

Honolulu Community College
Hist 281: Introduction to American History 1
Writing Intensive
Fall 2012

Instructor: Mieko Matsumoto

Office Hours: To be determined each semester and by appointment *Office 618*

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Course Description -----

Welcome to History 281! This class is the first part of two American history courses in the University of Hawai`i System (you are not required to take the courses in sequence). This course analyzes the historical development of human societies and their cultural traditions in North America through the 1870s.

This semester we will approach history not only as content (e.g. what happened) but also as a process, an academic perspective which involves constant analyses, interpretation, and discussion. This will involve working with not only secondary sources (literature written by scholars) but also primary sources such as artwork, letters, and literature. It is important to recognize that interpretations of history are subject to continual change. Thus, as historians (or hopefully future historians), it is important to be able to assess conflicting interpretations of history. Thinking critically about primary and secondary sources strengthens our abilities to produce strong scholarly analyses.

Regarding content, this course will focus on the histories of various societies, nations, and cultures located around the world. Throughout the semester, several themes will guide our scholarship:

1. Forced and voluntary migration and cross-cultural interaction
2. The influence of technology, goods, disease, and ideas on historical change
3. State-building, expansion, and conflict
4. The relationship between humans, the environment, and geography
5. The significance of class, gender, and ethnicity in shaping historical experiences

Student Learning Outcomes-----

Students in this course will:

1. Distinguish the characteristics of Americans in their geographic settings
2. Describe the interactive roles which social, religious, political, economic, scientific, and technological forces have played in American history
3. Evaluate such historical theories as the 'great person' in history or deterministic interpretations
4. Trace the development of American history and recognize its enduring influences
5. Describe global processes (e.g. agricultural and urban revolutions, emergence and growth of civilization, human migration, disease, ecological forces, imperialism, neo-imperialism, decolonization, industrialization etc.)

Writing Intensive -----

Get ready to write! Together, as a class, we will focus on research and writing techniques that will enable you to effectively create written arguments.

Student learning outcomes for all writing intensive courses include:

1. Demonstrate writing ability consistent with a second year level of English writing skills
2. Write in grammatically correct sentences that convey clear meaning in an effective way
3. Use writing as a tool for learning and critical thinking

Method of Instruction and Student Responsibilities -----

This is a writing intensive class. As such, the major goal of the course will be to improve your abilities to convey original arguments and ideas through writing. Writing will be integral to the class as an avenue toward achieving critical thinking and historical analysis skills. More than 60% of your grade will be based on the completion of written assignments. You will be required to produce **at least 16 pages** of graded written work by the end of the semester. Contact with the instructor, attendance in-class, and substantial efforts to improve writing skills are required and will be a critical aspect of the grading process. In addition, classes will incorporate both lecture and discussion. Discussion is an important component of this course so please come to class prepared with your thoughts, notes, readings, and questions. Students are responsible for completing all assigned readings, must participate in writing workshops and peer review processes, and are expected to engage actively with the instructor and with one another. Lectures will be supplemented with visual and audio materials, in-class group activities, and writing workshops. Students are also responsible for checking their UH e-mail accounts regularly for updates on class activities and assignments.

Textbooks and Required Materials -----

Foner, Eric, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*. Third Edition. Vol. 1. W.W.W. Norton & Company, 2012.

Foner, Eric, ed, *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History*. Third Edition. Vol 1. W.W.W. Norton & Company, 20110

In addition, there may be the occasional online reading.

You are responsible for bringing materials in either electronic or paper form to class for discussion. It is important that you check the schedule every week to make sure you have completed all of the required readings.

Communication-----

Email and office hour visits are preferred. I will do my best to respond via email within 48 hours to all emails sent between Monday through Friday.

Prepare for Success -----

1. **Practice respect:** During the course of the quarter, we will engage topics and themes that are politically charged. There will undoubtedly be differences in opinions, beliefs, and interpretations. While it is important that you challenge each other as well as the readings, it is equally important that you treat your peers with respect and consideration. You are never required to agree with each other or with the arguments in the texts we read—rather, the goal is to develop your skills in critical analyses and arguing within an academic context. However, it is ***imperative*** to keep in mind that the class is composed of individuals from various backgrounds with various opinions and ideas. Respect for differences is instrumental in fostering a collegial environment in which different perspectives can be exchanged, and differing points of view can be explored. As such, **I require each of you to respect one another and listen to the comments offered by your peers.** Healthy debates are the keystone of academic inquiry and critical thinking; verbal violence and harassment are not, and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. If you experience these types of problems in the class, whether subtle or overt, come see me or email me immediately. Students are expected to follow the **HCC Student Conduct Code** (<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/policies/scc.pdf>)
2. Come to class and be **on time**. If you must miss class you are responsible for obtaining notes from a fellow student.
3. Turn in work on time. Assignments are due at the beginning of class on the due date. Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis. **Late assignments will be penalized 5% per week late.**
4. **Exams must be taken on the date assigned by the instructor.** Taking an exam late will result in a 15% grade reduction per week. Exceptions will be made on a case-by-case basis.
5. Be prepared to work hard. Complete all assigned readings and **take notes**.
6. Ask your instructor for help if you do not understand the material.
7. Laptops are to be used for class work only and not for Facebook, web-surfing or social networking. All cellphones, ipods, and other unapproved electronic devices should be turned off during class. Failure to comply will result in a markdown of participation points, and you will be asked to leave class.
8. Practice academic honesty. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated!** All instances of plagiarism will be reported to Administration. **Plagiarized work will result in an automatic F for the assignment and can result in expulsion from HCC.** The instructor reserves the right to change the score on a paper at any time, including after the fact, if it is discovered that the paper has been plagiarized, and to change the course grade if applicable. The definition of plagiarism, according to the University of Hawai'i Code of Conduct, is as follows:
 - a. "Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or

oral material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or dry labbing, which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of the course or from previous terms or fabricating data to fit the desired or expected results.”

Transfer Credit -----

This course transfers to all other UH system campuses as a WI course.

Course Components -----

1 Mid-term exam 10%

1 Final exam 10%

Both exams will cover information provided in lecture, class discussions, and readings. Completion of readings and consistent attendance are necessary steps in preparing for success on the exam. More information regarding both exams will be provided throughout the semester.

Part 1 of the Creative Interpretation of History and Research Paper Assignments 10%

See Handout

Creative Interpretation of History 15%

This short writing assignment (4 pages min.) will allow you to express your knowledge of how historical developments impact individuals based on their background (race, gender, class). See handout for further instructions.

Research Paper 30%

This medium length paper (8 pages min.) will assess your abilities to conduct college-level research and historical analysis. The paper will be based on the 2012-2013 National History Day theme, “Turning points in History: People, Ideas, and Events.” This assignment will be linked with the Creative Interpretation of History paper. See handout for further instructions.

Writing a Paper Step by Step

Each paper will be composed in stages. Part 1 of the paper will consist of a thesis statement (if applicable), working bibliography, and prospectus. Part 2 will be your initial paper. Part 3 will be your final revised paper (see below). You must complete all steps in order to receive full credit for your work. Further instructions and due dates will be discussed in class.

In addition, you are required to come in for one 15 minute conference with the instructor. More information will be provided during class.

Revisions

The revision process is a crucial component of any writing intensive class. Revisions are required for both papers (one revision per paper). **Revisions are due in-class 2 weeks after you receive comments. Revisions must be turned in WITH the original paper.** If you do not complete your revision you will only be able to receive 80% of your initial grade.

Class Participation and Weekly Journals 25%

Class participation is an important component of your grade. Participation means that you: (1) are in class and punctual, (2) are awake, (3) have completed the readings and assignments, (4) have done all assigned prep work (e.g. answered discussion questions), (5) are ready to engage respectfully with your classmates and the instructor. Every day is a discussion day so please come prepared. A strong participation grade does not necessarily mean that you raise your hand every for question but instead, that you show your engagement through active listening, respectful participation in group work, and thoughtful contributions to our class discussions and activities. Ideally, you will find class discussion and the insights of your classmates a great resource for this course. Missing class will affect your participation grade. If you're not in class to participate, you cannot receive credit for participating. **If there happens to be an in-class assignment you will NOT be able to make it up (exceptions may be made by the instructor in the case of medical or family emergency). Arriving late or leaving early without an excuse will affect your grade.** If there is a reason that you must miss class, arrive late, or leave early make sure to tell inform the instructor ahead of time.

Weekly Journals

These short and informal writing assignments will help you develop critical thinking and analysis skills as you reflect on weekly readings. **Learning to read critically will help you to become a stronger writer.** Reading widely will also help you assess various writing styles and build up your vocabulary. **Journals should be spell-checked, and should be grammatically correct.** Each journal should be roughly 1 page single-spaced at minimum. The journals are due during the second class of every week.

Extra Credit

Extra credit will be given randomly through in-class activities. Extra credit points will be added to your participation grade.

Grades -----

Please keep all work that I return to you as proof that you have completed the assignment. You are responsible for keeping and maintaining a file of your own work.

Grades are assigned based on performance alone. If you would like to discuss a grade please come to my office hours prepared to discuss the details of your paper or exam.

Grades are not assigned on a curve. Grades are based on an A-F letter grading system.

Students must complete all assignments (including class participation) and exams in order to pass the class.

Students with Disabilities Statement -----

Students in this class who need accommodations for a disability should submit documentation and requests to the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (SSD) in Bldg. 2, Rm. 108A. Phone: 845-9282 voice/text or 9272 voice/text for more information. If you have already

registered your requests with SSD this semester, please see the instructor after class or during office hours and be prepared to provide a current verification letter from SSD. (Rev. 3-29-2004).

Course Schedule and Assigned Readings -----

Unless noted otherwise, readings and assignments are listed on the day that they are DUE.

Week 1: Native America

Week 2: European Expansion to the “New World”

Week 3: Settling Down: the Establishment of English American Colonies

Week 4: Social Conflicts in the Colonies

Week 5: A MidWife’s Tale: Thinking like a Historian

Week 6: Thinking about Borders and Borderlands

Week 7: African Slavery in North America

Week 8: The American Revolution

Week 9: Founding a Nation

Week 10: Technological & Social Changes in the 19th century

Week 11: Westward Ho! Moving West & the Native American Response

Week 12: The Pacific Northwest

Week 13: An Age of Reform

Week 14: A House Divided

Week 15: The Experience of the Civil War

Week 16: What is Freedom? Reconstruction

Week 17: Final Exam..... Good Luck!

NOTE:

This course ends with the completion of the final exam. Absolutely NO assignments will be accepted after that time without prior instructor approval.

Changes may be made to this syllabus or any aspect of the course over the course of the semester. It is each student's responsibility to regularly check their UH e-mail account for possible changes.