History 105
American History to 1877
Sections 1 and 2
Syllabus
Westminster College
Spring Semester, 2012

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Thompson/Clark 314
Section 1: M-W-F 2:00-3:00
Section 2: M-W-F 3:10-410

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will cover the political, economic, social, cultural, and religious history of the American nation from initial settlement to 1877. In this course we will focus on the following themes in American history:

Discovery and Exploration
Early settlements
The frontier and the myth of the American west
Native Americans
The American Revolution
Slavery
American identity
Women's Rights
Industrialization
Reform
Religion
The Civil War

This course meets the requirements for the Humanities and Culture Intellectual Perspective, a history major or minor, and the elementary education major.

ASSESSMENT GOALS

1) To gain a thorough understanding of American History from exploration to Reconstruction (1877).
2) To gain an understanding of how historians work to craft narratives that assemble a large number of sources to tell a compelling story.
3) To learn how to read and analyze primary sources, the essential building blocks of narrative history.
4) To understand the relevance of history to the contemporary age, and to learn how to use historical knowledge to make better decisions on contemporary policies.
5) To learn how to write and talk about history in a meaningful way.

REQUIRED TEXTS

James Roark, et al, *Understanding the American Promise,* Volume I: to 1877
Anthony Marcus, et al, A*merica Firsthand: volume 1:Readings from Settlement to Reconstruction*
A book of your own choice

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS

Four exams including the final (20 percent each)	80 percent
The Pathfinder's project	10 percent
Participation	10 percent

Description of graded assignments:

1) Examinations. Each exam will be one hour long and consist of short answer and short essay questions. Before each exam I may give you several interpretative questions to think about, and ask you to either write an essay outside of class or as part of the exam. The final exam will be longer than one hour.

2) The Pathfinders project. All of us approach history from a different position and with different interests. Some students like military history, others are more interested in the private life of the family. Fortunately the field of American history provides a broad choice of books on many topics. Each student is required to read a biography of one of the historical figures covered in our text or a historical study of a topic of special interest to each student. You may also choose to read shorter articles or books as long as you read a least 200 pages. For example education majors may choose to read some of the history books written for elementary and middle school students to help them prepare to teach. You may also choose to read one of the many excellent novels about topics in the period. The literature surrounding the Civil War is especially rich. Fromtime to time I will recommend specific books or websites you might browse for recommendations. Or you might even be a radical and scan the shelves in the library. I will also provide a list of questions to use in writing your book review.

   Regardless of what you read you will join a small group of approximately four in the last few weeks of the semester to summarize what you learned from the reading. You may use Powerpoint or graphic images to aid your presentation, but that is not required. I will give you one of three grades for that effort. An S- if you did not complete the assignment properly, an S if you completed the assigned work, and an S+ if you read over 300 pages and did a solid job with the presentation. If you receive an S- the grade you earned for the rest of the class work will be reduced by one quality point (for example B+ to B), an S will not affect your grade and an S+ will raise your grade for the other components of the course by one quality point.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Al1 members of the Westminster community are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, in keeping with the philosophy and purposes of the College.

Academic dishonesty is a profound violation of this expected code of behavior. It can take several forms, including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, purposely altering the work of another (without that person's permission), misrepresentation of attendance in class or at College events, misrepresentation of work, facts or experimental results, unauthorized use of or intentional intrusion into anther's computer files and/or programs, intentional damage to a computer system, unauthorized use of library materials and privileges, or engaging in any activity which attempts to alter or harm another's academic standing.

The college has adopted a comprehensive policy on academic integrity. You should read this policy in its entirety. You will find it printed in the college catalog . These policies will be enforced in this class. In addition, the college has adopted Turnitin.com as an electronic way to assess the originality of student writing. This website may be used in the class for one or more of your writing assignments.

LEARNING STYLE IN THIS CLASS

I believe in using a diversity of learning methods and approaches, both for the sake of variety in sustaining interest and because I know that different students learn in different ways. This course, therefore, will include close textual analyses of the assigned readings, small group discussions and tasks, general large group discussions, videos, role-playing, and lectures. Since exactly what will happen each day in class will vary, unfailingly regular attendance and being prepared to discuss the assigned readings is essential! The primary responsibility for learning, as always, is yours.

USE OF "MY WESTMINSTER" FOR COURSE MANAGEMENT

The college has installed a comprehensive new administrative software system, including a Learning Management System, that we all are just beginning to use. . It is critically important at the start of the semester that you have good access to "My Westminster" so we can learn it together.

I will begin to activate portions of the system in this class as the semester unfolds. I think it will be better if we learn it gradually, because I do not want the important work of the class confused by a too rapid introduction of a fairly complex system. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have problems with the system.

ACCESSIBILITY STATEMENT

Westminster College actively strives for the full inclusion of all our students. Students with disabilities who require access solutions for environmental or curricular barriers should contact Corey Shaw, Director of Disability Resources, located in 209 Thompson-Clark Hall. phone: 724-946-7192 e-mail: shawcj@westminster.edu

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance is mandatory. If you aren't there, we can't learn from each other. You are allowed **three** absences (of any kind, excused or unexcused). without penalty. ***After three missed classes***, you may lose one quality point (i.e. B to B-) for each class you miss. If for some reason you will not be able to take a test you must inform me *before* the test is given in class, and make it up immediately upon your return. I will deduct three points from the grade of a paper for each day it is overdue without a valid reason.

CELL PHONES: Cell phones and other electronic devices should be turned off during class. No text messaging or use of the computer for non-class communication is permitted.