

# HIST 2111-J (Spring 2017)

MW 9:30-10:45 Russell 109

Gordon State College

**I. Course Title:** HIST 2111 American History to 1865

**II. Instructor:** Dr. J. Franklin Williamson

*Contact Info:* Russell Hall, Room 103C

678-359-5859

[fwilliamson@gordonstate.edu](mailto:fwilliamson@gordonstate.edu)

*Office Hours:* T 12:30p-2:00p,

W 11:00a-3:00p,

R 12:30p-2:00p,

F 9:00a-11:00a,

And by appointment

### III. Description:

In this course, we will explore the history of major events, people, ideas, concepts, beliefs and practices that have together defined the history of the United States of America, from the time before 1492, to the period after the Civil War. Taking this course will provide you with a variety of benefits, the most immediate of which will be the satisfaction of three credit hours of your Area E requirements, while also meeting the “US Perspectives Learning Goal” in the process. However, beyond checking boxes for graduation, this course will also introduce you to some of the basic tools of the historical profession, as well as help you hone skills that will be essential in your professional careers after college, no matter what major field of study you pursue.

Contemporary American political-, social-, and even cultural leaders commonly argue that one or another facet of our lives in 2016 are (or are not) in tune with the longer tradition of “American History.” While it is easy to overstate similarities or differences between the present and the past, the job of historians is to identify these changes and continuities as precisely and objectively as possible. To be sure, the tradition of “American History” can itself be a problematic standard against which to measure the present and the boundaries of the “America” can be difficult to reduce to a few words. At the same time, the influence of the United States on the rest of the world’s history, for better or for worse, is crucial for understanding the modern era.

In general, we could think of the history of “American History” as a *history of ideas* (such as “equality” and “freedom”) that help explain the U.S. as it is today. Conversely, we could also understand this history as a *story of choices made and actions taken*, sometimes harmoniously with these ideals but sometimes in clear contradiction of them, that similarly explains the way the country and its people appear at present. As we move through the semester, we will try to find examples of both of these characterizations and figure out which ideas or actions were most decisive in explaining the present day.

Besides learning lots of “stuff” about history, this class will also help you to practice thinking historically. Everything has a history, so thinking historically means learning to approach a problem or event in the past (or the present day!) from a variety of perspectives, with attention to the short-term and long-term contexts and consequences, to see what degree of continuity or change has taken place over time. When we look at historical actors’ choices we can also try to determine whether they made decisions based on the limitations of their own structural circumstances, whether they sought to exercise their own free agency to control their own destiny, or maybe some combination of the two. Thinking historically also means looking for evidence and analyzing that evidence into an interpretation that explains the past events in question.

Finally this class will help you improve your ability to think critically and write clearly and effectively. You will have the opportunity to read, evaluate and then discuss a variety of primary sources from different historical eras. Additionally you will hone your critical thinking skills through writing several short papers, in which you will practice identifying and interpreting historical evidence, eventually deploying that evidence to mount an argument in favor of your interpretation of a discrete historical question.

These separate dimensions of the course all reinforce each other and, by building up your skills in one area, you will be able to improve other areas more easily. Ultimately, I hope that, by the end of the course, you will be able to say that you *know* some facts, that you *understand* those facts’ relationship to each other, and that you can *think* of a way to make an argument using these elements together.

#### IV. Readings:

There are two textbooks for this course, one required and the other one optional.

- **Required:** Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History*, Fourth Edition. VOLUME I (2014). ISBN: [978-0-393-92291](#).
- **Optional:** Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty: An American History*, Brief Fourth Edition. VOLUME I (2014). ISBN: [978-0-393-92032](#).

If you would like to purchase a textbook to help as a study aid or to use as a back-up in case your lecture notes are lacking, you will probably have better luck looking on Amazon.com or other online outlets rather than the College bookstore. In any case, if you do purchase a textbook, make sure to get the volume that covers the early history of the United States.)

In addition to the required primary document reader above, I may also assign additional readings that will be posted on our course’s D2L webpage. (I will give you more information in class if I decide to do this.)

In all cases, however, I will expect you to read the assigned materials BEFORE class on the day for which they are assigned (those days marked “Discussion” in the schedule). You also need to BRING the discussion materials (i.e. the textbook) WITH YOU TO CLASS on the day they are assigned.

Although not assigned, I highly encourage you to also keep up with current events and national and international news. While you may only have time to watch a few minutes of *CNN* or *Fox News* over your breakfast cereal, you should also try to expose yourself to more sophisticated, elite sources of information such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*,

and *The Wall Street Journal*, since you are on your way to becoming a member of the educated class of professionals and leaders. If you are stuck in traffic much of the day, try listening to NPR or BBC programming (over the airwaves or via podcast). Again, current events knowledge is not a requirement to be successful in this course but it may help you make sense of the “big picture” and why our subject matter is important.

#### **V. Assignments:**

*Papers:* You will write two (2) short papers (3-4pp each), interpreting primary and secondary documents to write a thesis-driven essay in response to an assigned prompt. These two papers will each be worth 16% of your course grade (for a total of 32% of your grade).

Papers handed in late will face deductions and plagiarism will not be tolerated.

*Exams:* You will complete three (3) exams, comprised of some combination of multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, ID, as well as essay questions, testing comprehension of the key terms but also larger topics presented in lectures and in the readings. The first and second exams will each be worth 16% of your course grade but the third exam (which will serve as the “Final Exam”) will be worth 20% (for a total of 52% of your grade).

*Reading Quizzes:* I will give you five (5) open-book quizzes over the assigned readings, administered via the course D2L webpage. At the end of the semester, I will drop the lowest quiz grade, and each of the remaining quizzes will count as 2% of your course grade (for a total of 8% of your course grade). Please note that there will be no make-ups in the event you do not complete one of the quizzes.

*Class Attendance and Participation:* You are expected to attend every class meeting. However, I will not take attendance on every day. If you think you need to miss a lecture for some reason, that is your decision to make. Keep in mind, however, that there is no textbook for this class and, hence, no source you can go to directly to find out exactly what I taught on any particular day. So if you miss a lecture, you are on your own to try to fill in your notes as best you can using a textbook (if you purchase one), the lecture outlines, and by asking your neighbors.

On those five days (designated in the schedule) when we meet for class discussion, your attendance is mandatory and I WILL take attendance on these days. Besides attendance at class discussions, I will also evaluate your level of preparation for class (i.e. whether you have read the assigned material or completed the assigned work before class), as well as your level of active participation in that day’s lesson. That is, just coming to class will not get you all the points you need.

At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest individual class discussion grade, and the remaining four discussion grades will be averaged together to count for your Attendance and Participation Grade (for a total of 8% of your overall course grade.)

Since this element of your grade is so important (indeed, you cannot earn an “A” without it), I will also take into consideration whether you ask questions or otherwise demonstrate your engagement with my lessons on days when we are not holding a formal discussion. So don’t be afraid to speak up and ask a question -- you will be rewarded for doing so!

By the way, if you miss a class discussion, there will be no make-up class offered. And if you come to class discussion without copies of the readings, or without having read them, I may ask you to leave class for that day.

**VI. Key Dates:**

*Monday, March 6, 2017* is the last day you can drop this class without receiving an automatic WF. If you decide that you have missed too many classes and therefore too much material to make up, it is your responsibility to follow the [College's official drop policy](#).

*Monday, May 8, 2017* is the date of the Final Exam for **HIST 2111-J (MW 9:30)**. This exam will take place from 10:15am until 12:15pm.

**VII. E-mail Policy:**

E-mail is, by far, the best way to get in touch with me for any reason. This is because I have five classes to teach and sometimes I do not have the luxury of hanging around before or after class to answer questions. Although we are using D2L for this class, please do NOT use the "E-mail" feature embedded in D2L. I will not respond to this e-mail address! And I do not expect you to, either!

Instead, always use [fwilliamson@gordonstate.edu](mailto:fwilliamson@gordonstate.edu) to contact me, as I check it multiple times across the day. Having said that, please allow me 24 hours to respond to you before sending me your question again (since I am actually in the classroom for much of the day). You are also expected to regularly check your @gordonstate.edu e-mail address, since this is the only way I have of sending you important information and announcements.

When you have a question you want to ask via e-mail, always check the syllabus for the answer before you click "send." This is because most of the administrative or organizational questions students ask are already answered by the material in the syllabus. In fact, I may respond to your question about when is the midterm by saying, "check the syllabus."

When you have a question that the syllabus does not answer, or a more specific, individual question, please take the time to observe the proper conventions of professional correspondence. That is, address your subject ("Hello Dr. Williamson"), identify yourself and which class you are in ("this is John Doe from your Monday 8:00am HIST 2111 class"), then proceed to ask your question ("I am having trouble with the paper. Could we set up an appointment to go over some things?"). Finally, always end with a proper valediction and your name ("Thanks, John"). This may sound silly but, I guarantee, when you are writing a memo or professional e-mail to your supervisor one day, you will appreciate knowing how to make it sound more sophisticated than a text message. (And your boss will appreciate it, too!)

**VIII. Grades policy:**

I am happy to talk to you individually about your grades after I have returned assignments to you, and I encourage you to e-mail me or come to office hours to chat. However, after any graded work is returned to you, I ask that you wait 24 hours before contacting me with questions or concerns. Furthermore, I also need you to understand that grading is a painstakingly careful and methodical process for me, one that takes time but also ensures all students' work is evaluated fairly. Therefore, I will not entertain requests to re-grade individual assignments – once I return them to you, grades are final.

In order to more discerningly and precisely evaluate students' work, I rely on a "plus/minus" system of grading assignments submitted for this class. You will see a breakdown of the numeric equivalents of each grade I use below. Please note, however, that Gordon State

College only recognizes whole letter grades (i.e. no plusses or minuses) as records of students' final course grades. For example, if one essay is graded as an 81 and another graded as an 84, these two essays would receive different letter grades in this class. However, if one student's final course grade is an 81 and another's is an 84, both students would receive a grade of "B" for the class.

My in-class Grading Scale:	A	≥ 93
	A-	≥ 90
	B+	≥ 87
	B	≥ 83
	B-	≥ 80
	C+	≥ 77
	C	≥ 73
	C-	≥ 70
	D+	≥ 67
	D	≥ 60
	F	≥ 60

Gordon State College's Grading Scale (for final course grades):

A	≥90
B	≥80
C	≥70
D	≥60
F	≤59

Any assignments not turned in on time will be subject to a penalty of 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are late. For example, a "B" quality paper turned in two days late would receive a grade of "C+." *You should not read this as permission to wantonly submit your work late.* These penalties accrue into significant losses in points very quickly, meaning that it is in your best interest to turn papers in on time. Having said that, some points are always better than no points, so a late paper is usually better than no paper. In any event, if you know you will have to turn in an assignment late, please contact me as far in advance of the deadline as possible, so that I will know you are still working and planning to submit the assignment.

While we are on the subject of graded work, I should point out that I expect all students to abide by the Gordon State College policy on Academic Honesty, [found in the Academic Catalog](#). Officially, academic dishonesty "includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole, or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such act." In a nutshell, this means that all assignments completed and submitted by a student **must consist solely of that individual student's own, original work**. This means you are **not permitted to plagiarize material** in papers you write for this class, you are **not permitted to assist others in answering questions on quizzes or exams** administered in this class, and you are **not permitted to use unauthorized or otherwise prohibited notes or aids** when completing such quizzes or exams yourself.

By taking this course, you agree that all required papers may be subject to submission of textual similarity review to Turnitin.com. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in other papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site [http://turnitin.com/en\\_us/about-us/privacy](http://turnitin.com/en_us/about-us/privacy). According to the

Family Compliance Office of the U.S. Department of Education, your papers are education records within the meaning of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>). Education records may not be disclosed to third parties in a form that identifies you without your consent. Since Turnitin.com is a third party, you must choose one of the two ways below (not both) to submit papers to Turnitin.com in order to comply with FERPA:

a. YOU CONSENT TO DISCLOSE PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION

TURNITIN.COM: You may consent to release your personal identification to Turnitin.com by simply uploading your paper to the D2L Dropbox for this course, which will automatically submit your paper to TII's plagiarism checker.

OR

b. YOU DO NOT CONSENT TO DISCLOSE PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION TO TRUNITIN.COM: If you choose not to consent to release your personal identification to Turnitin.com, you must send your paper to your instructor by email as an electronic attachment that can be opened by Microsoft Word, by the deadline given on the syllabus. Your identifying information will be removed and the paper uploaded to Turnitin.com for you.

Your paper will be processed by Turnitin.com whichever option you choose. The different options simply determine how the paper is submitted to Turnitin.com and whether the paper has your name on it. Please note that in Turnitin.com there is a "test upload" assignment area for your paper. Because test uploads are not required or graded, and need not be a sample of your own work, they are not "education records." Also note that, if you upload an early draft of your paper to the test upload assignment, and then upload the final assignment, the final originality report will show that a substantial part of your paper is identical to your draft. That is expected.

You can read more about Turnitin.com here: <http://www.turnitin.com>

As you can tell by now, I take academic honesty very seriously. Yet I also want to help you develop your skills at analysis, critical thinking, and writing. So when you are working on your papers, if you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, [here is an excellent tutorial](#) from the UNC-Chapel Hill Writing Center, as well as [another very helpful guide](#) from the Perdue University Online Writing Lab. Also please note that [Gordon State College's Writing Center](#) also offers a variety of services in helping students develop their own work, so do take advantage of these resources, too. Of course, if you encounter a problem or question while preparing your papers, you can also [contact me](#) and I will help you find an answer.

By the way, any student found to have committed academic dishonesty will face one of the four possible sanctions outlined in the Academic Catalog, as best warrants each individual case:

- 1.) "a grade of F for the assignment and/or require remedial action by the student"
- 2.) "a grade of 0 for the assignment and/or require remedial action by the student"
- 3.) "a failing grade in the course"
- 4.) "refer the matter to the Dean of the Faculty"

Once again, if at any time you are unsure of what is permitted or not permitted, please don't hesitate to ask me!

**IX. Title IX:**

Gordon State College is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that you are not alone. All faculty members at Gordon State College are mandated reporters. Any student reporting any type of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence or stalking must be made aware that any report made to a faculty member under the provisions of Title IX will be reported to the Title IX Coordinator or a Title IX Deputy Coordinator. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, you must contact the Counseling and Accessibility Services office, Room 212, Student Life Center. The licensed counselors in the Counseling Office are able to provide confidential support.

Gordon State College does not discriminate against any student on the basis of pregnancy, parenting or related conditions. Students seeking accommodations on the basis of pregnancy, parenting or related conditions should contact Counseling and Accessibility Services regarding the process of documenting pregnancy related issues and being approved for accommodations, including pregnancy related absences as defined under Title IX.

**X. ADA and 504:**

If you have a documented disability as described by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, you may be eligible to receive accommodations to assist in programmatic and/or physical accessibility. The Counseling and Accessibility Services office located in the Student Center, Room 212 can assist you in formulating a reasonable accommodation plan and in providing support in developing appropriate accommodations to ensure equal access to all GSC programs and facilities. Course requirements will not be waived, but accommodations may assist you in meeting the requirements. For documentation requirements and for additional information, contact Counseling and Accessibility Services at 678-359-5585.

**XI. Courtesy policy:**

When coming and going to class, please be courteous to me and to your classmates. Please be on-time and arrive early enough to finish unpacking before class begins. If you need to leave early, please plan ahead and sit near the door so that your exit will not disturb the rest of your peers who are listening and taking notes.

I realize that it is 2016 and most people carry a cell phone with them everywhere they go (especially people in the 18-25 year-old demographic!) but I am certain that you can manage to ignore your phone for 120 minutes. After all, humans lived for millennia without Facebook and ESPN! All phones need to be turned off or at least silenced during class, as well as stored away in your book bag, purse, or pocket. If you violate this policy, I may ask you to leave class for the day.

I highly encourage you to bring your laptop with you to class in order to take notes. However, should you choose to bring your laptop, you need to refrain from checking e-mail, using social media, shopping for clothes, checking sports scores, or otherwise distracting yourself and others around you. If I do notice that you are texting, messaging, shopping, or doing anything else not related to class on your laptop, I reserve the right to prohibit you from bringing your laptop to class. I may also ask you to leave class for the day. (The same goes for doing homework for another class in my class or simply talking to your neighbors while another

student or I am talking to the class – these are all unprofessional behaviors that unfairly interrupt your classmates’ learning experience and engaging in them will result with me asking you to leave.)

In the past, some students have asked if they may be allowed to record my lectures in order to play them back at home and take more accurate notes. You must speak with my individually and you must have my express written consent to recording if you would like to do this. Otherwise you may not make recordings of my classes. If you violate this policy, I may ask you to leave class for the day.

## **XII. Schedule (Subject to change):**

WEEK 1      Wed 1/11:      Introduction to the course

**Reading:**

Course syllabus

WEEK 2      Mon 1/16:      No class (MLK Holiday)

Wed 1/18:      Lecture 1. America before 1492 and the Spanish Conquest

**Reading (in Voices):**

3. *Bartolomé de las Casas on Spanish Treatment of the Indians*,  
from *History of the Indies* (1528),

4. *Pueblo Revolt* (1680)

WEEK 3      Mon 1/23:      Lecture 2. French and Dutch Colonial Competition

**Reading (in Voices):**

5. *Father Jean de Brébeuf on the Customs and Beliefs of the Hurons* (1635),

6. *Jewish Petition to the Dutch West India Company* (1655)

Wed 1/25:      Paper-writing workshop

**Quiz #1 (available via D2L) is due no later than 11:59pm on Friday, 1/27**

WEEK 4      Mon 1/30:      Lecture 3. Jamestown, Plymouth, Massachusetts Bay

**Reading (in Voices):**

10. *John Winthrop, Speech to the Massachusetts General Court* (1645),

11. *The Trial of Anne Hutchinson* (1637)

Wed 2/1:      **Discussion 1. “One Nation Under God?”**

(See *Group Assignments and Questions on D2L*)



WEEK 9 Monday, March 6, is the midpoint of the semester.

Mon 3/6: Lecture 10. Constitution

**Reading (in Voices):**

- *U.S. Constitution* (1787; **available on D2L**),
- 33. *Jefferson's Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom* (1779),
- 38. *Benjamin Rush, Thoughts upon Female Education* (1787)

Wed 3/8: TBA

**Quiz #3** (available via D2L) is due no later than 11:59pm on Friday, 3/10

WEEK 10 Mon 3/13: No Class – Spring Break (Have fun and stay safe!)

Wed 3/15: No Class – Spring Break (Remember to finish your paper!)

WEEK 11 Mon 3/20: **Paper #2** due at the beginning of class

Lecture 11. Challenges of the Early Republic

**Reading (in Voices):**

- 43. *Thomas Jefferson on Race and Slavery* (1781),
- 48. *George Washington's Farewell Address* (1796)

Wed 3/22: Lecture 12. Jefferson's "Revolution," War Returns

**Reading (in Voices):**

- 50. *Tecumseh on Indians and Land* (1801),
- 51. *Felix Grundy, Battle Cry of the War Hawks* (1811)

WEEK 12 Mon 3/27: Lecture 13. American Democracy, American Nationalism

**Reading (in Voices):**

- 47. *Judith Sargent Murray, "On the Equality of the Sexes"* (1790),
- Andrew Jackson, Bank Veto Message (1832); **available on D2L**

Wed 3/29: **Discussion 3. "With Liberty and Justice for All?"**  
(See Group Assignments and Questions on D2L)

WEEK 13 Mon 4/3: Lecture 14. Growth of Markets, Growth of Minorities

**Reading (in Voices):**

- 63. *Appeal of the Cherokee Nation* (1830),
- 64. *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens* (1838)

53. *Complaint of a Lowell Factory Worker* (1845),

Wed 4/5: Lecture 15. Conflict over Slavery

**Reading (in Voices):**

68. *Rules of Highland Plantation* (1838),

69. *Slavery and the Bible* (1850),

70. *Letter by a Fugitive Slave* (1840)

**Quiz #4** (available via D2L) is due no later than 11:59pm on Friday, 4/7

WEEK 14 Mon 4/10: Lecture 16. Westward Expansion

**Reading (in Voices):**

79. *John O'Sullivan, Manifest Destiny* (1845),

78. *Declaration of Sentiments of the Seneca Falls Convention* (1848),

Wed 4/12: **Exam 2**

WEEK 15 Mon 4/17: Lecture 17. Secession Crisis

**Reading (in Voices):**

84. *The Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (1858),

85. *South Carolina Ordinances of Secession* (1860)

Wed 4/19: **Discussion 4. "The United States of America?"**  
(See Group Assignments and Questions on D2L)

WEEK 16 Mon 4/24: Lecture 18. Civil War (Part I)

**Reading (in Voices):**

86. *Letter of Thomas F. Drayton* (1861),

88. *Samuel S. Cox Condemns Emancipation* (1862),

90. *Frederick Douglass on Black Soldiers* (1863),

Wed 4/26: Lecture 19. Civil War (Part II)

**Reading:** View the film, *Sherman's March* (instructions in D2L)

**Quiz #5** (available via D2L) is due no later than 11:59pm on Friday, 4/28

WEEK 17 Mon 5/1: **Discussion 5. "One Nation, Indivisible?"**  
(See Group Assignments and Questions on D2L)

Wed 5/3: Lecture 20. Reconstruction

**Reading:** None (*but please be sure to complete the online student evaluations for this course!*)

**Monday, May 8, 2017,** is the date of the **Final Exam,** which will be administered from **10:15am to 12:15pm.**

\*\*\*Study Partner\*\*\*

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE (optional): \_\_\_\_\_