**50:512:201:03 Development of US I**  Rutgers University-Camden

Dr. Richard Demirjian, Jr. Fall 2016

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Course description: This course explores the political, economic, cultural, and military history of what would become the United States in the years between the settlement of North America and the American Civil War. The course will also examine the roles played by ethnicity, race, gender, class, and localism in the possible formation of a national identity in Early America.

\*Required texts:

Cathy Matson and Stephen Gillon, *The American Experiment: A History of the United States, Volume I: To 1877*, Third Edition, (2008) Houghton Mifflin.

David E. Shi and Holly A. Mayer, *For the Record: A Documentary History of America, Volume One: From First Contact through Reconstruction*, Fifth Edition, (2012)

W.W. Norton.

Additional readings: Additional photocopied materials may be placed on reserve on the Robeson Library website and be accessible through a link on the course Sakai page.

Course goals: To provide students with a broader understanding of the meaning and utility of the term “Americans” as it pertained to the various peoples of the United States in the era prior to 1865. The course will also seek to instill students with a sense of the pastoral myth. Modern Americans have a tendency to long for bygone days- to long for a distant past when folks “led the simple life”- yet, early American life was fraught with complexity, danger, and hardship. This course should help students to better understand how people in early America saw their world and wrestled with the challenges of settlement, independence, and survival in a world of competing domestic interests and hostile nations.

# **Academics:**

# Grading:

# Mid-Term Exam: 30%

 Final Exam: 30%

 Midway Quiz #1: 10%

 Midway Quiz #2: 10%

 Class performance: 20%

There are five standard letter grades in the University’s grading system and I will assign any one of them as the work before me warrants. In this course, an “A” does not stand for Average and a “C” represents an average grade (not a failing one). Below average and unacceptable work will be graded accordingly. That being said; I hope that you all do very well.

Reading: Each week I will give lectures on early American History that correspond with assigned readings. I will try to make them as interesting as possible in an effort to engage you with the course material, and even -gasp- to convince you that history really is interesting. That is my end of the bargain.

Reading is your end of the bargain. Successful students will read, on average, about 50 pages per week in this course. Students will receive weekly reading assignments from the assigned books. It is important that you do the reading and come to class prepared to discuss it. You cannot just come to class, take notes, never open a book, and earn above average grades in this course- seriously. Exam essays must offer evidence that a student can **meaningfully** synthesize material from the readings andclass notes in his/her answer to an essay question.

Exams (30%): There will be two exams for this course. Exams are entirely essay in format.

Mid-Term Exam (2 parts): **Tuesday October 25 & TH October 27** (Chs. 2-7)

Final Exam**: Tuesday December 20** (Chs. 8-15)

Midway Quizzes (10%): Two “Midway” quizzes will be given in this course midway between the start of the course and the Mid-Term and then between the Mid-Term and the Final. These quizzes will be based upon the first few units of those respective parts of the course and will check your understanding of important themes discussed in lectures and in reading recitations based upon the documents reader (*For The Record*). Textbook chapters will not be part of the content of quizzes.

Students must pick up exams and quizzes promptly: There is a one class meeting grace period. Exams which are not picked up within one class meeting week of the day that they are handed back will begin to be penalized 5 points per class meeting. In other words, if I hand back exams on a Tuesday and I am still holding your paper after class on Thursday- your 80 just became a 75. If I still have it after class the following Tuesday- it is now a 70, etc. I do not enjoy “caddying” students’ work around in my briefcase for weeks. If you are that disinterested in your work, the declining grade shouldn’t bother you anyway.

This will not apply to students with excused absences. I determine what constitutes an excused absence.

Class performance (20%): There will be no written homework for this course. However, students should come prepared to discuss the assigned readings during each class meeting. Class performance will be graded on a weekly basis, and \*student conduct including attendance, punctuality, and classroom conduct, as well as any quiz grades, all factor into this portion of the course which comprises 20% of the final grade.

Class performance is graded and recorded systematically as follows. If you are absent you receive a 0. (not an F as in 50 or so, a zero) If you come to class on time but don’t participate you receive a √. (a C: AVERAGE: you found the room, you have a pulse- as average as it gets) If you come on time and participate you receive a √+. (a B: GOOD: you’re trying) If you come on time and participate at a high level you receive a √++. (an A: GREAT work, insightful) If you attend and are unprepared, disruptive, or annoyingly late you receive a √-. (a D: POOR: try it in the real world workplace and see how well it goes over) Any student who arrives over 25 minutes late receives an F. (an F: FAILING)

e-mail: All students are expected to be available through the **Rutgers** e-mail system. I will not send separate e-mail messages, or cc’s along for students who are not on the Rutgers system. It is **your responsibility** to make sure you are getting any e-mails through the Rutgers system. I do not expect to e-mail you unless of a personal emergency or illness which would prevent me from teaching. But in such an event, I will post an announcement on Sakai and all students will be contacted through their Rutgers e-mail.

Extra credit: There will be **no** individual “extra credit” opportunities in this course.

**Student Conduct:**

Attendance: Students are expected to attend all class meetings. As class performance comprises a considerable proportion of their grade, it is strongly suggested that they do so. Students who choose not to attend class receive zeroes for that day and are responsible for all materials, instructions, and /or scheduling changes covered that day and should be prepared to get the appropriate notes or information **from a classmate**, not the instructor.

 Students who come to class and sleep will also receive zeros, as they are effectively absent for any scholastic purposes. I am more interested in whether or not your mind shows up.

Make a friend: If you do not attend class, *do not* e-mail me or the teaching assistant to find out what happened- I already covered it all once, and this is not an on-line course. Make 2 friends soon who will help you to catch up or stay informed in such circumstances. All students are requested to get the e-mail addresses or cell phone numbers of 2 classmates for this reason

Punctuality: Students who stroll in late are marked proportionally absent for that day, and the lateness will work against your class performance score for that week. A pattern of consistent lateness (and thus consistently disrupting my lectures) will be noted and will seriously impact your class performance score. If it is not important for you to be here on time, please drop the course now.

Yes! You need a note!: Students who cannot attend class for **ANY** reason and wish to have their absence excused, need a note. Students who are ill need a note from the doctor or the University Health Center. “I didn’t feel well,” although suggestive of illness, is not a sufficient medical excuse. Personal difficulties sometimes interrupt students’ lives- particularly around exam and quiz dates. **The proper way to handle such situations is through the Dean of Students’ Office, which contacts all the student’s instructors about the student’s situation.** If your story is undocumented (or not sufficiently documented in my analysis) it is not excused – period. This means that exams will not be made up. I will not be put in the embarrassing position of asking you for documentation. Therefore, I am telling you in advance that it is required and that it is your responsibility to bring it to me without my asking if you wish your absence to be excused. I will then judge the quality of your documentation and determine whether or not your absence is excusable.

\*Electronic devices: I CANNOT STRESS THIS STRONGLY ENOUGH. Students must turn off all cell phones, pagers, I-Pods, etc. before entering the classroom. They are a distraction I do not want in my classroom. Also, do not take out any hand-held electronic device during class for any reason. If you do, you will receive an ‘F’ score for class performance for that day. If I need to speak to any student about the matter more than once, I will take the matter to the Dean’s Office. \*Also, you may not tape record my lectures.

Tentative Schedule:

Week 1 (9/6-8): **T-** Course introduction, Syllabus / **TH -** Europeans and the Wilderness

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 2

Week 2, (9/13-15): **T-** Settling North America / **TH-** Recitation

 **Read:** Text, Ch.3

Week 3, (9/20-22): **T** - Class in British North America / **TH** -Recitation

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 3

\*Week 4, (9/27-29): **T-** The Atlantic World Economy and The War for Empire /

 **TH**-\***Midway Quiz #1;** *The War that Made America, Episode 1:*

 *A Country Between*

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 4

Week 5, (10/4-6): **T**- The American Revolution, Phases 1 & 2: The Imperial Crisis & The

 War for Independence / **TH**- Recitation

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 5-6

Week 6, (10/11-13): **T-** The American Revolution, Phase 3: The Critical Period

 **TH- L**ecture wrap-up (if needed)

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 6-7 (get all caught up in text)

Week 7, (10/18-20): **T**- Recitation / **TH**- Review Session

\*\*Week 8, (10/25-27): **\*Mid-Term Exam (2 days)**

Week 9, (11/1-3): **T-** The 1790s andthe Rise of the First Party System / **TH**-Recitation

 **Read:** Text, Ch. 7

Week 10, (11/8-10): **T-** Jefferson, The War of 1812, and the Making of Modern America

 **TH -** Recitation

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 8-9

Week 11, (11/15-17): **T-TH** - The Monrovian Era

 **Read**:Text, Ch. 9

\*Week 12, (11/22-24): **T-\*Midway Quiz #2**; Recitation / **TH- Thanksgiving Day**

Week 13, (11/29-12/1): **T**- The Age of Jackson / **TH**- Recitation

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 10

Week 14, (12/6-8): **T** - Manifest Destiny and the Mexican War /

 **TH**: The Road to Secession: The 1850s

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 13-14

Week 15, (12/13-15): **T-** Civil War Inaugurated, 1860-61

 **TH- Reading Day, NO CLASS**

 **Read**: Text, Ch. 15

**\*\***Week 16, (12/20): **Final Exam, 11:30 AM- 2:30PM**