**

### **40: Monday, November 24: Secession and the Descent to War**

#### Readings:

- William L. Barney, *The Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir’s Civil War*, pp. 3-45
- Documents: James D. B. DeBow, “The Interest in Slavery of the

Southern Non-Slaveholder” on [blackboard](#); South Carolina’s “Declaration of Causes,” December 24, 1860; Mississippi’s “Declaration of Causes,” January 9, 1861; Georgia’s “Declaration of Causes,” January 19, 1861 on [internet](#)

**41: Wednesday, November 26: Thanksgiving Holiday**

**42: Sections – Thanksgiving Holiday**

**Week 15:**

**43: Monday, December 1: On the Homefront**

Readings:

- William L. Barney, *The Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir’s Civil War*, pp. 46-107

**44: Wednesday, December 3: War’s End**

Readings:

- William L. Barney, *The Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir’s Civil War*, pp. 108-140
- Documents: Spotswood Rice to “My Children,” September 3, 1864, and Spotswood Rice to Kitty Diggs, September 3, 1864, on [internet](#)

**45: Sections**

**Week 16:**

**46: Monday, December 8: The Rise and Fall of Reconstruction**

Readings:

- William L. Barney, *The Making of a Confederate: Walter Lenoir’s Civil War*, pp. 141-231

**Final Exam**

**Friday, December 12, 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.**

**Endnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> <http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/violation/plagiarism/>

