

**RARITAN VALLEY COMMUNITY COLLEGE
ACADEMIC COURSE OUTLINE**

HIST – 201 H UNITED STATES HISTORY: BEGINNINGS TO 1877 (HONORS)

I. Basic Course Information

- A. Course Number and Title: **HIST-201H United States History:
Beginnings to 1877 -Honors**
- B. New or Modified Course: **Modified version of existing non-honors course**
- C. Date of Proposal: **Spring, 2009**
- D. Sponsoring Department: **Humanities, Social Sciences & Education**
- E. Semester Credit Hours: **3**
- F. Weekly Contact Hours: Lecture: **3**
 Laboratory **0**
- G. Prerequisites: **GPA of 3.5 or permission of instructor**
- H. Laboratory Fees: **None**
- I. Name and Telephone Number or E-Mail Address of Department Chair: Kimberly Schirner, x8286, kschirme@raritanval.edu

II. Catalog Description

Prerequisites: GPA of 3.5 or permission of instructor

This class surveys American history beginning with its Pre-Columbian origins. It extends to the colonial period and then to the Atlantic World forces that created revolution. The course continues with the tensions inherent in a nation divided by region and vision for the future. It ends with the climax of conflict that was the Civil War, and the Reconstruction in its wake that left unsettled the issue of civil rights.

This course places US history in the context of global events. In doing so, it examines the complex ways in which the contours of the American experience have been both shaped by global forces and conversely how the United States has influenced the world. Moreover, the course investigates the expansion and contraction of democracy as part

of the longer-term process of global revolutionary movements demanding freedom that began, but not fully realized, with its own revolution.

III. Statement of Course Need

This course provides students with the basic tools for understanding America in the world, and the world in America. In our increasingly globalized environment it is vital to provide historical narratives departing from purely national frameworks. Students will be better equipped to understand their past, present, and future with this more expansive historical perspective.

This course also meets the increasing demand for honors courses due to growing enrollment numbers and desire of college to establish an honors program.

IV. Place of Course in College Curriculum

- A. This course serves as an elective in Humanities for all majors
- B. This course serves as a General Education requirement in History
- C. This course generally transfers as a General Education History course. For New Jersey colleges go to NJ Transfer, www.njtransfer.org, for all other colleges and universities go to their individual websites.

IV. Outline of Course Content

- A. America before America: Pre-Columbian civilizations and cultures
- B. Spain in America
- C. England, France, and the Netherlands in America
- D. British colonial America
- E. Colonial America's place in the Atlantic World
- F. Sectional differences: religious, economic, etc.
- G. American (and Atlantic World) Revolution
- H. Articles of Confederation vs. The Constitution: the 'crisis' of democracy
- I. Federalist Era
- K. Anti-Federalism and peaceful transference of power
- L. Expansion, Indians, and foreign relations
- M. Jacksonian America: a democracy of frontiersman
- N. Immigrants and loss of Indian sovereignty
- O. Manifest Destiny from Mexico to Pacific
- P. Free trade vs. Protectionism: Slavery, and the Civil War
- Q. Reconstruction to the Hayes/Tilden election

VI. Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes

A. General Education Goals

Students will:

1. employ correct terminology in discussions and in written work (RVCC G.E.: 1, 2, 4; NJ G.E.: 1, 2, 8.)
2. interpret texts for discussion and written work (RVCC G.E.: 1, 2; NJ G.E.: 1, 2)
3. use textual evidence to support claims (RVCC G.E.: 1, 2, 3; NJ G.E.: 1, 2, 8)
4. contrast various approaches to the topic in question (RVCC G.E.: 1, 2, 4, 6; NJ G.E.: 1, 2, 6, 8)
5. report on analyses of topic in discussion and in written work (RVCC G.E.: 1, 2; NJ G.E.: 1, 2, 8)
6. identify the political, social, historical, and ethical implications of various texts in relation to the seminar topic (RVCC G.E.: 1, 2, 5, 6; NJ G.E.: 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 9).

B. Learning Outcomes

Student will be able to:

1. compare, contrast, and apply the basic theoretical paradigms as relevant to topic of seminar;
2. synthesize primary and secondary texts;
3. demonstrate basic knowledge of historical, socioeconomic, and political issues regarding the topic;
4. analyze texts as a basis for original thinking and writing.

VII. Modes of Teaching and Learning

- A. lecture
- B. group discussion
- C. text analysis
- C. individual and/or independent and group research

VIII. Papers, Examinations, and other Assessment Instruments

Assessment methods may consist of:

- A. library research
- B. presentation and/or research assignment
- C. midterms and final examination
- D. participation in class discussions and article critiques

IX. Grade Determinants

In order to evaluate achievement of the goals and outcomes listed above, possible grade determinants may be:

- A. examinations
- B. seminar participation
- C. presentation & research project

X. Texts and Materials

Suggested Textbooks

George Tindall & David Shi, *America: a Narrative History*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Walter Lafeber, *The American Age, US Foreign Policy at Home and Abroad (Vol. I)*. New York: W.W. Norton.

Other Readings

Separate readings provided to students around which seminar discussions will be grounded

XI. Resources:

Library resources, library instruction, technology support, audio/visual equipment, CATT room for classroom instruction

XII. Honors Course

Definition: This course conforms with the definition of an Honors Course because it enriches and challenges students beyond the regular scope curriculum of a Humanities class. The seminar requires a research paper sourced in assigned and/or peer-reviewed readings going beyond those assigned in the regular class. Moreover, it necessitates weekly writing on assigned readings in a seminar format closely aligned with a graduate course in structure.

A. Educational Goals and Learning Outcomes

The educational goals and learning outcomes are the same as in section VI above. However, student learning will be leveraged upward through contact with research professors; this will provide an enhanced and unique learning opportunity than would be offered by a non-honors course. Students will be able to better critically engage arguments and texts through intensive seminar work beyond level of regular coursework.

B. Honors Content

1. Reading: distinctive content, as opposed to only textbooks. Materials developed by research professors in their particular areas of specialization.
2. Writing: weekly assignments on assigned readings, and a research paper.
3. Students will discuss readings and concepts with faculty using contextual evidence to support claims.

C. Assessment Instruments for Honors Work

Students will be assessed based on:

1. In-class participation in discussions on course readings in advanced seminar format requiring intensive investigation of historical questions
2. Content, depth and clarity of papers and other writing assignments beyond scope of normal classes
3. Performance on exams

D. Grade Determinants for Honors Work

1. Student participation in classroom discussions
2. Weekly writing assignments
3. Final research paper, potentially of publishable or presentation quality
4. Exams