COURSE DESCRIPTION

An educated citizenry is crucial to the success of our nation. In order to better understand the present, educated persons must have an understanding of the past, of where they have come from, of how they have lived, and of why things developed the way they did. Historian Henry Steele Commager put it this way: “A people without history is like a man without memory: each generation would have to learn everything anew -- make the same discoveries, invent the same tools and techniques, wrestle with the same problems, commit the same errors.”

As such, this course seeks to provide you with a basic knowledge of the roots and development of American history through the end of the Civil War. Key themes will include the reasons for and growth of the colonization of America, the ideas that went into the Revolution and the Constitution, the growth of the nation, the background, conflicts, and legacies of the Civil War, and the development of our notions of political rights.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through essay exams, supplemental assignments, and critical essays, students who successfully complete this course will:

i. Demonstrate an understanding of the history of the United States since/before 1865, including its major concepts, themes, methods and theoretical approaches by producing short reflection papers, topic papers, and essay exams.

ii. Demonstrate an understanding of how historical sources are used, how historians utilize historiography to build scholarship, and an ability to interpret the past by reading, writing and commenting in class.

iii. Identify, synthesize and interpret historical arguments and to explain these arguments cogently in writing assignments and in class discussion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Please read the course requirements listed below with care. It is important that there is no misunderstanding regarding them, so if you have any questions concerning them, be sure to ask. I will operate under the assumption that you are aware of and understand them.

Bluebooks – You will need to supply three clean bluebooks before the first exam.

Lectures and Attendance -- The lectures are designed to be the foundation for the course. As such, regular class attendance is essential if you hope to pass the course. I assume that when you sign up for the course, you are committing yourself to be in class on a regular basis. Further, it is essential that you pay close attention and take good notes when you are here. Despite the help of PowerPoint screens to guide you, this is not always easy in a larger lecture setting. The screens are just an aid, and merely copying what is on them will not be enough.

Textbook - Jacqueline Jones, et. al., Created Equal: A Social and Political History of the United States (custom TAMUCC edition or brief 3rd edition). The text is designed to offer you an overview of U.S. history. With the lectures as a foundation, you should use the reading to provide additional material to fill in the gaps. Don’t do the reading in a vacuum; first, scan the reading before the lectures to get a few main points and a general sense of the subject matter covered. Then go back and do the reading more carefully. After the lectures, go back over the reading, with an eye toward supplementing and building upon the issues and events we discussed in class. Don’t try to remember every detail (you won’t be able to do this anyway); instead, try to determine what is important. The assigned readings often include materials not specifically
covered in class, so it is absolutely essential that you read the assignments in order to succeed in this course. Refer frequently to the relevant materials on the review guides, and to the lists of terms that you’ll be responsible for that we don’t cover in the lectures.

Supplemental Reading – John Hollitz, ed., Contending Voices: Biographical Explorations of the American Past, Vol. 1 (3rd edition). You’ll use this book to supplement and complement, rather than duplicate, the class lectures. You’ll also write about individual chapters for your Critical Essay assignments (see below). Each chapter in this reader includes two types of materials: interpretive essays written by historians about how different figures influenced, and were affected by, key issues in American history; and additional primary source documents. In reading the interpretive essays, you should focus on identifying and understanding the argument (or theme, or thesis, or conclusions – pick whichever word you feel most comfortable with) that the author is trying to make. You should also know the evidence he/she uses to do this. It is okay to disagree with the author’s conclusion, but you need to be able to understand and explain how and why the author made this argument. As you’re reading, also try to think about how the subject matter of each essay affects your life. When reading the primary source documents, focus on linking them to the themes explored in the interpretive essay.

Critical Essays - Over the course of the semester, you will write three critical essays on chapters from Contending Voices. In each critical essay, you must: 1) identify the major theme of the chapter; 2) compare and contrast the two perspectives on that theme; 3) use at least two of the accompanying primary documents to help examine those perspectives; and 4) explain how the subject matter is important to you (i.e., how does the subject matter affect or influence your life, or your life experiences?). For more details, see the “Critical Essay Guidelines” document.

Quiz -- In hopes of exposing you at an early stage to course expectations, we will have a short quiz two weeks before the first exam. The quiz will consist of a series of matching questions, drawn from the required readings and the lectures.

Examinations -- There will be four exams in this course, including the final. The final exam is comprehensive, covering all the material given over the course of the semester. Your lowest exam score will be dropped; as such, the final exam is technically optional. If you are satisfied with your first three exam scores, you may opt out of the final. In order to do well on the exams, it is essential that you attend class regularly, take good notes, and read your assigned materials. Each exam will consist of the following:

Chronologies (20%) – One section of each exam will include a series of chronological sequencing questions, in which you will be asked to place a series of names, events, or things in their proper historical sequence. Materials in this section will come from the lectures and the assigned readings. Subjects from the readings will be drawn from the lists provided to you. There will not be a list of subjects on any review sheet covering lecture materials for this section.

Matching (30%) – The second section of each exam will include matching questions, drawn from the lectures and the assigned readings. As is the case for the chronologies, the subjects from the readings on this section of the exam will come from the lists provided to you. There will not be a list of subjects on any review sheet covering lecture materials for this section.

In-class essays (50%) – Essay questions will comprise the third section of each exam. The essays will be drawn from a pool of 5-6 questions handed out before the exam. These essays will ask you to describe, explain, and analyze assigned readings as well as materials discussed in class. The focus of these essays will come from lecture materials, but you will also be expected to supplement the lecture materials with relevant information from your assigned reading. They will require you to describe, explain, and analyze key themes in American history. You should write your in-class essays as if you were writing to a college-educated reader who is not a specialist in history; in other words, you should not expect the reader to “know what you are thinking.” Explain the issues and give as much supporting evidence as you can. Your answers should be thorough essays, not short telegrams.
In order to do well on the exams, it is essential that you attend class regularly, take good notes, and read your assigned materials. There are no short-cuts to academic success. It demands energy and effort on your part.

*Lecture Supplements and Participation* – Over the course of the semester, we will have 8 lecture supplement assignments, which will consist of a mixture of in-class and take-home work. Your best scores on 6 of these will count toward your grade. As you have 8 chances to do this, there will be no makeups.

**ASSESSMENT**

- Quiz 5%
- Section 1 Critical Essay 5%
- First Exam 20%
- Section 2 Critical Essay 5%
- Second Exam 25%
- Section 3 Critical Essay 5%
- Third Exam 25%
- Lecture Supplements 10%
- Optional Final Exam (may replace any exam grade)

**COURSE POLICIES**

1. **Late Work** - All work must be turned in on time. Since you have multiple opportunities to turn in your critical essays, unless you are granted, in advance, written permission from me or the class assistant, no late papers will be accepted.

2. **Electronic Submission of Work** - This is not an on-line course. You must turn in hard copies of all of your work.

3. **Make-up Examinations** – Since your lowest exam score will be dropped, you may not make up a missed exam. Students who miss one of the regular exams, even for legitimate reasons, must replace it by taking the comprehensive final.

4. **Lecture Supplements** - Since you have 8 opportunities to successfully complete 6 lecture supplement assignments, there will be no makeups allowed. Regular class attendance is expected.

5. **Extra Credit** -- You have enough of importance to do in the regular assignments for this course. No extra credit opportunities will be available.

6. **Grade Appeals during the semester** -- In grading your exams the primary concerns are to maintain fair standards. You have the right to appeal if you believe that you have received an exam grade which does not reflect the quality of your work, or if you do not understand why an answer you gave was graded in the manner in which it was. However, you must wait at least 24 hours after the papers are returned to initiate this process.

7. **Assistance** – Our office hours are intended to make this course less forbidding. Feel free to come by and talk with me, or with our class assistant, during our posted office hours. If you cannot make these times, ask to make an appointment.

8. **Freedom of Speech** -- Feel free to raise your hand with a question or comment. Reducing confusion, providing clarification, or responding to student curiosity is an important part of the classroom process and will be undertaken to the extent that time and class size permit. In most cases, if you did not understand something, it is because I did not explain it clearly, so you will be doing your colleagues and yourself a service if you request a clarification.

9. **Academic etiquette** -- Universities must maintain standards of academic etiquette in order to affect an atmosphere
conducive to learning. You are expected to demonstrate courtesy to one another in and out of the classroom. Turn off your cell phones, blackberries, I-Pods, etc., before coming to class, and use laptop computers only for taking notes in class. Talking to one’s neighbor(s) during class lectures or general discussions, chronic lateness, using cell-phones or text message gadgets in class, surfing the web, leaving class before it has been dismissed, etc., is inherently disruptive and thus injurious to the rights of others to the opportunity to learn. As such, it is unacceptable in a university classroom. Students who are unable to abide by these rules of academic etiquette and normal civility will be removed from the class and subject to disciplinary action.

10. Academic Integrity -- Cheating or plagiarism on an assignment or test, or failure to complete any of the course requirements, will result in a zero grade for the assignment in question, and, in more serious cases, lead to further academic penalty. For definitions of and penalties for plagiarism, see University Procedures, 13.02.99.C3.01 "Procedure for Academic Misconduct Cases” at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/students/130299C301.pdf

11. Dropping a Class – I hope no student needs to drop a course. However, events sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. March 30 is the last day to drop a course for the semester with an automatic grade of “W”.

12. Examinations – On exam days, leave your books, backpacks, etc., at the front of the room or along the sides of the corridors before taking the exam. Electronic devices will not be permitted.

13. Blue Books- Each student is required to provide three clean blue books. Do not write your name or anything in them. These must be turned in before the first exam.

14. Blackboard - A posting of this syllabus, a suggestion page, and class handouts is available at and should be checked regularly.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS (subject to change) CE = Created Equal; CV = Contending Voices

SECTION I: FOUNDATIONS OF AN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Jan. 11 Introduction

13 Who Ruled? American Indians; CE, 38 (focus on the Iroquois League)
CV, “The Cross and the Sword in Spain’s New World: Bartolomé de Las Casas and Hernán Cortés” Section 1 Critical Essay Opportunity

16 Martin Luther King Day – no class

18 Who Ruled? Europe and the New World: The English; CE, 41, 67-68, 74-76
(focus on changes in government)

20 Who Ruled? Colonial Virginia; CE, 41-44, 51-54, 72-74
CV, “Revolt on the Virginia Frontier: Nathaniel Bacon and William Berkeley” Section 1 Critical Essay Opportunity

23 Who Ruled? Colonial Virginia and New England CE 84-101 (focus on the process of African enslavement)
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| 25   | History quiz  
Who Ruled? Colonial New England; *CE*, 44-51, 76-77, 168-169 (focus on John Locke) |
| 27   | Administering the Colonies; *CE*, 67-68 (focus on the Navigation Act, Plantation Act); 115-128 (focus on diversity of colonists and colonial economies, Great Awakening, George Whitefield)  
*CV*, “Enthusiasm, Authority, and the Great Awakening: James Davenport and Charles Chauncy”  
Section 1 Critical Essay Opportunity |
| 30   | Empire Under Strain; *CE*, 128-35 (focus on William Pitt and James Wolfe), 142-47 (focus on the Stamp Act, colonial responses, and challenges to traditional concepts of balanced government) |
| Feb. 1 | Shots Heard Round the World; *CE*, 151-60  
*CV*, “The Price of Patriotism: Jonathan Sewall and John Adams”  
Last Section 1 Critical Essay Opportunity |
| 3    | The War for Independence; *CE*, 164-77, 179-88 |
| 6    | The Confederation and the Search for Order; *CE*, 198-205 |
| 8    | Summing Up, Section I |
| 10   | First Examination |

**SECTION II: A MATURING AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

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| Feb. 13 | The Constitution and the Search for Order; *CE*, 206-214  
*CV*, “The Conflict over the Constitution: Patrick Henry and James Madison”  
Section 2 Critical Essay Opportunity |
| 15    | Establishing a Government, I; *CE*, 218-27 |
| 17    | Establishing a Government, II  
*CV*, “Political Conflict in the Early Republic: Benjamin Franklin Bache and Alexander Hamilton”  
Section 2 Critical Essay Opportunity |
| 20    | The Jeffersonians, I; *CE*, 235-38 |
| 22    | The Jeffersonians, II |
| 24    | Expansion at Home and Abroad; *CE*, 242-250  
*CV*, “Resistance and Western Expansion: Tecumseh and William Henry Harrison”  
Section 2 Critical Essay Opportunity |
| 27    | Slavery in America, I; *CE*, 256-59 |
| 29    | Slavery in America, II  
*CV*, “The South and the Slavery Debate: Hinton Rowan Helper and George Fitzhugh” |
Section 2 Critical Essay Opportunity

Mar. 2 Library Assignment
5 Jackson, the Presidency, and the Age of Mass Politics, I; CE, 261-73
7 Jackson, the Presidency, and the Age of Mass Politics, II; CE, 273-79, 288-90 (focus on Trails of Tears)
9 Mobilizing Emerging Majorities: Whigs and Democrats

Mar. 12-16 Spring Break
19 Economic Changes; CE, 253-56
Section 2 Critical Essay Opportunity
21 An American Republic; CE, 193-195, 233-34 (focus on concept of a “Republican mother”)
CV, “The Feminine Sphere in Antebellum Society: Catharine Beecher and Elizabeth Cady Stanton”
Last Section 2 Critical Essay Opportunity
23 Summing Up, Section II
26 Second Examination

SECTION III: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IN CRISIS

Mar. 28 Manifest Destiny; CE, 302-308
CV, “Manifest Destiny and Conquest: Thomas Larkin and Juan Bautista Alvarado”
Section 3 Critical Essay Opportunity
30 Congress and the Compromise of 1850; CE, 323-24
Last Day to Drop a Course

Apr. 2 The Abolitionists and 19th Century Reform; CE, 298-301
CV, “Politics, Morality, and Race in the Abolitionist Crusade: William Lloyd Garrison and Frederick Douglass”
Section 3 Critical Essay Opportunity
4 A Shattered Truce; CE, 324-331
6 Deepening Sectional Crisis
CV, “Yankees and ‘Border Ruffians’ in ‘Bleeding Kansas’: Sara Robinson and David Atchison”
Section 3 Critical Essay Opportunity
9 Secession; CE, 331-334, 338-42
11 America’s Bloodiest War
13 The War Begins; CE, 342-45
16 Lincoln and the War; CE, 342-49
   CV, “Mr. Lincoln’s War: Clement Vallandigham and Benjamin Wade”
   Last Section 3 Critical Essay Opportunity
18 The War Drags On
20 The Union Triumphant; CE, 349-59
23 The Meaning of the Civil War
25 Summing Up, Section III
27 Third Examination
30 Third Exams returned; Final Exam review

FINAL EXAM Wednesday, May 9, 8:00-10:30

ACADEMIC ADVISING
Academic advisors are available to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. Each college has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisors. In our college the undergraduate advisor is Linda Miller (825-3466, Linda.miller@tamucc.edu). The graduate advisor is Rachelle Stanley (825-3466, Rachelle.stanley@tamucc.edu). Both are located on the second floor of Driftwood. Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information please call (361) 825-5931 or log on to http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at 825-5816 or visit their office in CCH 116.

VETERANS
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at 825-5816.

FINAL GRADE APPEALS
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the student may take
the steps below.

1. Presentation of grievance to instructor. (This step must be taken within fourteen calendar days after the beginning of the next term.)
2. Appeal to department chair or area coordinator.
3. Written appeal to the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
4. Preliminary review and advising by an ombudsman appointed by the Provost.
5. Submission of file by department chair to the chair of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
6. Review of file by committee chair and submission of case to committee.
7. Proceedings of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee. (Committee holds hearing, reviews data, presents findings to all parties, and makes recommendation to Provost.)
8. Decision by Provost.
9. Final appeal in writing to the Provost if student or instructor thinks appropriate procedures have not been followed.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.