

HIST 231Q-10A  
The Foundations of American Society: Beginnings to 1877  
Fall 2012, MWF 10:45-11:50  
Seney 412

Dr. Susan Youngblood Ashmore  
Office: Branham Faculty Annex  
Office Hours: MW 1:00-2:30 or  
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## COURSE SYLLABUS

### Course Description:

This course will introduce you to the history of the United States from pre-colonial era through the Civil War by paying particular attention to how historians do their work. As a survey course that concentrates on the foundations of American society we will focus on what it means to be an American and how that has changed over time with specific emphasis on leadership, migration, diversity, sustainability, the concept of individual freedom, the creation and maintenance of the Union, and how that Union is threatened. We will learn about the political and economic development of the United States as well as the social history of the country. Special emphasis will be given to the colonial experience, slavery, the American Revolution and its aftermath, social and cultural life in nineteenth-century America, sectional crisis, and the Civil War.

### Course Goals:

There are several objectives for this course. First, by gaining a factual knowledge of this historical period the course seeks to assist students in learning to think historically, or to become historically minded, by recognizing and criticizing evidence and using primary and secondary sources to reason inductively going from specifics to generalizations. Second, this course hopes to teach students to ask questions about the past to gain an awareness of the various dimensions of history—political, economic, social, and cultural and to incorporate aspects of ethnicity, gender, race, and class into the explanation of these various historical dimensions. Third, the course strives to help students discover, understand, and appreciate the interplay of forces that shape historical change in America's past including individuals and social groups as creators of history. Fourth, this course will help students develop reading, researching, and writing skills that will benefit them in upper division classes. At the end of the course students should be able to recognize a historical argument when they see one, be able to interpret primary documents by placing them in their historical context, understand the various perspectives historians have taken as they write about America's past, be familiar with the most important people, ideas, and events of early American history, and understand their significance for today.

**Required Readings:** These books are available at the campus bookstore and on reserve at the library.

Mark Donnelly and Claire Norton, *Doing History*, New York: Rutledge, 2011.

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *The Age of Homespun: Objects and Stories in the Creation of an American Myth*, New York: Vintage Books, 2001.

Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution*, Boston: Beacon Press, 1999.

Erskine Clarke, *Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.

William E. Gienapp, *Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America: A Biography*, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Primary documents and secondary journal articles on Reserves Direct (located on the Oxford College Library Web Page under Hist 231Q 9A, Ashmore).

### Grading and Assignments:

Short Essay Exam (10%) given on **September 28**; Midterm Essay Exam (20%) given on **October 26**; Historical Essay (20%): a 6-8 typed pages, double-spaced essay on *Dwelling Place* due at the *beginning* of class on **November 19**, quizzes (announced and unannounced) from assigned reading material—including books as well as primary documents and secondary readings on Reserves Direct (10%); reading journal portfolio of selected reading journal entries due **December 10** (10%); final essay exam given on **Tuesday December 18 from 2:00-5:00** (30%). All assignments as well as your final course grade will be based on the +/- system. Study questions for the short

essay examination, midterm examination, and final examination will be distributed at least one week prior to each exam. Student work submitted as part of this course may be reviewed by Oxford College and Emory College faculty and staff for the purpose of improving instruction and enhancing Emory education.

#### **Honor Code:**

We are a community of scholars. Therefore, academic dishonesty is not tolerated. Your signature or name on any work submitted for credit in this course shall indicate you have neither given nor received unauthorized information or assistance on the work, nor have you condoned the giving or receiving of unauthorized information or assistance by others. As a student at Oxford College of Emory University you have agreed to abide by the honor pledge and have taken upon yourself the responsibility of upholding the Honor Code; you are encouraged to inquire of the Honor Council about any doubtful case at any time throughout the semester. For complete details on the Honor Code please see the Oxford College Catalog.

#### **Attendance Policy:**

Class begins at 10:45 and ends at 11:50. Regular attendance and active participation in class are assumed to be essential parts of the learning process. Students are allowed three absences, every absence after that will deduct points from the attendance/class participation portion of your final course grade. Occasionally participation in a college-sponsored event will not be counted as an absence. However, you must inform me prior to the event and present written proof of college sponsorship. It is your responsibility to obtain missed lecture notes and turn in all assignments on time. I expect you to be awake and focused on the material at hand in class. Do not study for another course while you are in my class. During discussions of reading material I expect you to have prepared before class and to actively participate with your classmates in the discussion.

If you miss the first exam, the midterm exam, or the final exam, **only absences due to medical or family emergencies** (for example, you are in the hospital) are valid. You will need to present written evidence of your illness or family emergency to take a makeup exam. Students will only be allowed to make up missed work after presenting written proof of a medical or family emergency. All make-up midterm exams will be given on the last day of class (December 11) during my office hours. You cannot change the time of your final exam because of travel plans, vacation plans, job opportunities, or having more than one final exam on one day.

#### **Turning in Assignments and Late Penalties:**

If you miss the due date on a written assignment, a late penalty of **five points per day** (including weekends) will be deducted from your grade for that assignment. If you turn your written assignment in after the beginning of class but on the same day it is due you will be deducted **2.5** points from your grade for that assignment. **I also do not accept written assignments via e-mail, such as your historical essay.** I only accept hard copies of written assignments. If you turn in your assignment after the beginning of class, slide it **under** my office door, in the Branham Faculty Annex.

#### **Class Etiquette:**

**Visiting me in my office:** I encourage you to visit me during my office hours, or make an appointment with me if my office hours do not coincide with your schedule. One of the positive experiences you can have at Oxford College is getting to know your professors well. So, take advantage of that opportunity and come see me throughout the semester. My office is on the first floor of the Branham Hall Annex.

**Cell Phones:** I do not accept phone calls during class, so you should not either. Turn off your cell phones before the beginning of class. If ringing cell phones becomes a common occurrence, I will ask you to leave the class. Do not bring your cell phone to class during any exam. I will ask you to leave your cell phone with me at the front of the class if you bring it on exam day. Do not send or read text message in class.

**MP3 Players:** You cannot listen to music on an MP3 player while you take your identification exam, midterm exam, or final exam.

**Laptop Computers:** Using a laptop computer to take notes in class is a privilege. Do not read websites or check e-mail while class is in session—this is distracting to your fellow students and to your professor; you will lose your privilege of using a laptop if you do this.

**E-mail:** We will have a class conference on LearnLink that corresponds with this course. I will post on the conference all assignments as well as other pertinent items that may enhance class discussion. When

communicating with your fellow classmates on the conference or with me on my personal e-mail address do not post anything that you would not be comfortable saying to your classmates or to me in person.

All of us use e-mail on a regular basis. However, the convenience of e-mail can often lead to informality and misunderstanding. For this reason, there are different rules for writing in formal situations—class discussions, e-mail messages to professors, student discussion lists—that do not necessarily apply when writing to friends and family. So, here are my suggestions for using e-mail in our class. When writing to me or on our LearnLink conference you should use a serious tone. Address me by my proper title, follow rules of grammar and mechanics, and do not use all lower or upper case letters or instant messaging abbreviations. You should use black ink in your e-mail messages. Avoid using curse words and other slang in formal situations. I have heard it said that writing is like fashion, one style is not appropriate for every situation. For example you would not wear your bathing suit to a job interview at a bank. So, get in the habit of using your professional voice when communicating as a professional, in your case your profession right now is being a college student. Most importantly, remember that even though you cannot see them, you are communicating with real human beings whenever you send e-mail. Do not let the impersonal screen make you forget to be as respectful in your communication as you would be when speaking face to face. Take time to think about your message before you send it. Never send a message when you are feeling emotional, particularly if you are upset or angry.

Do not assume just because you *can* get in touch with me when you want to that I will be available to read your message. I rarely check e-mail once I leave campus, which is usually around 5:30 p.m., and I don't check e-mail over the weekend. So, note that I read e-mail from 9:00-5:30 Monday through Friday. **I also do not accept written assignments via e-mail, such as your historical essay.** I only accept hard copies of written assignments. If you do not turn your assignment in at the beginning of class you can place it **under** my office door, Branham Annex.

Finally, remember that e-mail is not a very private communication system. Your messages can be printed out, and they can also be sent on to others as forwarded messages. Any private message you send potentially can come under public scrutiny; therefore you should not write anything that would cause you or someone else embarrassment or trouble should your e-mail become public.

## SCHEDULE

|         |   |  |
|---------|---|--|
| Aug 29  | Syllabus, What Does It Mean to be an American?  |  |
| Aug 31  | Popular History, visit City of Oxford Cemetery  | <i>Doing History</i> , Chap 9  |
| Sept 3  | <b>Labor Day – no class</b>   |  |
| Sept 5  | Thinking About the Study of History   | <i>Doing History</i> , Part I, pp 3-50   |
| Sept 7  | Jamestown, Virginia   | ResDirect: 17 <sup>th</sup> Cent Chesapeake  |
| Sept 10 | Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake  | ResDirect: “Atlantic History in Global Pers”   |
| Sept 12 | Colonial New England  | ResDirect: 17 <sup>th</sup> Cent New Engl, “God in America”<br>Episode 1: “A New Adam” (first 33 min only) |
| Sept 14 | <b>Quiz and Discussion of Ulrich, Chapter One: “An Indian Basket” (pp. 41-74), and <i>Doing History</i> Chapter 3.</b>  |  |
| Sept 18 | Colonial South Carolina   |  |
| Sept 20 | Colonial Society–Class  | ResDirect: Woods, “Becoming a Gentleman”   |
| Sept 22 | <b>Quiz and Discussion of Woods</b><br>Colonial Society–Gender  | Ulrich, Chap 3   |
|         | <b>Discussion of Ulrich, Chap 3 Reading Journal Due</b>   |  |
| Sept 24 | Imperial Crisis   | ResDirect: Imperial Crisis & Young p vii-32  |
| Sept 26 | Imperial Crisis   | ResDirect: Imperial Crisis & Young p vii-32  |
| Sept 28 | <b>Essay Exam</b> –Includes readings and lecture notes from Jamestown, Va through Colonial Society; bring pen or pencil to exam   |  |
| Oct 1   | Imperial Crisis   | Ulrich, Chap 5   |
| Oct 3   | Imperial Crisis   | Young, p 33-41, <i>Doing History</i> , Chap 4  |
| Oct 5   | Imperial Crisis   | Young, p 42-51, <i>Doing History</i> , Chap 5  |
| Oct 8   | American Revolution   | Young p 52-66  |
|         | <b>Reading Journal due on Ulrich, Chap 5, Young, and <i>Doing History</i>, Chapters 4 and 5</b>   |  |
| Oct 10  | American Revolution   | ResDirect: War for Indep, Young p 67-84  |
| Oct 12  | American Revolution   | ResDirect: War for Indep, Ulrich, Chap 6   |
| Oct 15  | No Class – Fall Break Holiday   |  |
| Oct 17  | New Nation  | ResDirect: Woods, “The Greatness of George Washington”   |
| Oct 19  | Federal Constitution and Bill of Rights   | Justice David Souter, Harvard Commencement May 27, 2010  |
| Oct 22  | Antebellum South  | ResDirect: Antebell South & Clark, Chap 1-4  |
| Oct 24  | Antebellum South  | ResDirect: Antebell South & Clark 5-8  |
| Oct 26  | <b>Mid-Term Essay Exam</b> covering Imperial Crisis through Federal Constitution and Bill of Rights, ResDirect readings, Ulrich, Young,, Woods, lectures through Oct 19th |  |
| Oct 29  | Antebellum South  | ResDirect: Antebell South & Clark, Chap 9-12   |
| Oct 31  | <b>Discussion of <i>Dwelling Place</i> Chapters 1-12, Reading Journal Entry due</b>   |  |
| Nov 2   | <b>No Class</b>   |  |

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| Nov 5  | Antebellum South  | ResDirect: Antebell South & Clark Chap 13-16                               |
| Nov 7  | Antebellum Reform   | ResDirect: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Great Awakening & Clark Chap 17-20              |
| Nov 9  | Antebellum Reform   | ResDirect: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Great Awakening & Clark Chap 21-24              |
| Nov 12 | <b>Discussion of <i>Dwelling Place</i>, Chapters 13-24, Reading Journal Due</b>               |  |
| Nov 14 | Sectional Conflict 1840s  | ResDirect: Sectional Conflict, Gienapp, Chap 1-2                           |
| Nov 16 | Sectional Conflict 1840s  | ResDirect: Sectional Conflict, Gienapp, Chap 3                             |
| Nov 19 | Sectional Conflict 1850s  | <b>Essay on <i>Dwelling Place</i> due at the <u>beginning of class</u></b> |
| Nov 21 | <b>No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday</b>  |  |
| Nov 23 | <b>No Class – Thanksgiving Holiday</b>  |  |
| Nov 26 | Sectional Conflict 1850s  | ResDirect: Sectional Conflict, Clark Chap 25-28                            |
| Nov 28 | Sectional Conflict–Dred Scott to Lincoln  | ResDirect: Sectional Conflict, Gienapp, Chap 4                             |
| Nov 30 | Civil War   | ResDirect: Civil War,, Clark 29, Gienapp Chap 5                            |
| Dec 3  | Civil War   | ResDirect: Civil War; Gienapp, Chap 6                                      |
| Dec 5  | The Civil War   | E-Res: Civil War; Gienapp, Chap 7  |
| Dec 7  | The Civil War   | E-Res: Civil War; Gienapp, Chap 8  |
|        | <b>Quiz &amp; Discussion of William Gienapp, <i>Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America</i></b> |  |
| Dec 10 | The Civil War Aftermath   | E-Res: Civil War   |
|        | <b>Reading Journal Portfolio Due at the beginning of class</b>                                |  |
| Dec 11 | Reading Day   |  |
| Dec 18 | <b>Final Essay Exam, 2:00-5:00 p.m., bring pen or pencil</b>                                  |  |

**Reserve Direct Primary Documents and Secondary Readings**  
**Hist 231Q, Fall 2012, found on Reserves Direct, Oxford Library Web Page**  
**Dr. Susan Youngblood Ashmore**

**Seventeenth-Century Chesapeake**

**Document:**

James Revel, "The Poor Unhappy Transported Felon's Sorrowful Account of His Fourteen Years Transportation at Virginia in America," c. 1680, in William A. Link and Marjorie Spruill Wheeler, eds, *The South in the History of the Nation Vol 1: Through Reconstruction*, (Bedford/St. Martin's Press: Boston, 1999), pp. 42-49.

William Byrd, "Entries from His Secret Diary," 1709, in Link and Spruill, pp. 64-68.

**Seventeenth-Century New England**

**Documents:**

John Winthrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" sermon

**Film:**

"God in America" Episode 1: "A New Adam" from beginning to 33:00 minutes

**Colonial America**

**Readings:**

Gordon S. Wood, "Becoming a Gentleman," in *The Americanization of Benjamin Franklin*, Penguin Press: New York, 2004, pp. 17-60.

**Film:**

"God in America" Episode 1: "A New Adam" from 33:00 minutes to the end

**Imperial Crisis and War for Independence**

**Documents:**

The Stamp Act

Broadside on the Boston Massacre, "A monumental Inscription on the Fifth of March," Boston, Printed by Isaiah Thomas, 1772, the American Antiquarian Society. (Receive this in class)

The Olive Branch Petition

The Declaration of Independence

Documents from the British Library (Receive citations in class)

**Reading:**

Alfred F. Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party: Memory and the American Revolution*, Beacon Press: Boston, 1999.

Gordon S. Wood, "The Greatness of George Washington," in *Revolutionary Characters: What Made the Founders Different*, Penguin Press: New York, 2006, pp. 31-63.

**Film:**

"God in America" Episode 2: "A New Eden"

## **The New Nation**

### **Document:**

The U.S. Constitution and First Ten Amendments

David Souter, Harvard Commencement Address, May 27, 2010

## **Antebellum South**

### **Documents:**

Thornton Stringfellow, "A Brief Examination of Scripture Testimony on the Institution of Slavery," in Drew Gilpin Faust, ed., *The Ideology of Slavery: Proslavery Thought in the Antebellum South, 1830-1860*, (Louisiana State University Press: Baton Rouge, 1981), pp. 136-167.

Slave Sales found in Nineteenth Century Newspapers

### **Reading:**

Erskine Clarke, *Dwelling Place: A Plantation Epic*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005).

## **Second Great Awakening and Antebellum Reform**

### **Documents:**

William Lloyd Garrison, "Truisms," January 8, 1831, "On the Constitution and the Union," December 29, 1832, in William E. Cain, ed., *William Lloyd Garrison and the Fight Against Slavery: Selections from The Liberator*, (Bedford/St. Martin's Press: Boston, 1995), pp. 74-76, 87-89.

### **Film:**

"God in America" Episode 2 "A New Eden"

## **Sectional Conflict**

### **Documents:**

Bishop Andrew Letter, Special Collections, Woodruff Library, Emory University

Dred Scott v. Sanford, 1857, in Paul Finkleman, *Dred Scott v. Sandford: A Brief History with Documents*, (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1997).

## **Civil War**

### **Documents:**

Walt Whitman, "States," *Leaves of Grass*, (W.W. Norton: New York, 1973), pp. 608-610.

Lincoln's First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861.

Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863.

Gary Wills, "The Gettysburg Address, 1. Spoken Text, 2. Final Text," in *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America*, (Simon and Schuster: New York, 1992), pp. 261-263.

Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address

### **Reading:**

William E. Gienapp, *Abraham Lincoln and Civil War America: A Biography*, Oxford University Press: New York, 2002.