THE UNITED STATES TO 1877
HIS 133-012
TR 12:30-1:45

INSTRUCTOR:
Dr. Randi Cox
Liberal Arts, room 356
T 2:00-3:00, W 1:30-4:00, Th 2:00-3:30, and by appointment
468-2428 (Email or text message is better than my office phone.)
Sign up for JackText via Banner to receive and reply to text messages from me.
rcox@sfasu.edu
https://d2l.sfasu.edu/ (Also accessible through MySFA. Call x1919 for assistance.)

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION
A comprehensive survey of American history from early explorations through Reconstruction. Meets Texas state requirements for all graduates.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT TO DO AND LEARN IN THIS CLASS
- You will learn how to approach history as a way of reasoning about the past, just as professional historians do.
- You will develop core skills that historians use to gather and analyze evidence, make connections, assess change over time, compare multiple perspectives, identify causes and turning points, construct sound arguments, etc.
- You will broaden and deepen your knowledge of seven key issues in early American history, each of which shape how Americans define their nation today.
- You will practice these skills in class, and your mastery of them will be evaluated through your performance on short writing assignments, debates, and exams.

REQUIRED TEXTS
J. Locke & B. Wright The American Yawp at http://www.american_yawp.com
Frederick Douglass Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass
Additional required materials will be posted on D2L. You must have frequent computer access to be successful in this course. Your phone will not be enough.

COURSE QUESTIONS, THEMES AND TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/21-1/28</td>
<td>1. Why is Columbus Day controversial? (Causation, Complexity)</td>
<td>PW: 2/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/2-2/11</td>
<td>2. What were Puritans really like? (Context, Connections, Complexity)</td>
<td>PW: 2/17</td>
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<td>2/16-2/23</td>
<td>3. How revolutionary was the American Revolution? (Causation, Context, Complexity)</td>
<td>Debate: 3/3</td>
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<td>3/22-4/5</td>
<td>5. Was America founded as a Christian nation? (Change, Context, Connections)</td>
<td>Debate: 4/12</td>
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<td>4/2-5/5</td>
<td>7. What caused the Civil War? (Causation, Context, Connections, Complexity)</td>
<td>Final: 5/12</td>
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**Assignments, Grades, and Due Dates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice writing</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
<td>Two at 50 points each: Wednesday, Feb. 3 and Feb. 17 (Submit via D2L by midnight.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Revolution debate</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
<td>Thursday, March 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>200 pts</td>
<td>Thursday, March 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion debate</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
<td>Tuesday, April 12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Slavery essay</td>
<td>200 pts</td>
<td><em>Wednesday</em>, April 27 (Submit via D2L and turn in a paper copy by midnight.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>200 pts</td>
<td>Thursday, May 12 at 10:30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flex assignments</td>
<td>100 pts</td>
<td>At least ten points will be available every week, five of which will be in-class.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1000 pts</td>
<td>A = 900-1000, B = 800-899, etc.</td>
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**Assignment Overview**

I will provide instructions for all assignments on D2L, but this overview will give you an idea of what you have signed up for.

**Practice Writing**: We will finish our first two units (on the Columbian Exchange and Puritan culture) with a Practice Writing exercise worth 50 points each. You will write 1.5-2 pages analyzing historical evidence. This exercise will give you practice with the type of writing you will do later in the course, both on the exams and on the slavery paper.

**Debates**: We will finish units #3 and #5 (on the American Revolution and Religion in Early America) with in-class debates. I will assign positions for each debate to ensure a good balance of talkative/quiet students and strong/weak students. Your grade will be based on a formal preparation paper (about 3 pages), but you will also be able to earn additional flex points from a strong oral performance at the debate itself. You must attend the debate to receive credit for this assignment. Please speak to me immediately, if you know that you have a school activity on one of those dates.

**Slavery essay**: We will finish unit #6 on slavery with a slightly longer paper, about four pages. By this point you will be ready for this more complex assignment, in which you will compare conflicting arguments about the nature of slavery in America.

**Exams**: The midterm and the final will include a mix of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. The final will not be cumulative, but it will include an essay question on Frederick Douglass. Fair warning: My exams are long. You will need the whole time. On the other hand, I work hard to make sure that the exams reflect the practice material.

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**The Five C's of Historical Reasoning**

What is historical reasoning? What do historians do when they reason about the past? We will use five main concepts to help you develop your historical reasoning skills.

1. **Change and Continuity**: Historians debate what has changed over time and what has remained the same.
2. **Causation**: Historians debate the causes of historical events. Since history is an interpretive discipline, we often disagree about causality.
3. **Context**: Historians insist that the past must be understood on its own terms. Any historical event, person, idea must be placed in the context of its historical era to be interpreted.
4. **Contingency and Connections**: Historians are aware that events happen for a variety of reasons, which are often interconnected. Change one factor, and the event might not have happened at all. This idea helps us to remember that historical events are not inevitable.
5. **Complexity**: Historical reasoning is not about memorizing dates and names. It is about making sense of the messiness of the past, in all its complexity. That often means recognizing that different historical groups experienced events in different ways.
Flex assignments: Ten percent of your grade will come from flex assignments. I will offer about 150 points worth of flex assignments, but you may only earn a maximum of 100 points. Think of it as a kind of structured participation grade. About 50 points will be available from in-class activities; if you are absent, you cannot make them up. Another 50 points will come from weekly homework and reading quizzes; no late assignments will be accepted for any reason. A final 30-50 points will come from miscellaneous activities, such as reflections on campus events, participation in SI, the class debates, etc. You can even annotate songs from the musical Hamilton. Because I will offer many opportunities for you to earn points, I will not accept any late papers or make-ups for these. Our first flex assignment will be Tuesday, January 26: a 5-point quiz over the syllabus and the Vox article on taking notes by hand.

**Course Policies and Official University Policy**

**Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Course responsibilities: You should think of this course like joining a health club. As your personal trainer, it is my responsibility to show you how to do everything that is required of you. I give you my word that I will stick to the syllabus, so far as policies go. I will do my best to keep to the schedule and promise to notify you of any changes. On the other hand, it is your responsibility to exercise and eat right—that is, to come to class, keep up with the reading, and prepare for assignments. The grade you earn is determined by the quality of your effort, not necessarily by the amount of time you spend.

Consultations: I take my responsibilities as an instructor seriously. You are warmly invited to come to my office hours to discuss readings, lectures or anything else that you have concerns or questions about. You may also make an appointment, if my hours are not convenient. If you are having problems in the class, the worst possible thing you can do is wait until the end of the semester to say something. Let me know right away, so that I can help you. If you stop by my office to introduce yourself by January 29, I will give you three flex points.

Attendance: Although attendance is not formally required in this class, poor attendance will make it difficult to perform well. Students who fail to complete the course will receive a grade of QF, which may limit future eligibility for financial aid. In addition, you will receive an F in the course if you do not complete all of the major assignments (the midterm, the final, both debates and the slavery paper), even if your overall average is above 60%.

Make-ups: No make-up exams will be given unless you make prior arrangements to miss the regularly scheduled exam. If you miss an exam due to an emergency on the day of an exam, you will not be allowed to take a make-up until you provide written documentation to justify your absence. There will be absolutely no make-ups on flex assignments for any reason.

Professionalism: Students are expected to be on time and to behave in a professional manner. Disruptive or distracting behavior will not be tolerated. Students reading non-course material or disrupting the class in any way will be asked to leave the room. The penalty for cheating and plagiarism will range from failure of the assignment to failure of the course, depending of the severity of the incident.

Technology: While I understand that students sometimes need access to phones for family emergencies, it is easy to become distracted by technology. Please be careful with your phones, so that you and those around you can focus on what we are doing. **Laptops and tablets may not be used on lecture days. Research shows that students who take notes by hand get higher grades than students who take notes on a laptop.** I will be more flexible on workshop days, so that you do not have to print out D2L readings.

**Academic Integrity (SFA Policy 4.1)**

Abiding by university policy on academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes, but is not limited to: using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam; falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment; and/or; helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to: submitting an assignment as one’s own work when it is at least partly the work of another person; submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise
obtained from the Internet or another source; and/or, incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Penalties for Academic Dishonesty
Penalties may include, but are not limited to reprimand, no credit for the assignment or exam, re-submission of the work, make-up exam, failure of the course, or expulsion from the university.

You may read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student_academic_dishonesty.pdf

WITHHELD GRADES (SFA POLICY 5.5)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average. Hey, are you still reading this? Good for you. Bring a 3x5 card to class on Tuesday, January 26 with your name and the title of your favorite David Bowie song for three flex points. Don't tell anyone. It will be our secret. And if you don't have a favorite David Bowie song, now is a perfect time to pick one.

DISABILITY POLICY (SFA POLICY 6.1)

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic-accommodation-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf

STUDENT BEHAVIOR AND THE SFA WAY (SFA POLICY 10.4)

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program. Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance that is available to help SFA students succeed. For information on the Student Code of Conduct, called The SFA Way, go to: http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/student-conduct-code.pdf

CORE CURRICULUM OBJECTIVES AND STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, Social Responsibility, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, and Teamwork. The Coordinating Board has indicated that American history courses should focus on the first four of these objectives, although this course will also provide some opportunities for you to improve your teamwork skills.

HISTORY DEPARTMENT PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course.