Founding of British America
50:512:300

Instructor: Chris Golding
Spring 2014
Thursday, 6-8.40pm
Room ?
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Course Description
Study of British North America, emphasizing political, social, economic, and cultural developments and the formation of a British empire. This course, in particular, will adopt and Atlantic World perspective of British America, which will emphasize the maritime connectivity that tied together the Atlantic littoral.

Course Requirements
- First and foremost it is expected that you will keep up with the course reading as assigned (details below).
- You can expect short quizzes of varying weight (posted to sakai) related to the weekly reading. Quiz grades will be taken from the “Attendance and Participation” portion of the course grade as we progress.
- Your attendance and engagement in our class meetings will represent a significant portion of your grade. Given the limited number of meetings, it is important that you come prepared and ready to be involved in discussions of the readings.
- Book Reviews: You will write book reviews for three of the books that we will be reading (Norton, Morgan, and O'Shaughnessy). These reviews will be short critical reviews (1,000 words). The goal will be to provide a summary of the argument, and assess the success or failure of the author in making that argument. Each review should give attention to the types of sources (methodology) that the author employs in making their argument.
- Final Exam: The final exam for this course will be a take-home exam (essay) covering the material read and discussed in class. Details to follow.

Grading
Attendance and Participation  30%
Book Reviews  45%
Final Exam  25%
Required Books
Steven Sarson, *British America 1500-1800* (Hodder Arnold)
Mary Beth Norton, *In the Devil’s Snare: The Salem Witchcraft Crisis of 1692* (Vintage)

Course Schedule

**Week 1** (January 23)  
The New World  
*British America, Ch. 1-2*

**Week 2** (January 30)  
The Chesapeake  
*British America, Ch. 1-3*  
*In the Devil’s Snare, Intro-Ch. 4*

**Week 3** (February 6)  
The West Indies  
*British America, Ch. 4*  
*In the Devil’s Snare, Ch. 5-Epilogue*  
**Review of In the Devil’s Snare due**

**Week 4** (February 13)  
New England  
*British America, Ch. 5*  
*American Slavery, American Freedom, Book I & II*

**Week 5** (February 20)  
The Middle Colonies and Lower South  
*British America, Ch. 6*  
*American Slavery, American Freedom, Book III & IV*  
**Review of American Slavery, American Freedom due**

**Week 6** (February 27)  
The Politics of Empire  
*British America, Ch. 7-8*  
*An Empire Divided, Part I & II*

**Week 7** (March 6)  
The End of an Era: The Death of the Middle Ground  
*British America, Ch. 9*  
*An Empire Divided, Part III & IV*  
**Review of An Empire Divided due**

**Final Exam** (TBD)
**COURSE POLICIES**

**Course Goals**
The description of this course is listed above, and provides the basic outline of the narrative the course will follow. In addition to the history of the British Empire, this course will also stress skills in critical reading and thinking, ability to engage in group discussion of readings and ideas, and a general appreciation for historical context.

**Attendance**
Given the small number of course meetings that we will have, your attendance is of paramount importance. Therefore, absences will not be excused without effect on your final grade outside of special circumstances. Our meetings will be structured with an opening lecture that will help to advance and contextualize the readings, which will then be followed by discussion of the reading as a group. These discussions will be a significant part of what the group gets out of this course, so it will be important that you come prepared and willing to involve yourself in discussion.

**Office Hours**
While I am not going to schedule specific office hours, I am more than happy to meet with you either before or after class. If you wish to meet before class, just give me a heads up and I will get to the building a bit earlier to see you. I am readily available by email, and that is the best way to reach me with pressing matters or concerns.

**Assignments**
All assignments are to be submitted electronically. If you do not get confirmation from me that I have your assignment, please check back and make sure it was received. Grammar and spelling are important. Take advantage of spell-check and proofread your assignments before you submit them to me.

**Late Assignments**
For each day that an assignment is overdue I will subtract 5% from the grade, until a week following the due date after which I will not accept the assignment and you will receive a 0. So, for example, an assignment due on a Friday that is received on Sunday will have 10% removed from the final grade.
If you are having a problem, and suspect you will not get an assignment in to me on time, *speak to me in advance of the deadline*. Do not wait until after the fact to announce a problem, as I will be significantly less sympathetic at that point.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

“*Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are only legitimate when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged…The principles of academic integrity entail simple standards of honesty and truth. Each member of the university has a responsibility to uphold the standards of the community and to take action when others violate them…Students are responsible for knowing what the standards are and for adhering to them. Students should also bring any violations of which they are aware to the attention of their instructors.*”