I. Required Texts:


II. Description

Beginning with a brief overview of the peoples of pre-contact North America and early encounters between Europeans and indigenous peoples and the “Columbian Exchange,” we will then examine the development of colonial society and culture, the growth of the institution of slavery, and the growing tensions between Britain and its colonies. We will move on to investigate the American Revolution, the creation of the Constitution, and the competing visions of the Federalists and Jeffersonians. The course then delves into the reasons fueling the tremendous economic growth of the young nation after the War of 1812, the rise of popular democracy in the 1820s through the 1840s, antebellum religious revivals and reform movements, and the increasing sectional tensions between North and South. We will culminate with thorough look at the Civil War and Reconstruction eras. In addition, we will read Anthony F.C. Wallace’s *The Long, Bitter Trail* to obtain a deeper understanding of the politics and realities of Indian removal in the 1820s and 1830s, as well as the *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, which we will use to explore how the practice of enslaving human beings could exist in a society that placed such a high value on individual liberty and freedom.
III. Course Goals

• At the end of this course, students will be familiar with the major themes in early American history outlined in the description above.
• Students will practice and refine their ability to analyze primary documents and secondary historical literature.
• Students will practice and refine their ability to compose original historical arguments in writing through informal online writing and formal traditional essays.

IV. Objectives, or What You Should Be Able To Do by the End of the Course

• Given a topic drawn from the description above, students will be able to effectively write about the causes, nature of, and consequences flowing from, historical change in the United States from the pre-contact era through Reconstruction.
• Given a relevant primary-source document, students will be able to identify and articulate the context from which it is drawn, and elucidate its meaning and significance.
• Students will become historically aware of issues central to the origins and development of American patterns of thought, social and political organization, and culture.
• In general, students will improve their ability to think critically and express their ideas through written and oral communication.

V. What Is Expected of You?

• You are expected to know this syllabus and understand what it says. If you are unclear about anything that appears in this document, please ask me.
• You are expected to participate in class discussions, coming to class with prepared questions or ideas to pose to the class.
• You are expected to take notes in class, which will be of assistance as you prepare to write your papers and study for quizzes and exams.
• Take notes on your readings. When taking notes on the assigned readings, remember to try to take down only the most important elements of what you read. Learn to take notes in an outline format. Try to summarize what you are reading in your own words. These notes will be useful for written assignments and studying for the final exam.
• Bring the assigned readings to every class; we will use them in every session.
• The required readings should be done before the class meeting. As in all history courses, there is a lot to be done. It is important to schedule enough time to do it. While reading, please also write down at least a couple of questions, ideas, issues, or things you did not understand so that you can bring them up in class.
• Students are expected to post a minimum of six web comments over the course of the semester, and write at least one set of web questions. If this minimum is done satisfactorily, a student can expect order to receive a “C” for the “web comment” section of your overall grade, which is 15 percent of the overall grade. If a student wishes to earn a higher grade, it is recommended that he or she write about eight or nine. When posting a comment on the course website, try to do so before class, although posting afterward is certainly allowed. The designated class discussion leader should try to e-mail his or her set of questions to the instructor twenty-four hours before the class day so that they can be reviewed and possibly refined before they are posted.
• During class, all electronic devices that are not being used for note-taking or review are to be stowed away in your bag. All headphones should be removed before the beginning of class. Texting, reading e-mail on your phone, or wearing earphones during lectures or discussions is disrespectful to the instructor and your fellow students.

VI. Policy on Absences and Lateness

You must attend every class and be on time. Attendance is 10 percent of your grade, while class participation represents another 15 percent of your grade. You can't participate if you are not in class, so poor attendance can have an impact on 25 percent of your entire grade. As you will see, the class sessions will not work without your informed participation. Cumulative unexcused absences have an effect on your attendance grade as indicated in the grid below. A sixth unexcused absence means an automatic “F” for the
course. I will excuse absences for documented medical emergencies (emergencies do not include doctors’ appointments—you should not schedule appointments during class time). In addition, each time you are late, one point is deducted from your overall attendance grade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unexcused Absences</th>
<th>Attendance Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 or 1</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F for the course</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So, for example, if you are absent three times and are late twice, your attendance grade will be 78.

If you plan on being absent due to a religious observance, please inform me ahead of time. Please take note of the following state law on absences due to religious observances as quoted in the Brooklyn College Bulletin:

“The New York State Education Law provides that no student shall be expelled or refused admission to an institution of higher education because he or she is unable to attend classes or participate in examinations or study or work requirements on any particular day or days because of religious beliefs. Students who are unable to attend classes on a particular day or days because of religious beliefs will be excused from any examination or study or work requirements. Faculty must make good-faith efforts to provide students absent from class because of religious beliefs equivalent opportunities to make up the work missed; no additional fees may be charged for this consideration.”

VII. How Class Sessions Will Work
Each class session will begin with a lecture by the instructor about the assigned readings followed by a discussion of the readings and themes of that class, and then follow-up discussion on any web comment postings. On occasion, there will be in-class exercises and/or screenings of film clips. On quiz days, the first ten-to-fifteen minutes of class will be devoted to a reading quiz (a study sheet with themes and terms will be provided before the quiz, which will mostly consist of multiple choice questions). We usually will have one quiz for every two textbook chapters.

VIII. Grading
Course Website Comments: 15%
First Paper Assignment: 10%
Second Paper Assignment: 10%
Reading Quizzes: 25%
Attendance: 10%
Class Participation: 15%
Final: 15%

Class participation is 15 percent of your grade. It’s best practice for you to come to class with some prepared questions, comments, or observations on the course readings. And you should always feel free to interrupt a lecture with a question, especially if you do not understand something. The following rubric is how I will evaluate class participation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Class Participation Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consistently insightful and well prepared contributions to discussions in almost every class</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular contributor with thoughtful remarks and questions</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Occasional contributor (twice a week) who has relevant things to say | 80
Does not contribute much, perhaps speaks about four times the whole semester, but nonetheless seems engaged | 70
Contributes rarely, or brings up issues that are not relevant to the discussion | 60
Bodily present, but mentally elsewhere | 50

All elements of the course must be completed satisfactorily in order to pass the course. There will be no curve in the grading. Grades are assigned on the following scale:

- A+ = 97 or higher
- A = 94–96
- A- = 90–93
- B+ = 87–89
- B = 84–86
- B- = 80–83
- C+ = 77–79
- C = 74–76
- C- = 70–73
- D+ = 67–69
- D = 64–66
- D- = 60–63
- F = 0–60

Paper Revisions: If papers are turned in a minimum of two class sessions before the due date, the instructor will read and comment on paper drafts and assign a “ballpark” grade, giving the draft back to student in time for suggested revisions to be incorporated in the final draft.

**IX. Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at (718) 951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him.

**X. Academic Honesty**

All work you turn in for this class must be your own. Any deviation from this standard will result in a zero for the paper assignment, which not only seriously jeopardizes your ability to pass the course, but also will lead to the notification of the Office of Undergraduate Studies.

**Plagiarism.** According to the MLA style guide, plagiarism “is to give the impression you have written or thought something that you have in fact borrowed from someone else.” [Joseph Gibaldi and Walter Achtert, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 3rd edition (New York: Modern Language Association of American, 1988), p. 21.] If you borrow an idea, a sentence, or more from a source, you must let the reader know what that source is. It’s only fair to the original author.

If you do not know what plagiarism is, ask me, consult a work such as the MLA guide, or check out a website like this one: [http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml](http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml)

The Brooklyn College policy on academic integrity as quoted from the bulletin is as follows:

“The faculty and administration support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity may be found at:

[http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Academic_Integrity_Policy.pdf](http://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/la/Academic_Integrity_Policy.pdf)
If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member must report the violation."

Historians typically use the Chicago Manual of Style system to cite sources. You can find a primer on this style here: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

I am extremely sensitive to the issue of plagiarism and will automatically fail your paper if I find any signs of it. I’d prefer that you be overly cautious in footnoting rather than having to fail you.

XI. Course Website Comments

Each student will be required to write a set of web questions for an assigned discussion reading. I will post questions formulated by the student the day before the reading appears on the syllabus. Each student is required to answer a minimum six questions over the course of the semester with a comment of at least one paragraph. Most questions sets will contain three or four questions, but make sure that you answer just one per comment box (you can answer more than one question in a question set, but please do so in separate comment boxes so that they count as separate comments). Keep in mind that the website is a valuable space to test out your ideas and articulate your thoughts before you sit down to write a formal paper.

IMPORTANT: Make sure to sign in to comment using your full name so I can credit the right person.

PLEASE MAKE SURE TO DO THE WEB QUESTIONS AS THEY COUNT FOR 15 PERCENT OF YOUR OVERALL GRADE. Please also keep the following points in mind:

- **Expressing Your Thoughts in Your Own Words:** You will not receive credit for cutting and pasting something of the web and presenting it as your own thought (I may even seek disciplinary measures if anyone does this—plagiarism is a serious academic offense). In addition, you will not receive credit if you simply repeat what someone else has already posted. You certainly can react to what someone else has written, but you cannot merely agree or say the same thing worded differently. It is thus a good idea to post early before someone else comes up with a similar idea, as you will be graded on the originality of your contribution to the conversation. PLEASE NOTE: This textbook has study questions at the beginning and end of each chapter (“Looking Ahead” and “Recall and Reflect”). You cannot use these questions or rephrased versions of them. You need to come up with your own that reflect your particular interests or concerns.

- **Grading Criteria:** Your website comments are 15% of your total grade. They will be graded on the quality and originality of thought, the way that they engage the questions, and the strength of the argument and evidence that they present. Grammar and spelling will not affect the grading of the website comments, but please do not use abbreviations.

- **Keep it Civil:** I hope that you will have some lively online discussions, and you should feel free to disagree with your classmates. But please do not attack anyone personally! Remember to be respectful of other people’s ideas and feelings even if you disagree with them.

- **Tone:** Comments may be less formal than a paper (for example, misspelled words won’t count against you here), but more formal than a text message or casual e-mail. Please do not use texting abbreviations or symbols.

- **Length:** Your posts should be at least a full paragraph. You certainly may write more than that if you have more to say.

- **Relevance:** Comments that have little or no relevance to the questions will not count toward your grade.

- **Images, Video Clips, and Links to External Documents:** In your comments, you may provide links to historical documents, images, or even video clips, but you need to have a good reason to do so. For example, if you post a clip from a Hollywood movie, you need to explain how and why that clips relates to the questions that have been asked. If the clip or link is not directly related to the question, your post will not count toward your grade. Media should be historically relevant. (Keep in mind that the era covered by the course did not have sound or moving picture recording, and photography only emerged in the final decades. Nonetheless, there were certainly plenty of other forms of art to reference. Representations of earlier eras in modern media can be used, but should be handled very critically.)
The course website is located here: https://americanpluralismsummer2015.wordpress.com/

**XII. Essay Assignments**

Your papers will be evaluated for both content (evidence and argument) and style of presentation. I am primarily looking for lucid arguments backed by specific evidence. I will read and comment on drafts, if provided to me in sufficient time. If you give me a draft at least a week before the paper is due, I will provide a general evaluation, but not a detailed edit. Because I will read drafts, I do not permit rewrites. If you feel unsure about your ability to write a historical essay, get a draft done and submit it early.

*Format and Style:*

Papers are to be printed out in a twelve-point font, and have one-inch margins.

- Papers must bear a standard title page, and be stapled in the upper left hand corner (Your paper should a meaningful title; don’t just call it “History Essay”).
- Please do not use plastic paper covers.
- Other than the title page, each page must be numbered.
- Footnotes and a bibliography are required. Check Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 7th Ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007) or a similar guide for information on correct citation styles.
- Spelling counts. Use spell-check on Word (but keep in mind that it is sometimes wrong!). It is ideal to get someone to proofread the paper for you—you can miss mistakes after reading your drafts several times over.
- Keep It Simple: Make sure to avoid using words that you don’t fully understand just because they are long and sound impressive. Most of the time, it is a good idea to keep sentences concise as the meaning of a sentence becomes confused or lost if it goes on too long (know what a “run-on sentence” is). And avoid using the passive voice if possible.

Papers lacking any of these elements will be marked down.

**XIII. Me**

My office is Boylan 1120B (just a few doors to the left of the main entrance of Boylan). Office Hours: Tu & Th, 1:00 – 2:00 pm. Please make an effort to see me in office hours, but if this is not possible, we can schedule an appointment. My email address is: bomalley@brooklyn.cuny.edu

I will rely heavily on e-mail to stay in touch with you. I am teaching three courses this semester, so I expect a high volume of correspondence. To help me manage this, please follow a few guidelines:

1. **ALWAYS** write your NAME and COURSE and SECTION in the subject line (for example: Alicia Jones – HIST 3401)

2. Please keep the correspondence formal, professional, and polite, avoiding texting abbreviations, slang, or inappropriate familiarity (“Hey Prof,” “Yo Dude,” etc.). You should treat your correspondence with me the same as you would with a potential employer. THINK BEFORE YOU WRITE ME. I encourage you to write me if you have a question about the course material, but please do not write me to ask for information readily available in this syllabus or other course documents. Here are some very helpful guidelines about emailing professors/instructors:

   http://web.wellesley.edu/SocialComputing/Netiquette/netiquetteprofessor.html

**XIII. Some Important College-Wide Dates for Summer Session 1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 26</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>First day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Masters Commencement Exercises (regular class schedule)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>NO CLASSES: Baccalaureate Commencement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 29</td>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>Last day to add a course for Summer I. Federal Financial Aid enrollment status is based on enrollment status on this day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Last day to drop a course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>First day to withdraw with a &quot;W&quot; grade.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 17</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw with a &quot;W&quot; grade.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
XV. Course Schedule

Tuesday, May 27: Before 1492 and First Contact

Wednesday, May 28: Explorations and Exchanges (12:45 pm start time)

Thursday, May 29: NO CLASS – Brooklyn College Commencement

Monday, June 1: The Societies and Economies of the Colonies
- Quiz on Chapters 1 & 2 at the beginning of class.

Tuesday, June 2: Empire in Transition
- *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 4: The Empire in Transition, pp. 82-104.

Wednesday, June 3: Revolution
- Quiz on Chapters 3 & 4 at the beginning of class.
- Web Reading: The Declaration of Independence - [http://1.usa.gov/1f3kgGn](http://1.usa.gov/1f3kgGn)

Thursday, June 4: The New Republic and the Constitution

Monday, June 8: The Jeffersonian Era and the War of 1812
- Quiz on Chapters 5 & 6 at the beginning of class.
- *The Long Bitter Trail*, Introduction

Tuesday, June 9: American Nationalism
- *The Long Bitter Trail*, Chapter 1: The Changing World of the Native Americans
Wednesday, June 10: The Jacksonian Era
• Quiz on Chapters 7 & 8 at the beginning of class.
• *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 9: Jacksonian America, pp. 197-220.

Thursday, June 11: Indian Removal
• *The Long Bitter Trail*: Chapter 2: The Conflict Over Federal Indian Policy, Chapter 3: The Removal Act & Chapter 4: The Trails of Tears
• Web Reading: Andrew Jackson’s 1830 Message to Congress on Indian Removal: [http://1.usa.gov/1tHSetP](http://1.usa.gov/1tHSetP)

Monday, June 15: Population, Transportation, Communication, and Commerce
• *The Long Bitter Trail*, Aftermath: The Long Shadow of Removal Policy

Tuesday, June 16: Society of the 1830s and 1840s

Wednesday, June 17: The Old South
• Quiz on Chapters 9 & 10 at the beginning of class.
• *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 11: Cotton, Slavery, and the Old South, pp. 247-257.
• *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Chapters I-III (pp. 41-55 in assigned edition)
• Web Reading: Gabriel Winant, “Slave Capitalism,” *N+1 Magazine*, Issue 17: The Evil Issue (Fall 2013) [https://nplusonemag.com/issue-17/reviews/slave-capitalism/](https://nplusonemag.com/issue-17/reviews/slave-capitalism/)

Thursday, June 18: The “Peculiar Institution” and the Culture of Slavery
• *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Chapters IV-VIII (pp. 55-75 in assigned edition)

Monday, June 22: Antebellum Culture
• *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Chapters IX-X (pp. 75-106 in assigned edition)

Tuesday, June 23: Sectionalism of the 1840s and 1850s
• Quiz on Chapters 11 & 12 at the beginning of class.
• *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, Chapter XI & Appendix (pp. 106-125)
• Web Reading: Part One of Thoreau’s “Civil Disobedience” (originally published as “Resistance to Civil Government”): [http://thoreau.eserver.org/civil1.html](http://thoreau.eserver.org/civil1.html)

Wednesday, June 24: Civil War: Secession and Mobilization
• *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 14: The Civil War, pp. 313-326.

Thursday, June 25: The Strategies, Campaigns, and Battles
• *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 14: The Civil War, pp. 326-342.
• Web Reading: The Emancipation Proclamation: [http://1.usa.gov/1ynH6Ex](http://1.usa.gov/1ynH6Ex)
• Watch the following short video of historian Eric Foner explaining Lincoln’s evolving position on slavery: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hQ2u214A2Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8hQ2u214A2Y)
Monday, June 29: Reconstruction and the Problems of Peacemaking
  • Quiz on Chapters 13 & 14 at the beginning of class.
  • *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 15: Reconstruction and the New South, pp. 343-358.

Tuesday, June 30: The Grant Administration and the End of Reconstruction
  • Reading: *Unfinished Nation*, Chapter 15: Reconstruction and the New South, pp. 358-370.

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, July 2, 1:00 to 3:00 pm, Boylan 4135 (regular room)