



The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

American Civilization to the Civil War - 39368

Last update 31-08-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: History

Academic year: 0

Semester: 2nd Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Yoav Hamdani

Coordinator Email: yoav.hamdani@gmail.com

Coordinator Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:00-3:30 p.m.

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Yoav Hamdani

Course/Module description:

This class is about the origins of the United States of America, covering the years from 1492 to 1865. We will start when colonists invaded a continent of hundreds of Native nations. We will examine how an unlikely republic formed out of thirteen British provinces and came to dominate the continent's midsection. And we will end with the American Civil War, the war that nearly tore that fast-growing republic in two. Our major themes will include the control of land and people, the evolution of American political and economic institutions, the relationships between religious and social movements, and the link between ideologies of race and gender with larger processes such as enslavement, dispossession, and industrialization. All along, we will keep asking how, why, and what were they thinking? This class is also about the discipline of history, the business we historians call "an argument without end." You will not just be learning standalone "facts," rather, you will learn why scholars ask certain questions, and how we try to answer them. Each lecture introduces a central question that animates historians' research and debates. The readings and paper assignments will also challenge you to do what historians do, that is, read sources and make arguments about the past. My hope is that you leave this course with a greater appreciation of the depth of the American story, and a better understanding of how we study it.

Course/Module aims:

*To develop historical and critical thinking
Understanding North American History as inseparable from Indigenous and African-American History
Understand how historians use textual evidence to construct narratives about the past.*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*Critically evaluate secondary and primary sources through close reading and analysis.
Interpret selections of primary and secondary sources and to construct original arguments from those sources
Evaluate different accounts of the same event and adjudicate between varying interpretations*

of that event.

Synthesize a larger historical narrative through an exam that combine ideas and events

introduced in lectures into coherent analyses.

Attendance requirements(%):

80

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

A detailed syllabus will be on the course website

Themes:

Indigenous History

European Invasions of America

Slavery and Enslavement

Religious, Social, and Cultural History

Racism & Gender

Democratization

The American Revolution

Federalism and the Constitution

Conquest, Dispossession and Territorial Expansion

Industrial and Market Revolutions

The U.S. -Mexico War

The Civil War

Required Reading:

Reading assignments will be on the course website

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Written / Oral / Practical Exam 50 %

Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 30 %

Mid-terms exams 10 %

Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 10 %

Additional information: