

Dakota College Course Syllabus

Course Title: HIST 103 - U.S. History To 1877

Credits: 3

Instructor: Aimee Duchsherer Williamson

Please use course mail as your first means of communication with me. If this is impossible for whatever reason, then you may email me at aimee.duchsherer@dakotacollege.edu.

Course Description:

This course offers students an introduction to the History of the United States from before Native American contact with Europeans through the end of Reconstruction in 1877. This class will follow the development of America as a nation, advances in technology, and the varied means by which Americans met social and economic challenges. Students will be introduced to key events, people, and trends fundamental to any course in American History. Within and beyond these key events, this course allows students significant freedom to explore those areas of American History of greatest interest to them.

Course Objectives:

This course has three objectives. First, students will be able to identify key historical events and people and the forces surrounding them. In other words, students will have a grasp of the basic elements of early American History. Second, students will take from this course the many skills that the study of History provides. Students will learn how to evaluate sources and how to cite them. Students will learn how to craft a thesis and support it. Third, students will take from this course the unique preparation a digital course offers for a digital age. More and more work is done online, and this requires a new kind of professionalism. The ability to assert one's position in a credible and collegial manner is crucial to communication through electronic media. Proper grammar is of the utmost importance in establishing one's credibility in a world where the written word is the primary means of communication as is the case in digital communication. Particularly in the online world, the written word represents people. This course is designed to prepare students for working in a digital community.

Texts:

- Ayers, Gould, Oshinsky, Soderlund, American Passages: A History of the United States, Vol. 1: To 1877, 4th Edition, Wadsworth Publishing, 2009. ISBN-13: 978-0-547-16631-5.
- Free supplemental and primary source materials via the course site.
- Please note: there are a few different versions of the textbook and sometimes your page numbers might not be the same as your classmates'. This is ok. Just ensure you are following along with the correct chapter.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Testing:

- 4 quizzes (non-cumulative), 50 points each = 200 points
- 1 final exam (cumulative) = 100 points
- Total: 300 Points

Quizzes are non-cumulative and multiple choice. The final exam is cumulative and multiple choice.

Discussion:

- 16 Weekly Discussions, 25 points each = 400 points
- Chicago Citation Exercise = 25 points
- Primary Source Exercise = 25 points
- Structuring an Argument Exercise = 25 points
- Crafting a Thesis Exercise = 25 points
- Total: 500 Points

The heart of this course is participation. The weekly discussion fora have four purposes:

- To explore and analyze the readings.
- To build the skills required to craft and support an argument.
- To build writing skills.
- To teach students how to thrive in a professional digital community.

Essay Project Assignment:

- Thesis Statement = 25 points
- Essay Draft = 75 points
- Final Essay = 100 points
- Total: 200 points

Optional Extra Credit Paper = 50 bonus points.

Essay is thesis-based, 1,000 words at minimum. Students will provide papers that are polished and free of typos and grammatical errors. There will be abundant opportunity in the Weekly Discussion Boards to fix grammatical problems. Students will select one of the provided topic options and will use primary source evidence and the text book to support an argument. Please refer to "Essay Project Assignment" for complete instructions.

Total points available = 1,000 points

90-100% = 900-1,000 points = A

80-90% = 800-899 points = B

70-80% = 700-799 points = C

60-70% = 600-699 points = D

<59% = <599 points = F

Due Date Policies

This course is very busy at the beginning of the semester and slows down as the semester progresses. Due dates are firm. Students may work ahead as far and as quickly as they would like; they may set their own pace. Students should be aware that hastily written posts and papers at the last minute will result in poor grades. Students should allow for plenty of time to receive and incorporate instructor feedback. Submission of assignments after the due date are at the instructor's sole discretion. I will try to accommodate personal, academic, and professional issues that may affect a student's ability to complete an assignment on time but only if the student communicates with me. It is the student's responsibility to manage their time efficiently and contact me as soon as there is a problem. If you need an extension on a due date, you must contact me no later than the due date--there will be no exceptions to this policy.

Weekly discussions remain open for a week after the due date--you do not need an extension to submit during that time period.

No Incompletes will be given.

Tentative Course Outline

Each week there are:

- Chapter Readings.
- Primary Source Readings.
- Weekly Discussions.

There are occasional supplemental readings. There are also four exercises to develop paper writing skills. These exercises are to be accomplished in the early weeks of the course.

Week 1

Chapter 1: To 1590: Contact, Conflict, and Exchange in the Atlantic World
Citation Exercise
Citation Practice

Week 2

Chapter 2: 1590-1675: Colonization of North America
Primary, Secondary, Tertiary Sources Discussion
Crafting a Thesis Discussion

Week 3

Chapter 3: 1675-1720: Crisis and Change
Structuring an Argument Discussion

Week 4

Chapter 4: 1720-1763: The Expansion of Colonial British America
Forum
Quiz 1

Week 5

Chapter 5: 1764-1783: Wars for Independence
Thesis Statement Due

Week 6

Chapter 6: 1783-1788: Toward a More Perfect Union

Week 7

Chapter 7: 1789-1799: The Federalist Republic

Week 8

Chapter 8: 1800-1815: The New Republic Faces a New Century
Quiz 2

Week 9

Chapter 9: 1815-1828: Exploded Boundaries

Week 10

Chapter 10: 1829-1836: The Years of Andrew Jackson
Essay Draft Due

Week 11

Chapter 11: 1837-1845: Panic and Boom

Week 12

Chapter 12: 1846-1854: Expansion and Reaction
Quiz 3

Week 13

Chapter 13: 1855-1861: Broken Bonds

Week 14

Chapter 14: 1861-1862: Descent into War

Week 15

Chapter 15: Chapter 15: 1863-1865: Blood and Freedom
Final Essay Due

Week 16

Chapter 16: 1865-1877: Reconstruction: Its Rise and Fall
Optional Extra Credit Paper Due December 12th.
Quiz 4

Week 17

Final Exam

Lecture/Lab Schedule: Online and asynchronous.

General Education Goal:

Beyond the standard goal of any History course that students will be able to identify key historical events and people and the forces surrounding those events, this course has the goal of educating students in credible written communication. History requires analysis and argument. Because this is an online course, all communication is written. Hence, students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills:

1. Uses the stages of the writing process to develop, organize, and present ideas in writing.
2. Analyzes the demands and possible strategies of a writing task, based on topic, purpose, context, and audience, and then accomplish that task with clarity.
3. Demonstrates competent writing that includes a clear, original thesis or claim, appropriate evidence and support, a logical structure, and a style of language that serves the writer's purpose and audience.
4. Uses edited standard written English in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and syntax, and presents written work in a style and format consistent with the demands of an academic setting.

Relationship to Campus Theme:

A focus on the interaction between natural resources and the development of the United States. Discovering how technological developments have affected the history of the American population. Reviewing the political process of the United States and reflecting on how future events hinge on current decisions.

Classroom Policies:

Reading the assigned texts is the student's responsibility and is essential to success in this course. The final exam must be taken by the due date. This academic environment is open and harassment free.

Student Email Policy:

Dakota College at Bottineau is increasingly dependent upon email as an official form of communication. A student's campus-assigned email address will be the only one recognized by the campus for official mailings. The liability for missing or not acting upon important information conveyed via campus email rests with the student.

Academic Integrity:

Webster's Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary defines plagiarism as: "The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work." There will be zero tolerance of any form of academic dishonesty. If any evidence appears of students not doing their own work, plagiarism, or outright cheating on quizzes/exams, the matter will be investigated. If it is concluded that such dishonesty occurred, the student in question will receive an automatic "F" for the course. Furthermore, the matter will be reported to the appropriate university office and the instructor will participate in any proceedings against the guilty party.

Disabilities and Special Needs:

If you have a disability for which you need accommodation, contact the Learning Center to request disability support services: phone 701-228-5477 or toll-free 1-888-918-5623.