



Syllabus-course rules and regulations.

Minnesota State University Moorhead
History 121: Course Syllabus
Fall 2024

Instructor: Dr. Sean Taylor

Meeting Time and Place: MWF, 10:00-10:50, Ma 173

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Office Hours: MW 8:30-9:45, 12:30-1:30-2:45, F 8:30-9:45, and online by appointment.

"It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it"—Aristotle

Course Goals:

This course introduces you to the major themes of American history from the colonial period through the Reconstruction of the Union after the Civil War. In this class **you will learn to read and discuss primary (material created at the time) and secondary sources (interpretations of the past) to better understand** the historical events relating to early American history. By reading and discussing these sources you will gain a better understanding motivations that lead to the changes that occurred in the past, some which directly affect us today. To aid you in this goal, we will discuss historical sources on a daily basis since I firmly believe being a historian is the only effective way to understand and learn history.

Course Requirements:

I. Electronics

We live in an age where it seems we are all connected electronically. While cell phones and other electronic devices are valuable tools, and we will use them in class, I am asking you to **not text or email** while class is in session. We are here to talk about the past and to listen to each other as we discuss our understanding of the past and **texting or phones ringing disrupt the discussion**. If you need to have the phone on for a day (sick kids, IRS is looking for you), just let me know and set your phone to silent.

Honestly, studies have shown it is completely harmless to be disconnected from the outside world for a whole class period--you will survive.

II. Readings and Lecture

Textbook: Textbooks provide a valuable resource in history classes--**they tell you the narrative**. After all, knowing the Civil War happened after the American Revolution makes the whole thing more understandable, right? I use a free, online textbook in this class to help you remember the narrative of American history. You need to read it--there are chapter **quizzes on D2L** that a part of your grade, but you also need to read it so you understand how the people who founded our nation, all of them, understood the world they lived in, thus shaping our world today.

Lectures: My lectures provide a basic structure to the course material and amplify broader themes presented in both the textbook and other readings. **Do yourself a favor and actively** take notes as you view them (yes, write them down), as **I will be looking for lecture material in your written work**. Please Note: the lectures **will close at specific intervals and will not be available after that--just as I wouldn't re-give a lecture on the eve of an exam**.

III. Academic Expectations (Read Carefully)

Assignments and Weighting: One midterm and one final examination (33 percent); three short writing assignments (33 percent) and, discussion/participation (44 percent), and quizzes (10%).

Exams: They will consist of writing an essay where you answer a question(s) posed by me using both primary and secondary sources, class discussion, our lectures, and the textbook readings.

Short-Writing Assignment: There will be **three** short writing assignments (2-3 pages). The first is designed to let you examine primary sources, the last two are related to the *Reacting to the Past* games.

Quizzes: Covers the online textbook readings in *The American Yawp*.

Discussion/Participation: I firmly believe the **only way you can understand the past** is by “rolling up your sleeves and dive right in” and **read and think about the material presented** in class. Consequently, the only way this course works is **if you do your part and come to class having read and thought about this material**. It is not enough to skim it just before class—you must read it and try to understand why it was written. As noted above, **a substantial portion of your grade in this class is based on your in-class performance**. Participation is evaluated as follows:

A= Well-prepared; brings, refers to, and questions assigned texts; displays critical thinking; respects others and does not dominate; listens attentively.

B= Prepared; brings, refers to, and occasionally questions assigned texts; comments further discussion; listens attentively.

C= Usually prepared; brings but rarely refers to or questions assigned texts; rarely speaks, sometimes inattentive and sometimes engages in private conversations and interrupts others.

D= Often unprepared; often does not bring or is unfamiliar with assigned texts; has private conversations with others and is otherwise inattentive in class.

F= Unprepared; indifferent to issues being discussed and very inattentive.

A Note About Writing

You are being evaluated on your ability to think for yourself, to apply complex ideas to material, and to express yourself. In order to evaluate your abilities, **your work must be your own work.**

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI): Where possible, student work will be automatically scanned by the software of Turnitin.com. In addition to searching for matches between the submitted work and material submitted at other universities and all information published on the Internet, Turnitin will evaluate the work for signs of artificial intelligence (AI) writing. Turnitin will inform the instructor of the result of this evaluation, but students are not show this result.

Please note that recent changes to Grammarly makes it a form of AI, and anything rewritten by Grammarly might be flagged as AI.

Additionally, AI often inserts sentences from published documents into what it produces, creating direct plagiarism. Therefore, use of Grammarly and other forms of AI will place you at high risk of violating the university's Academic Honesty Policy (linked above). Be sure you understand the academic standards of presentation, originality, and documentation of sources before you employ AI in your writing.

If you use AI or Grammarly, you must alert the instructor of its use. This is done in the list of sources at the end of your document. You must list the program used and the precise prompt(s) you gave to the program.

No more 5% of your text can be generated by AI.

Attendance and participation: It is really hard to learn if you are not in class, especially in a class that relies so much on discussion. And discussion is important since it makes you a vital part of the learning process. **In short, you need to be in class for a good grade in this class.** I will send an attendance sheet around each day for you to sign. This will not directly

affect your participation grade, but does provide me with a record of your attendance should any question arise regarding your participation grade. **Bottom line, missing more than a few classes will hurt your grade.**

LATE WORK raises the issue of fairness for students who complete all assignments on schedule. Therefore students will not be permitted to MAKE-UP assignments, papers, or projects without a university-approved legitimate reason, and discussion with the professor PRIOR to the scheduled due date. In accordance with university policy, students who miss class because of a university-sponsored activity, or illness, will be permitted to submit assignments after the due date, without penalty. **NOTE:** Technical problems with personal computers or other electronic equipment or media will not automatically be accepted as a legitimate reason for lateness. **Unexcused LATE PAPERS, WRITINGS or PROJECTS will be penalized one letter grade per day** they are late, including weekends. Failure to complete major assignments and papers will result in an F course grade.

Academic Integrity: Cheating will result in a failing grade for the course. All work must be your own, handing something in that is not exclusively your own work will result in a failing grade. This policy will be enforced for all graded work. Note that cheating includes copying from books, articles or other material without proper quotation marks and citations. In addition, cheating includes copying each other's work on papers and other assignments. As noted above, this also includes any work created by any form of **artificial intelligence**, unless expressly approved by me. The standard definition of plagiarism is copying four or more words in a row without quote marks. A consistent pattern of "paraphrasing" by changing only one or two words also constitutes plagiarism. See the student handbook for more information.

Grading: Numerical grade levels are as follows: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D- (60-62) F (below 60).

A=Outstanding competence

B=Above satisfactory competence

C=Satisfactory level of competence

D=Marginally satisfactory level of competence

F=Unsatisfactory level of competence

Please note that a C is considered satisfactory at MSUM. I do not believe in grade inflation and will use the entire grade scale when calculating your final grade. If you work hard you will do well. Note also that A's are given for work considered outstanding. Simply fulfilling

the course requirements will not guarantee an A in this class. You must clearly exhibit outstanding competence to receive an A in the course.

General Expectations: Throughout the entire semester I expect an intellectual commitment on your part. Education is a two-part process: I must want to teach you, and you must want to learn. I will do everything I know to stimulate your interest, but I expect you not only to complete all the requirements but also to think deeply about the content of the course. This course is challenging, but I believe you will find it rewarding and perhaps, dare I say it, fun—if you keep up with the work.

Required Text Books:

-*The American Yawp*: this is a **free online textbook** we will use as the basis for background information. Chapter due dates can be found on D2L.

-Michael Johnson, *Reading the American Past*, fifth edition, (ISBN 0-312-56413-9)

-Patrick Colby, *Raising The Eleventh Pillar: The New York State Ratifying Convention of 1788*, ISBN: 9780393533033

-selected handouts in D2L.

Accessibility:

Minnesota State University Moorhead is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students and strives to make courses inclusive and accessible in accordance with sections 508, 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The University will make reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Accessibility Resources (AR) is the campus office that collaborates with students in need of accommodations and assists in arranging reasonable accommodations.

If you have or think you may have a disability or are currently registered and have questions/concerns, please contact the Director of Accessibility Resources at: Charles.Eade@mnstate.edu. Additional information is available on the AR website: <http://www.mnstate.edu/accessibility>.

The ADA Coordinator for students and ADA compliance issues is Chuck Eade, Director of Accessibility Resources, charles.eade@mnstate.edu.

Sexual Violence Policy

Acts of sexual violence are intolerable. MSUM expects all members of the campus community to act in a manner that does not infringe on the rights of others. We are committed to building a campus culture free from sexual violence. MSUM faculty and staff are concerned about the well-being of our students. We are obligated to share information

*with the MSUM Title IX Coordinator in certain situations to help ensure that the student's safety and welfare are being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking. If you have experienced or know someone who has experienced relationship or sexual violence, services and resources are available. You may also choose to file a report. For further information, contact **Kara Gravley-Stack**, Dean of Students and Title IX Coordinator, in Flora Frick 153 at kara.gravleystack@mnstate.edu or by calling (218) 477-4222. Additional information is available at: <http://www.mnstate.edu/titleix>*

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will understand how the United States developed from the original British colonies into a democracy.
2. Students will gain an appreciation of the diversity of the American people, in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, and region.
3. Students will understand the processes of westward expansion and economic development during this period.
4. Students will understand the causes and consequences of the Civil War.



Daily Discussion Readings

This is where you will find the daily readings for class discussion. Make certain you have thoroughly read the material and are ready to discuss it in class.

100 % 46 of 46 topics complete


1. Colonizing North America

In our first unit we will explore European colonization of North America. It's important to note that people from Europe came for many reasons, some in search of a better life, others because the choice was more stark--life or death. Africans came in large numbers as well--initially as part of a larger migration around the Atlantic world--but soon coming against their will as chattel slaves.

Likewise, the arrival of Africans and Europeans fundamentally changed the lives of the people already living here. Disease, trade patterns, warfare, labor practices, flora, and fauna, all changed for Native Americans as a result of colonization patterns.

8/26--Course introduction 

Web Page

8/28: Using music to understand history. 

Web Page

8/30 Johnson,
INTRODUCTION and Chapter
1, ANCIENT AMERICA:
BEFORE 1492

Web Page



9/2 Labor Day: No Classes at
MSUM. Spend the time reading
and thinking about the laboring
classes in America.

Web Page



9/4 Johnson, Ch. 2.
EUROPEANS ENCOUNTER
THE NEW WORLD, 1492-1600

Web Page



9/6 Johnson, Ch. 3. THE
SOUTHERN COLONIES IN THE
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY,
1601-1700

Web Page



9/9 Johnson, Ch. 4- The
Northern Colonies

Web Page



2. The Origins of Slavery



9/11 Slavery and the Making of America--click to view video



Web Page

9/13 More on the development of slavery



Web Page

9/16 Patterns of Black Resistance



PDF document

9/18 Going to the Source: Runaway Advertisements



Web Page

9/20 Exam 1



Web Page

3. From Colony to Nation



For most student colonial life before the American Revolution is a mystery. Indeed, most of you don't even think about it after you learn about the Pilgrims landing on Cape Cod in 1620. This unit is designed to open a door in to their lives just a little bit by asking you to think about how they lived, and who they lived with in the period. Why might this be important? That is question we will talk about quite a bit in class.

9/23 Johnson, Chapter 5,
"Colonial America in the 18th
Century."

Web Page



9/25 Podcast, "One Colonial
Woman's World"

Web Page



9/27 Retracing the American
Past-"A Small Circle of
Domestic Concerns"

Web Page



9/30 Discussion: Johnson, Ch.
6, "The British Empire and
Colonial Crisis, 1754-1775"

Web Page



10/2 What Really Happened at
the Boston Massacre?

PDF document



10/4 Whig Ideology and the
Declaration of Independence--
click the link for instructions

Web Page



10/7 Discussion: Johnson, Ch.
7, "The War for America"

Web Page



10/9 Johnson, Ch. 8, "Building a
Republic, 1775-1789".

Web Page



10/11 Next Module-"Raising the Eleventh Pillar," A Reacting to the Past Game

Web Page



4. Raising the Eleventh Pillar-A Reacting to the Past game



To help us understand the challenges Americans in our new nation faced in creating the new Constitution, we will utilize a Reacting to the Past Role-playing game entitled "Raising the Eleventh Pillar" to read and argue about the merits of the Constitution by using original texts. Each class member will have a role and belong to one of three factions--Federalists (in favor of the Constitution), Anti-Federalists (opposed), and Moderates (undecided). Be prepared to have fun while learning to think about the founding of our nation in a way you have never considered before.

Game Schedule: See the game book on page 48. We will use the 3x 50 minute schedule and discuss two issues per class period.

The Actual Game

Web Page



Game Names and Roles

Web Page



Preparation for Playing the Game

Web Page



Game Schedule

Web Page



5. Antebellum America



10/30 Women in the New Nation

Web Page



11/1 PDF from "Discovering the American," Past Ch. 5 First Party System

PDF document



11/4 Johnson, Ch. 9, "The New Nation Takes Form, 1789-1800"

Web Page



11/6 Lowell Mills in action today Video 1

Link



11/6 Lowell Mills in action today, video 2

Link



11/6 Away From Home-Lowell
Mills NOTE: reading Chapter 8:
The Market Revolution
(American Yawp) will help you
with this chapter

PDF document



11/8 Johnson, Chapter 10:
Republicans in Power 1800-
1824

Web Page



11/8 Johnson, Ch. 11, "The
Expanding Republic, 1815-
1840."

Web Page



11/11 Veterans Day, no classes
on campus

Web Page



11/13 Women, Children, and
Uses of the Street--public
welfare reform in the 1840s
and onward.

Web Page



11/15 Johnson, Ch. 13, "The
Slave South"

Web Page



11/18-The Peculiar Institution:
Slaves' Reaction to Slavery

PDF document



6. Civil War & Reconstruction



11/20 Johnson, Ch. 14 The House Divided-make sure you read both for today

Web Page



11/22 Proslavery Arguments

Web Page



11/25: Johnson, Chapter 15, "Crucible of War"

Web Page



12/2 Click here to view episode 4-"Slavery and the Making of America-The Challenge of Freedom" on your own.

Web Page



12/4: Johnson, Ch. 16 "Reconstruction"

Web Page



12/6 Going to the Source Capstone

Web Page



12/9 Wrap Up Discussion

Web Page



Discussion Group Information



You will find your discussion group assignments here as well as a peer evaluation I will ask you to fill out periodically. Note: filling out the peer evaluation completely is **mandatory**, failure to do so will impact your participation grade. The evaluation is available as a download, but should be filled out and handed in to me in class.

Discussion Group Names



Web Page

STUDENT PEER EVALUATION



SHEET—A confidential evaluation of your group members that will help determine their participation grade

Word Document