

History 202

# U. S. HISTORY: FIRST CENTURY OF INDEPENDENCE

(5 credits)

DR. TIM HEINRICHS, INSTRUCTOR

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## CONTACT:

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## WELCOME--

Soon after it was launched as an independent nation, at the dawn of the 19th century, the United States was a small agrarian republic huddled on the Atlantic seaboard and numbering four million souls. Or perhaps it was a diverse collection of 13 republics widely separated by barriers of tradition and geography. Its farm population outnumbered city people more than ten to one. Recognizing that with a population the size of Ireland's, the United States could only be a mosquito among the Great Powers, national leaders had to struggle just to steer clear of involvement with France and Britain in their worldwide struggle for dominance.

By the end of the 19th century the band of states had surged forth to become the world's leading economic power. It manufactured more goods than Britain and France put together. Telegraph, telephone, and train tied together every part of a vast continent, and the Republic now numbered 45 states with a population exceeding 75 million. Farm families in 1900 numbered only two-fifths of an increasingly urbanized population. The Great Powers now counted the United States among their number as it forged an empire of its own and began demanding a voice in overseas affairs. How did this vast change come about?

In tracing U. S. history to the eve of World War I, **HISTORY 202** has three main themes of change: the evolution of American politics, territorial and economic expansion, and the interaction of social and intellectual change. We shall ask the question of what continuities remained throughout the era.

As we deal with such issues as the Battle of New Orleans, the Erie Canal, democratization, the Bank war of Andrew Jackson, religious revivals, Edgar Allen Poe, woman as "angel of the home," abolitionism, the annexation of Texas, the Crisis of 1850, secession, the battle of Gettysburg, carpetbaggers, the inventions of Thomas Edison, the Chisholm Trail, barbed wire, the blizzards of 1885-6, trolleys, the panic of 1893, the Sears catalogue, the New Woman, the Spanish-American War, trust-busting, and the Panic of 1907, sort it all out by thinking *strategically*. What major themes are these facts part of? Specific details will mean little to you unless they are put together into your own overall ideas of

American history. An artist doesn't paint every blade of grass in a landscape, but just enough to convey the overall reality and mood.

What you will remember from the course a year or five years from now will not be Martin Van Buren's victory margin in 1836 but that he helped make politics the living of professionals, not the sport of aristocrats. Our goal will be to find central and revealing elements of the nation's past.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS--

### BOOKS--

- \* Edward Ayers et al, American Passages, compact edition (Wadsworth; ISBN— 0495188573). This is the main text; it is also used in History 201 and History 203.
- \* Elliott J. Gorn, ed., The McGuffey Readers: Selections from the 1879 Edition (ISBN: 0-312-13398-1). From the 1830s to the 1920s millions of youngsters were educated, socialized, and morally uplifted by these comprehensive readers.
- \* Lillian Schlissel, Women's Diaries of the Westward Journey (ISBN: 0-8052-1004-0).  
Contains first-person accounts of the five-month Oregon Trail journey, through the eyes of its women participants. The diaries reveal the wide array of emotions and ideals felt by the women as they coped not only with the trail's hardships but also with their role in holding families together--asserting themselves while reasserting their traditional values.
- \* There will be additional brief on-line readings each week.

### STRATEGY--

*At the conclusion of this course, successful students will be able to:*

1. Explain the significance of key people, facts, and events of the period under study, and develop standards to judge them from a historical-cultural perspective
  2. Demonstrate the importance of traditions of thought and ethical values in historical change
  3. Expand their vocabulary
  4. Evaluate historical arguments, judging the appropriateness of both logic and content
  5. Adapt scholarly processes of analysis, interpretation, and synthesis to articulate their own points of view, demonstrating a command of relevant facts and a framework of logical deduction...
- *Drawing inferences from data*
  - *Differentiating between facts, value judgments, and generalizations*
  - *Differentiating between description and explanation*
  - *Recognizing the role of cause and effect in historical analysis*

History is absolutely do-able if you think *strategically*. Think about overall trends. File facts away according to what they mean for major trends. The specific details absorbed in the course material will mean little unless you can do that. You are encouraged to put together your own interpretations of the facts.

### COURSEWORK--

Be sure to look at the "**Lectures & Discussions**" link on the Home Page, and at the "**Reading Schedule**," located on the "**Assignments**" page (accessible from the Home Page). Readings and lectures are grouped by weeks.

During the term you will do all the assigned readings, and **four** Discussion essays of 250-400 words each. You must post **two essays in each half of the course** (Discussions #1-#5, Discussions #6-#11), by the deadline for each. A Discussion essay should be 250-400 words. Each essay assignment is available in the "**Lectures & Discussions**" link for each Discussion, and so is a "**Posts**" icon for submitting your essay. Essays are usually due on Mondays, except on holidays.

On most occasions when you don't post an essay, you will do the week's reading anyway and post a **response** to the essay of another student. Responses are due three days after the Discussion's essays. You will post four Discussion responses in all, two in Weeks #1-#5, two in #6-#10. **Note: there will be no response to Discussion #11.** You only write responses for Discussions in which you did NOT submit an essay, which means that essays and responses must be submitted for **eight different Discussions**, total. **Note: there is no credit for posting a response on a Discussion for which you have already submitted an essay.**

Each response should be at least 75 words long and should express agreement, disagreement, and reasons for your view. It is good to introduce a fresh perspective or fresh evidence.

Essays are graded on a 25-point scale; responses on a 5-point scale. If you post extra essays, you will get the highest grades; in other words, a higher grade will be substituted for a lower.

The following is this term's schedule of due dates for essays and responses for each Discussion:

Assignment	Due Date	Assignment	Due Date
Essay Discussion #1	Monday January 8	Essay Discussion #6	Monday February 12
Response Discussion #1	Thursday January 11	Response Discussion #6	Thursday February 15
Essay Discussion #2	Tuesday January 16*	Essay Discussion #7	Tuesday February 20*
Response Discussion #2	Thursday January 18	Response Discussion #7	Thursday February 22
Essay Discussion #3	Monday January 22	Essay Discussion #8	Monday February 26
Response Discussion #3	Thursday January 25	Response Discussion #8	Thursday March 1
Essay Discussion #4	Monday January 29	Essay Discussion #9	Monday March 5
Response Discussion #4	Thursday February 1	Response Discussion #9	Thursday March 8
Essay Discussion #5	Monday February 5	Essay Discussion #10	Monday March 12
Response Discussion #5	Thursday February 8	Response Discussion #10	Monday March 15
		Essay Discussion #11	Monday March 19

In addition to the brief essays and responses, you will compose a seven- or eight-page paper (due March 14), following directions provided under "Assignments." This paper will bring together the diaries and McGuffey readers.

There will be two exams, each about two hours, on these dates: February 12-13, and March 19-20. You will take them online, and you may choose the times to take them on those dates. They will have multiple-choice and essay questions and will be based on the text and the lectures. There will be preparation sheets for each, listing possible questions.

NOTE: Copying material without attribution on essays and tests is plagiarism and is forbidden. A zero grade will be assigned to any paper or exam in which plagiarized material appears, or if on a Discussion essay, the entire Discussions grade (25% of the total term grade).

**A note on late work--**

Normally, late discussion essays are accepted but with a penalty of **.5/25** per day (up to a total of 3.5/25). If they are more than three days late, they must be sent to me by Vista email. Late essay responses are not accepted.

Late papers are assessed 2% per day (up to a total of 10%). This can be avoided if you obtain permission for an extension in advance of the due date.

The following is a breakdown of the final grade:

<i>Discussions</i>	25%
<i>Midterm exam</i>	25%
<i>Large paper</i>	25%
<i>Final exam</i>	25%

All items will be assigned percentage grades, whose average will be translated into a letter grade according to the following:

93-plus	A	77-79%	C+
90-92%	A-	73-76%	C
87-89%	B+	70-72%	C-
83-86%	B	67-69%	D+

If you’re ever not sure you’re on top of it all during the course, please ask questions by Vista e-mail. Or call me at 425-564-2114, or email [theinric@bcc.ctc.edu](mailto:theinric@bcc.ctc.edu).

I am looking forward to exploring with you the lives and minds that made up 19th-century America, an era that seems vaguely familiar and yet exotic at the same time.