

University of Florida  
Department of History  
Fall 2024

## **AMH2010: United States History to 1877**

This course fulfills Gen Ed Requirement for [Social and Behavior Sciences](#) and [WR6](#) and [Civics Literacy](#)

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:00-3:00pm, and by appointment,

Zoom Link:

<https://ufl.zoom.us/j/99633488825?pwd=wZP8a4cySCaUz7kJUAVmuv3ZTp8Bw1.1>

### **Course description**

AMH2010 surveys the development of the US from its colonial origins to the end of Reconstruction.

This course is a survey of American History from the colonial origins of the modern-day United States through the Civil War and Reconstruction Era. In this course, students will examine United States history from before European contact to 1877. Topics will include but are not limited to indigenous peoples, the European background, the colonial period, the American revolution, the articles of confederation, the constitution, issues within the new republic, sectionalism, manifest destiny, slavery, the American Civil War, and Reconstruction.

After completing this course, students should have a familiarity with the broad scope of American history through the Reconstruction Era. In addition to gaining this historical knowledge, students will engage in an analysis of primary and secondary source material in order to gain a firsthand perspective on the historian's craft. Finally, this course will allow students to hone their writing, speaking, and critical thinking skills in ways that should help them regardless of their major or chosen career.

A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

Students will describe the factual details of the substantive historical episodes under study.

Students will identify and analyze foundational developments that shaped American history from before European contact to 1877 using critical thinking skills.

Students will demonstrate an understanding of the primary ideas, values, and perceptions that have shaped United States history.

Students will demonstrate competency in civic literacy.

## Required Texts

The readings of this class are designed to complement the online lectures and will help you with the discussion sections. It is therefore of great importance that you complete the assigned readings by the final day of the module. Otherwise, you run the risk of getting lost as you try to catch up with the rest of the class. In a similar vein, successful students will post to the discussion pages early in the week in order to get feedback and encourage a constructive dialogue with other students. Knowledge of the readings will be important for your performance on papers and exams. The core readings will come from *The American Yawp*, a textbook that is free and online. There will also be some supplemental online readings added to the course readings over the course of the semester. These readings are usually chapters from larger works; you might find them challenging and I would recommend completing the textbook chapter first before tackling them. The online readings and assignments will always be free of charge, but they will also vary from week to week. So be sure to check each module closely for additional readings.

*The American Yawp* (This textbook is free online at <http://www.americanyawp.com/>)

## General Education: Student Assessment for Social and Behavioral Sciences

For the Social and Behavior Sciences Requirement, students will be assessed on their performance in each of four areas: a midterm exam, quizzes, and class participation. A rubric for class participation and written work is provided below.

### Social and Behavioral Sciences Student Learning Outcomes

	Definition	Course SLO	Assessment Tools
Content	Identify, describe, and explain key themes, principles, and terminology; the history, theory and/or methodologies used; and social institutions, structures and processes.	Students will demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used in the historical discipline. Students will also analyze the roles of social structure and status of different groups in early American history.  Relevant sources will be lecture, the Hewitt and Lawson textbook, as well as the texts on <i>Common Sense</i> and the Emancipation Proclamation.	Quizzes as well as the Mid-Term and Final Exam will assess students' ability to understand and recall pivotal themes, individuals, and institutions from US history to 1877. The Mid-term and Final exam will assess students' ability to analyze broad questions and provide essay responses that demonstrate an understanding of American history.

Critical Thinking	Apply formal and informal qualitative or quantitative analysis effectively to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions. Assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.	<p>Students will communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written and oral forms appropriate to the historical discipline.</p> <p>Students will analyze both content and texts from US history, evaluate them to arrive at their own conclusions about important themes in American history.</p> <p>Relevant sources will be lecture, the Hewitt and Lawson textbook, as well as the texts on <i>Common Sense</i> and the Emancipation Proclamation.</p>	<p>Mid-term and Final Exams will require students to describe, analyze, and uncover significant themes in American history to 1877.</p> <p>Short and long essay assignments, along with discussion sections will assess students' ability to understand, analyze, and uncover themes related to the Hewitt and Lawson textbook (short essays) and the <i>Common Sense</i> and Emancipation Proclamation texts (long essays)</p>
Communication	Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively.	<p>Students will analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using historical methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Students will also analyze and evaluate their own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures. Students will discuss and evaluate the historical circumstances in which fundamental American institutions developed.</p> <p>Relevant sources will be lecture, the Hewitt and Lawson textbook, as well as the texts on <i>Common Sense</i> and the Emancipation Proclamation.</p>	<p>Mid-term and Final Exams will assess students' ability to communicate their understanding of broad trends and specific themes in American history to 1877 in a timed environment.</p> <p>Discussion sections will assess students' ability to communicate orally an understanding of the lectures, Hewitt and Lawson textbook, and the readers on <i>Common Sense</i> and the Emancipation Proclamation.</p> <p>Both short and long essays will assess students' ability to understand and communicate complex themes in American history to 1877 in an untimed environment.</p>

## Assignments and Grading

Assignments and Grading This class will have one midterm examination and a final examination that will require writing a lengthy essay response to a broad question. There will also be short essays that you will complete throughout the semester. Although there are six (6) listed assignments, the grades will only count for four (4) of these brief essays. The exams will use the ProctorU online examination

service. You can get acquainted with the system here: <https://support.proctoru.com/hc/en-us/categories/115001818507>

Finally, you will answer a brief, five-question quiz at the end of each module. You will have 15 minutes to complete these quizzes, so please plan accordingly. Also note that since notice of all exam, quiz, and paper deadlines are given well in advance, there will be no make-ups given for travel reservations or non-emergency situations. Be sure to consult the guidelines for discussion groups as well as those for the individual essays. Adhering to the policies outlined in those documents will be important to your success in the course. These documents are available in the Start Here page on the Canvas course website. If you have any problems, please let me know. But when in doubt consult the Start Here page and this syllabus first! Please note that the grades are weighted towards the end of the semester; this is designed to reward improvement over the course of the semester. Also keep in mind that improvement over the course of the semester is important. Determination of the final grade in the course, the scale, and the value of grades will all be subject to the following formula:

Component	Point Value
Quizzes (15 x 5)	75
Discussion Posts (15 x 4)	60
Midterm	50
Brief Essays	40
Final Exam	60
Zoom Discussions (7—5%)	15
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>300</b>

Grading Scale	Grade Value
100-93=A	A=4.0
92-90=A-	A-=3.67
89-87=B+	B+=3.33
86-82=B	B=3.00
82-80=B-	B-=2.67
79-76=C+	C+=2.33
75-72=C	C=2.00
71-69=C-	C-=1.67
68-66=D+	D+=1.33
65-62=D	D=1.00
61-60=D-	D-=0.67
59-0=E	E=0.00

## Writing Requirement

For the Writing Requirement, students' mastery of Content, Communication, and Critical Thinking will be assessed through their performance on two formal essays and four brief essays:

Brief essays (4): The brief essays will be 500 words and will ask you to demonstrate your ability to analyze a specific question relating to the content of that week's readings and lecture. Due dates are indicated in the calendar below.

Relevant SLOs here include: CONTENT, CRITICAL THINKING, and COMMUNICATION.

All writing assignments should conform to the Chicago Manual of Style:

<https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html>.

On all essays the instructor will evaluate and provide feedback with respect to grammar, punctuation, clarity, coherence, and organization, using the following rubric. This feedback will be provided within two weeks of turning in your assigned work.

## Rubric For Writing Assignments

Component	A Level Work	B Level Work	C Level Work	D Level Work	Failing Work
THESIS	Easily identifiable, plausible, sophisticated, insightful, crystal clear.	Promising, but may be slightly unclear, or lacking insight or originality.	Unclear (contains vague terms), appears to not answer the question.	Difficult to identify and may blend restatement of obvious point.	Has no identifiable thesis. Shows obviously minimal lack of effort or comprehension of the assignment.
STRUCTURE	Evident, understandable, appropriate for thesis. Excellent transitions from point to point.	Generally clear and appropriate, though may wander occasionally.	Generally unclear, often wanders or jumps around.	Unclear, often because thesis is weak or not there. Transitions confusing and unclear.	No evidence structure or organization.
USE OF EVIDENCE	Primary and secondary source information incorporated to buttress every point. Examples support thesis and fit within paragraph. Good integration of quoted material into sentences.	Examples used to support most points. Some evidence does not support point or may appear where inappropriate. Quotations are integrated well into sentences.	Examples support some points. Quotations may be poorly integrated into sentences. There may not be a clear point.	Very few or weak examples and factual information. General failure to support statements, or evidence seems to support no particular point.	No attempt has been made to incorporate factual information or interpret primary and secondary sources.

MECHANICS	Language is clearly organized. Correct word usage, punctuation, sentence structure, and grammar; correct citation of sources; minimal to no spelling errors.	Sentence structure and grammar strong despite occasional lapses; punctuation and citation style often used correctly. Some spelling errors and at least one run-on sentence, sentence fragment, or comma splice.	Minor problems in sentence structure and grammar. Multiple errors in punctuation, citation style, and spelling. May have several (two to five) run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and comma splices.	Huge problems in sentence structure and frequent major errors in citation style, punctuation, and spelling. May have many (more than five) run-on sentences, sentence fragments, and comma splices.	Very difficult to understand owing to major problems in mechanics.
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## Civic Literacy

This class will adhere to the National Research Council’s classification of history as a social science and provide you with an introduction to the social and behavioral sciences. Consequently, we will employ paradigms, terminology, and methodologies used by social scientists—including both quantitative and qualitative methods. The lectures and discussions will focus on American politics and society and the relationships among individuals within our political and social systems. The required textbooks in this class will demonstrate the techniques by which historians in particular research and write about society. Through the required weekly reading and in discussion sections, you will learn to question and evaluate historical sources and evidence and, in the process, become informed thinkers and critical readers.

Your successful completion of AMH2010 with a grade of “C” or higher will count towards UF’s General Education State Core in Social Science (S). It will also count towards the State of Florida’s Civic Literacy requirement.

## Scheduled Zoom Discussions

This course is designed to allow you to complete work asynchronously online and on your own time (within the framework of the course schedule). However, to meet the state legislature's Civics Literacy requirement, scheduled Zoom discussion sections have been incorporated into the class. The discussions will be focused on applying our course content to the present. You will be required to attend 7 discussion meetings over the course of the semester (about every 2 weeks), and you will have a choice of 2 different times in each week that a discussion will be scheduled. Attendance and participation in these Zoom discussions will contribute 5% of your overall course grade. You will receive an update about dates & times and how to prepare for these discussions.

## Course Assistance, Academic Honesty, and Student Resources

U Matter, We Care Your well-being is important to the University of Florida. The U Matter, We Care initiative is committed to creating a culture of care on our campus by encouraging members of our

community to look out for one another and to reach out for help if a member of our community is in need. If you or a friend is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu) so that the U Matter, We Care Team can reach out to the student in distress. A nighttime and weekend crisis counselor is available by phone at 352-392-1575. The U Matter, We Care Team can help connect students to the many other helping resources available including, but not limited to, Victim Advocates, Housing staff, and the Counseling and Wellness Center. Please remember that asking for help is a sign of strength. In case of emergency, call 9-1-1.

UF's Writing Studio is a great resource, if you are concerned with your writing skills both in this class and beyond. They will help you meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online at <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/> or in person in 2215 Turlington Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click here (<https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>) to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class, as it constitutes intellectual theft and academic dishonesty. I will give you the guidelines, expectations, and other information regarding the written work in this course, so you really have no reason to cheat. Any possible rewards derived from plagiarism simply don't justify the risk! Instances of suspected plagiarism will be handled in accordance with the Student Honor Code process and give the link <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-honor-code/>

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Conduct Code.](#)

### **Course Evaluation**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **Module Schedule**

This schedule of the modules should help you track your progress as the semester progresses. The expectation is that you complete the work during the date range of the module, but each one will open as soon as the previous one is closed. Please consult the Canvas site for more specific information about the readings and assignments for each module.

Introduction, Start Here (August 22-23)

Module 1: First Contacts (August 26-30)

Module 2: Early Colonization and Resistance in North America (September 2-6)

Module 3: The American Colonies (September 9-13)

Module 4: Colonial Life (September 16-20)

Module 5: The British Empire in Crisis (September 23-27)

Module 6: Resistance to Revolution (September 30-October 4)

Module 7: Challenges to the Republic (October 7-11)

Module 8: The New Nation at Work (October 7-11)

Midterm Exam Week (October 14-18)

Module 9: American Slavery (October 21-25)

Module 10: American Politics in Crisis (October 28-November 1)

Module 11: Why Secession? (November 4-8)

Module 12: Civil War (November 11-15)

Module 13: From War to Revolution? (November 18-22)

Module 14: The Many Meanings of Emancipation (November 25-29)

Module 15: The Problem of Reconstruction (December 2-6)

Final Exam Week (December 7-13)