Course Description
This course is designed to introduce students to the history of the United States from colonial settlement to the end of the Civil War. This course is not concerned with the memorization of dates, the names of (in)famous Presidents or even what to think about America’s past, but rather one that seeks to help you learn how to think about the past. We will try to understand what history means to citizens of the 21st century: how do we understand it, why does it matter, and can our understanding of our own past change the present and possibly our future?

The course will explore several themes within the history of the United States, but will center on the overarching idea of freedom. What is this idea of freedom and what is the story of its evolution? People have not always viewed freedom as a principal value for a society or a government to possess, but now we think of it as essential. What is the story of freedom? How have various peoples been involved in the struggle for freedom? How have they altered its meanings over time? In following the course of these struggles, we will examine how Americans chose to define this idea as well as how they left a difficult and mixed legacy that we must understand if we are to make sense of freedom in our own lives.

Several alternate themes will also emerge concerning America’s promise of freedom: the connection between national politics and everyday life; the intriguing and often perplexing relationship between slavery and freedom; freedom’s role in U.S. foreign relations as well as the conquest and settlement of “frontier” regions on the North American continent.

It is important for you to know that the story of U.S. history is not always an attractive one; additionally, it is rarely, if ever, a simple narrative. And yet, we live in the world that this story created. We should know how this story began.
NOTE: In a face-to-face course, much of the learning, motivation, and reminders result from regular attendance to lectures. Since this is an online course, students are expected to take on even more responsibility for their own success. Students should plan to spend the hours that they would be in class engaging with the readings and assignments. You are expected to check your Blackboard and email regularly.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students who successfully complete this course will:

- demonstrate critical thinking by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information, gathering and assessing information relevant to a question, and analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information;
- develop communication skills by interpreting and expressing ideas through writing, oral, or visual communication;
- demonstrate personal responsibility by evaluating historical choices and actions, and relating consequences to decision making;
- develop social responsibility by identifying intercultural competence and civic responsibility in past regional, national, and global communities.

Required Texts


3) Additional texts will be posted on the course Blackboard page.

Course Requirements/Policies

Course Format
Each week has a folder with assignment prompts, Power Points, films, and primary sources. I have deliberately kept the amount of assigned reading reasonable with the expectation that the reading is done thoroughly and thoughtfully.

Discussions
Each week, you are expected to contribute thoughtfully to discussions via the Blackboard message board.

Response Papers
You will turn in short “response papers” most weeks that analyze course materials. *These must be submitted as .doc/x or .pdf files.*

Exams
You will take two exams. All of the assigned readings, films, and Power Points will be covered in the exams.

Assignment Breakdown:
- Discussions (25%)
- Response Papers (35%)
- Exams (40%)
Grade Scale:
A: 90-100
B: 80-89
C: 70-79
D: 60-69
F: 59 or below

Late Work/Make Ups
I will not accept any late assignments, though you are welcome to submit them early. Please give yourself plenty of time to familiarize yourself with Blackboard before the first due date. If you need an extension due to an emergency, you must email me your request at least 24 hours before the assignment is due. Extensions will be granted at the discretion of the instructor or as mandated by law or university policy.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

Disability Services
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 call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116. 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 (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeals
Students who feel they have 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. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website (http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.
Schedule of Topics and Readings
The schedule is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Give Me Liberty! (Foner)
Voices of Freedom (VOF)
Blackboard readings (Blackboard)

Week 1: August 24
Introduction to the course

Week 2: August 28
“A New World”
READ: Foner, Ch. 1

VOF or Blackboard: Bartolomé de las Casas on Spanish Treatment of the Indians, from History of the Indies (selection 1)
VOF or Blackboard: Thomas Morton, The Native Americans of New England
VOF or Blackboard: Adam Smith, The Results of Colonization
Blackboard: Bartolomé de las Casas on Spanish Treatment of the Indians, from History of the Indies (selection 2)
Blackboard: Excerpt from We Shall Remain: After the Mayflower

Week 3: September 4
Creating an Anglo America
READ: Foner, Ch. 2 & 3

VOF, Nathaniel Bacon on Bacon’s Rebellion
VOF, An Apprentice’s Indenture Contract
VOF, Memorial against Non-English Immigration
VOF, Complaint of an Indentured Servant

Week 4: September 11
Freedom and Slavery
READ: Foner, Ch. 4

VOF, Olaudah Equiano on Slavery
VOF, Advertisements for Runaway Slaves and Servants
VOF, Pontiac, Two Speeches
Blackboard: Excerpts from Slavery and the Making of America
Blackboard: Slavery Timeline

Week 5: September 18
The Revolution, Part 1
READ Foner, Ch. 5

VOF, Thomas Paine, Common Sense
VOF, Jonathan Boucher’s Argument against Independence
Blackboard: Declaration of Independence
Blackboard: Patrick Henry, Give Me Liberty or Give Death
Blackboard: The Memoirs of Samuel Smith
Blackboard: The Adventures of Johann Carl Buettner
Week 6: September 25
The Revolution, Part 2
READ: Foner, Ch. 6
  VOF, The Right of “Free Suffrage”
  VOF, Noah Webster on Equality
  VOF, Liberating Indentured Servants
  VOF, Petition of Slaves to the Massachusetts Legislature
  VOF, Rush, Thoughts Upon Female Education

Week 7: October 2
Early Republic
READ: Foner, Ch. 7 & 8
  VOF, Patrick Henry’s Anti-Federalist Argument
  VOF, Thomas Jefferson on Race and Slavery
  VOF, Ramsay, American Innovations on Government
  VOF, Tecumseh on Indians and Land
  Blackboard: Henry Knox, Letter to George Washington

Week 8: October 9
Midterm Exam: Due Wednesday, October 12

Week 9: October 16
The Market and a New American Culture
READ: Foner, Ch. 9
  VOF, A Woman in the Westward Movement
  VOF, Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The American Scholar”
  VOF, Henry David Thoreau, Walden
  VOF, Charles G. Finney, “Sinners Bound to Change Their Own Hearts”

Week 10: October 23
Limits of Democracy
READ: Foner, Ch. 10
  VOF, John Quincy Adams on the Role of the National Government
  VOF, Chief Sharitarish on Changes in Indian Life
  VOF, Appeal of the Cherokee Nation
  Blackboard: Andrew Jackson on Indian Removal
  Blackboard: Excerpt from We Shall Remain: Trail of Tears

Week 11: October 30
Women and Reform Movements
READ: Foner, Ch. 12
  VOF, Angelina Grimké on Women’s Rights
  VOF, Declaration of Sentiments of the Seneca Falls Convention
  VOF, Complaint of a Lowell Factory Worker (p. 166)
  Blackboard: Marriage Protest of Lucy Stone and Henry Blackwell
  Blackboard: The Lowell Mill Girls Go on Strike

Week 12: November 6
The Coming Storm
READ: Foner, Ch. 11
  VOF, Frederick Douglass on the Desire for Freedom
  VOF, Rules of Highland Plantation
  VOF, George Fitzhugh and the Proslavery Argument
  VOF, Letter by a Fugitive Slave
  Blackboard: William Lloyd Garrison, “No Compromise”
  Blackboard: James Whitfield, “America”

Week 13: November 13
Rising Sectional Tensions
READ: Foner, Ch. 13
  VOF, John L. O’Sullivan, Manifest Destiny
  VOF, Henry David Thoreau, “Resistance to Civil Government”
  VOF, William Henry Seward, “The Irrepressible Conflict”
  Blackboard: Texas Secession Statement
  Blackboard: Desertion Handbill

Week 14: November 20
Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: November 27
The American Civil War
READ: Foner, Ch. 14
  VOF, Marcus M. Spiegel, Letter of a Civil War Soldier
  VOF, Abraham Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address
  VOF, Frederick Douglass on Black Soldiers
  Blackboard: Accounts from Shiloh

Week 16: December 4
Course Conclusion

Final Exam: Due Friday, December 9