

Mayville State University

HISTORY 103: UNITED STATES HISTORY TO 1877

FALL 2025

The colonization of North America has been the decisive fact of the modern world. -- Otto von Bismark¹

There is, of course, a thing called history, but history is something unpleasant that happens to other people. – Arnold Toynbee

[W]e cannot escape history. We. . . will be remembered in spite of ourselves. – Abraham Lincoln

Course and Instructor Information

Instructor Name: John M. Pederson, Ph.D.

Contact Information:

Office: Classroom Building 111 A

Email: john.pederson.2@mayvillestate.edu

Work phone: 701.788.4668.

Hours of Availability:

Monday, and Friday: 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Tuesday and Thursday: 9:00 – 11:00 AM

Also available for meetings on other days and times by appointment.

Instructional Mode: On-campus face-to-face **Credit Hours:** 3

Course Date: August 26 – December 18, 2025

Time Zone: All times indicated throughout this syllabus reflect Central Time (CT).

Meeting Times and Location: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:00 - 1:15 PM; Education 114.

Final Exam Time and Location: Noon to 2:00 PM, December 18, 2025, in Education 114

Zoom Link: [Zoom Meeting Link](#)

Course Materials and Technologies

Required

[MSU Technology Requirements](#)

Foner, Eric. *Give Me Liberty: An American History*, Brief seventh edition.

¹ Phillips, Kevin, P, *The Cousins' Wars: Religion, Politics, and the Triumph of Anglo-America*, (New York: Basic Books, 1999), 3.

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Use of Artificial Intelligence in this Course

You may use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm. However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. Beware that use may also stifle your own independent thinking and creativity.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material (with due consideration for the quality of the reference, which may be poor). Any plagiarism or other form of cheating will be dealt with under the relevant Mayville State policies.

Course Description

A historical survey of United States History from its earliest European backgrounds to 1877.

Pre-/Co-requisites: No Pre-/Co-requisites are required.

Course Objectives

To successfully complete this course, the learner will be expected to meet the following objectives, as aligned to Composite Social Science Education Program Approval Standards through North Dakota's Education Standards and Practices Board ([ND ESPB](#)):

Students will understand and be able to explain:

- the state of North and South America prior to European settlement;
 - the causes of European discovery of North and South America;
 - the causes, nature, and methods of European colonization of North and South America;
 - the impact of European settlement on the Native Inhabitants;
 - the diversity of settlers and settlements in what became the United States;
 - the causes and consequences of the War of Independence;
 - the role and importance of slavery in the development of the United States and European colonies.
 - the basic features of the Constitution and why it was written;
 - the nature and success of reform movements in the 18th and 19th centuries;
 - the role of women in American society;
 - the causes, nature, and methods of the expansion of the United States;
 - the causes and consequences of the Civil War;
 - the nature and consequences of Reconstruction;
 - the consequences of past events for the present;
- Future educators will observe multiple INTASC principles (see page 4).

Standards Alignment (Composite Social Science Education Program Approval Standards-ND ESPB):

- 15035.1 In the social studies composite major curriculum the program requires the study of a broad base of social studies including history (eighteen semester hours) and at least two of the following three core areas: political science and civics (twelve semester hours), economics (twelve semester hours), and geography (twelve semester hours). Additional electives to the social studies composite may include: sociology (six semester hours) or psychology (six semester hours) or anthropology (six semester hours) or global studies (six semester hours).

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Essential Studies

As part of Mayville State University's Essential Studies curriculum, this course seeks to prepare students for twenty-first-century challenges by gaining: 1) Knowledge of human cultures; 2) Intellectual and practical skills; 3) Personal and social responsibility; 4) Integrative and applied learning.

Instructional Strategies and Learning Experiences

This course will utilize readings, partner discussion of assigned readings, large group discussion of assigned readings, lectures, quizzes, exams, written essays, podcasts, and films. Listed class readings are to be completed prior to the start of class on the respective day they are listed in the syllabus semester schedule below. When reading your daily assignments consider what is the most important and surprising information from that reading. In class you should be prepared to discuss both. Normally you will be asked to share either the most important or most surprising point in class discussion. Prior to beginning class discussion, you will be asked to rate your level of preparation by color codes. Green indicates you have read the material and are comfortable with it; yellow indicates you read the material but did not understand some or all of it; and red indicates you did not read the material, or if you did read it that you did not understand it. If you indicate red, you will not be called upon for the opening question.

Evaluation and Grading

Your performance on the items listed below will determine your grade. Nine quizzes will be given throughout the semester and your lowest three scores will be dropped before determining your quiz grade. You will write a reaction paper after listening to the Jefferson Hour episode "This Thing of Darkness." You will also do an online role-playing scenario that simulates the choices of a nineteenth century factory worker and write a summary of that experience. The course comprehensive question will involve listening to a debate about slavery reparations and integrating the course material as the student provides a recommendation. NO so-called EXTRA CREDIT assignments will be given individually. My goal is to return quizzes, exams, and papers to you the next class period, and my intent is to return all assignments within a week after submission.

Quizzes: (6 of 9):	60 points	Jefferson Reaction Paper:	40 points
First Exam:	100 points	Simulation Summary Paper:	40 points
Second Exam	100 points	In-class reflective writings:	60 points
Final Exam:	125 points	Participation:	50 points
Course comprehensive question: 50 points			

Grading Scale: Grading is on the following point scale (625 possible points)

A = 563 or more (90 % +);	B = 500 - 562 (80 % +);	
C = 438 - 499 (70 % +);	D = 375 - 437 (60 % +);	F = 374 or below

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Make-up Policy: Those who miss an exam to participate in a school sponsored activity are expected to contact the instructor in advance and make appropriate arrangements. Other legitimate reasons include a medical condition such that a doctor affirms that your presence endangers your health and/or that of others, or a family emergency. Quizzes missed for a school sponsored activity can be taken if you notify the instructor of your absence in advance. If you miss a quiz because of a medical condition or family emergency, you may arrange to take a make-up quiz *only if you have already missed three quizzes*.

Course Expectations

Students are responsible for material assigned and presented in class, including handouts, primary documents, and videos shown. Selected readings in addition to the textbook will be given at least one class period in advance. Classroom presentations and instructions for the writing assignments will be available via Blackboard. Student participation in discussion and group questions is expected. Attendance will be taken throughout the semester. Given my faculty rank and degree, I prefer to be addressed as Dr. Pederson.

Instructor / Student Communication

My preferred method of communication is face-to-face during office hours. You may call my office phone or e-mail if stopping by my office is not feasible. 6 PM Sunday through 3 PM on Friday you can anticipate a response to your e-mail or phone call within 24 hours. I do not text via a cell phone. Students are accountable for all academic communications sent to their Mayville State University e-mail address.

Late Arrivals

The grading system for students adding this course after the first day of instruction will be modified. The student will be graded only on the activities that transpired while the student is enrolled. Students will not be penalized for missed assignments, but the student is still responsible for learning the course material that was covered during their initial absence.

Enrollment Verification

The U.S. Department of Education requires instructors to conduct an activity which will validate student enrollment in this course. Class attendance will be used to verify enrollment in on-campus courses. If you do not attend, your enrollment in this course will be at risk.

Important Student Information

In the Help & Resources for Students section of the Blackboard Institution Page, you can view and download the Important Student Information document for the current academic year. It includes information about:

- ✓ Land Acknowledgement Statement
- ✓ Academic Grievance Concerns and Instructor English Proficiency

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- ✓ NetTutor - Online Tutoring Program
- ✓ Starfish - Student Success System
- ✓ Students with Documented Disabilities
- ✓ Student Learning Outcomes / Essential Learning Outcomes
- ✓ Academic Honesty
- ✓ Emergency Notification
- ✓ Continuity of Academic Instruction for a Pandemic or Emergency
- ✓ Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)
- ✓ Diversity Statement (Title IX)

Sources Consulted

Carnes, Mark and Garraty, John. *American Destiny: Narrative of a Nation*. Fourth edition. Boston: Pearson, 2012

De Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America*. Translated by Harvey Mansfield and Delba Winthrop. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Faragher, John, et al. *Out of Many: A History of the American People*. Fourth edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2006.

Finkelman, Paul. *Supreme Injustice: Slavery in the Nation's Highest Court*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2018.

Landes, David. *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations: Why Some Are So Rich and Some Are So Poor*. New York: Norton, 1999.

Issacson, Walter. *Benjamin Franklin: An American Life*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003.

McCullough, David. *John Adams*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.

Tindall, George Brown and David Shi. *America: A Narrative History*. Third edition. New York: Norton, 1992.

Phillips, Kevin. *The Cousins' Wars: Religion, Politics, and the Triumph of Anglo-America*. New York: Basic Books, 1999.

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INTASC Principles covered in this course:	
1	The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he/she teaches and can create learning experiences that make these aspects of subject matter meaningful for the students.
5	The teacher uses an understanding of individual and group motivation and behavior to create a learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.
6	The teacher uses knowledge of effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques to foster active inquiry, collaboration, and supportive interaction in the classroom.
7	The teacher plans instruction based upon knowledge of subject matter, students, the community, and curriculum goals.

Course Timeline/Schedule

The following is tentative and remains subject to change at the instructor's discretion. If a class also has a handout for that day, it has the designation "h/o." The page numbers refer to the printed pages in the textbook, *Give Me Liberty: An American History*.

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WEEK	DATE	SUBJECT	READING
			(Pages)
	<u>August</u>		
1	T – 26	Course Introduction	1-10
	Th – 28	The Spanish & the New World	10 - 30
	<u>September</u>		
2	T – 2	Spain's Rivals	30 - 37, 40 - 50
	Th – 4	The New England Colonies	56 – 70, 94 - 95
3	T – 9	Settlements & Slavery	51–56,86–89,90–91,111–120
	Th – 11	Benjamin Franklin's Life	84 – 85, 95 – 102, 121 – 130
4	T – 16	The Colonies & Imperial Wars	79–84, 89, 92–94, 130–144
	Th – 18	Success & Unrest	145 – 154
5	T – 23	Independence Declared	154 – 162
	Th – 25	Independence Won	162 – 171, 184 – 187, 190
6	T – 30	FIRST EXAM	
	<u>October</u>		
	Th – 2	Creating the Constitution	173 – 184, 192, 195 – 197, 200 – 212
7	T – 7	Early Days of the Republic	178 – 181, 192–193,212 – 219, 228–238
	Th – 9	Jefferson & Slavery, Podcast & articles,	187–191, 193–195, 222–225
8	T – 14	Jefferson's Presidency	236 – 246
	Th – 16	Growing Pains - War of 1812 <i>Reaction Paper due</i>	219 – 222, 246 – 252
9	T – 21	Good Feelings & the Corrupt Bargain	291 – 298
	Th – 23	Industrialization, factory life	255–261, 264–272, 277–282
10	T – 28	The Age of Jackson	285 – 291, 298 – 311
	Th – 30	Social & Cultural Changes, Women	273–277, 340–348, 357–364
	<u>November</u>		
11	T – 4	Manifest Destiny, Texas & Mexico <i>Simulation Summary Paper due</i>	366 – 377
	Th – 6	SECOND EXAM	
12	T – 11	Veteran's Day – No Class	
	Th – 13	North and South diverge	261–264, 314-331
13	T – 18	Resistance to Slavery	332 – 338, 348 - 357, h/o
	Th – 20	Compromise Crisis	377 – 389, 392
14	T – 25	Lincoln's Election & Secession	390 - 398, 389 - 393
	Th – 27	THANKSGIVING Holiday	No Class
	<u>December</u>		
15	T – 2	The Civil War Begins	401 – 415
	Th – 4	The Civil War Ends	415 – 439
16	T – 9	Reconstruction	441 – 463
	Th – 11	Reconstruction	463 – 473
		<i>Course Comprehensive Question Paper Due</i>	
	Th – 18	FINAL EXAM Noon	

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² The pages numbers identified for the readings on this page reflect the digital version of the text you access via Inclusive Access.