

HIST 240

**US History through 1865**  
**HIST 240, Section 003**  
**Professor Andrew McMichael**  
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<http://ecourses.wku.edu/>

Welcome to “History of the United States through 1865.” Two things will occur this semester. First, we will follow the progress of American history from the pre-Columbian period up through Reconstruction. For many of you this will be the first time you have done this since your junior year of high school, if not earlier. Second, we will learn about the craft of history. That is, this class will also focus on the way in which historians work. How do historians tell their stories through narrative? How do they analyze documents? When documents have differing interpretations, how do historians deal with that? You will learn this over the course of the semester, and hopefully become quite proficient at dealing with these problems. It will help to think of yourself in the way that historians do—as a detective. As detective begins with a problem and uses evidence to solve it. Historians do the same. This means that you will do a great deal of what historians do—read, write, and discuss history from a number of angles, using primary and secondary sources, lectures, discussions, analysis, &c. Make no mistake about it, this course will be difficult in terms of the work load and expectations. What I expect from you is effort, and what you will get from me is fairness. So, you can definitely get an “A” or a “B,” but you will have to work for it.

**READINGS:**

- Roark, Jim *The American Promise: A History of the United States, Volume I: To 1877* (Bedford, ISBN 0312394195)
- Edward Countryman, *How Did American Slavery Begin* (Bedford, ISBN 0312182619)
- Horowitz, *Attitudes Towards Sex in Antebellum America* (Bedford, ISBN 0312412266)
- W.J. Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic* (Oxford University Press, ISBN 0195029909)
- Rampolla, Mary Lynn, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*, 4th Edition (Bedford)
- Various Articles found on Blackboard site

**GRADE BREAKDOWN:**

Map Quiz—10%  
Midterm—20%  
Final—25%  
Three Papers—15% each

**MAP QUIZ**

The map quiz on the Tuesday of the third week will be a blank map in which you will fill in the all the states and their capitols.

### **MIDTERM AND FINAL:**

The take-home essay midterm and final will be based on readings, lectures, and discussion. All written work must be submitted to Blackboard by the beginning of the class period in which it is due.

### **PAPERS:**

You will write three short papers based on the readings and handouts. I will post the questions on Blackboard two weeks prior to their due date. All written work must be submitted to Blackboard by the beginning of the class period in which it is due.

### **ATTENDANCE:**

Attendance in this class is mandatory and I will take attendance each day. You are allowed four absences—excused or unexcused—over the course of the semester. At the fifth absence you will receive an “F” for the class. There are no exceptions to this policy, so please use your absences wisely.

### **LATE WORK, MAKE-UPS, ETC.:**

I allow late work to be turned in only in the case of *prior* consultation, and even then only in cases of *serious personal emergency*—ie. **not if your friends, aunts, uncles, cousins, or grandparents start dying**. Contact can be face-to-face, via e-mail, or by phone to my office, but must be **before** the work is due. Late papers will lose one full grade for each day they are late, Saturdays and Sundays included.

### **PLAGIARISM:**

Plagiarism consists of turning in work that is not your own. That can be anything from quoting material in a paper and not crediting the original author through a footnote, to copying from the textbook or another book, to pasting in the text from web pages or some Internet paper mill. The consequences for plagiarism in this course are simple: If you plagiarize, ***you will receive an “F” for the course and a letter reporting your conduct will be sent to your college dean recommending appropriate disciplinary action.*** No exceptions. There is an online guide, and I will discuss plagiarism before the first paper is due. If you remain unsure about what constitutes plagiarism it is your responsibility to clarify it with me prior to handing in a paper.

### **HOW TO ANNOY ME**

Two sometime occurrences annoy me to no end—lateness and cell phones. Nothing bothers me more than to have students come in after the beginning of class, or during a lecture, discussion, or film. At the same time, that annoying cell phone ring that comes right in the middle of some while a student or I are talking in class is rude and disrespectful not only to the speaker, but also to other students. Get here on time, and turn your cell phones off.

**Other than that, you will find that I am remarkably easy to get along with. I am not what I consider an easy grader, but I also have no hesitancy when it comes to handing out “A’s.” U.S. History can be a difficult subject, and this class will be an intellectual exercise during which you will be responsible for the readings, participating actively, and working hard to help educate yourself. There is a**

**substantial amount of reading each week and there is much to absorb. You will need to do all the reading in order to keep pace with the discussions and lectures. If you find yourself falling behind, please see me so I can help you with some reading strategies.**

## WEEKLY BUSINESS

Week 1 (Aug 25 – 29)—Introductions and “Three Old Worlds”

Readings: Roark Chapter 1

Week 2 (Sep 1 – 5)—Three Old Worlds, Continued

Readings: Roark Chapter 2

**Paper #1 Due Thursday**

Week 3 (Sep 8 – 12)—Settling In

Readings: Roark Chapter 4

**Map Quiz Tuesday**

Week 4 (Sep 15 – 19)—Installing Slavery

Readings: Roark Chapter 3; Countryman, *How Did American Slavery Begin?*

Week 5 (Sep 22 – 26)—Everyday Life in Colonial America

Readings: None

Week 6 (Sep 29 – Oct 3 **Fall Break, No Class Thursday!!**)—Colonial Society Changes

Readings: Roark Chapter 5

Week 7 (Oct 6 – 10)—Toward Revolution

Readings: Roark Chapter 6

Week 8 (Oct 13 – 17)—The American Revolution

Readings: Roark Chapters 7 & 8

**Midterm Due Thursday**

Week 9 (Oct 20 – 24)—The Early Republic

Readings: Roark Chapter 10; Rorabaugh, *The Alcoholic Republic*

Week 10 (Oct 27 – 31)—The Borderlands & Frontier

Readings: none

**Paper #2 Due Thursday**

Week 11 (Nov 3 – 7 **No Class Tuesday—Go Vote!**)—Transportation, Cities, Politics

Readings: Roark Chapters 11 – 12

Week 12 (Nov 10 – 14)—Everyday Life in Antebellum America

Readings: Horowitz, *Attitudes Towards Sex in Antebellum America*

Week 13 (Nov 17 – 21)—Receding South and Slavery

Readings: Roark Chapter 13

**Paper #3 Due Thursday**

Week 14 (Nov 25 – 27 **No Class Thursday**)—Sectionalism and the Impending Conflict

Readings: Roark Chapter 14

Week 15 (Dec 1 – 5)—The Civil War

Readings: Roark Chapter 15

**FINAL EXAM DUE: On Blackboard, Wednesday December 10, 2008 at 12:00 noon.**