

U.S. History to 1877: Focus on People and Places

Last Updated: Thu, 01/01/2026

Course prefix: HIST

Course number: 2111

Section: C

CRN (you may add up to five):

34810

Instructor First Name: Carla

Instructor Last Name: Gerona

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

"U.S. History to 1877: Focus on People and Places" is a high-quality course about American history that teaches you important historical content, while also helping you to hone your critical-thinking skills and develop an appreciation for the historian's craft. More than an unchanging series of important facts, or a commemoration of heroic people and events, history is an art and a science that can shed light on how the world works in a lot of different ways. Early American history is particularly important because it marks a time when American, African, and European peoples first came together, and early Americans developed new forms of government that remain a key framework for us today.

History also happened in particular places, some of which continue to be commemorated as historical parks and museums. This class will focus on this idea of places in history, and we will explore actual historic sites where important events happened.

Course learning outcomes:

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- You will develop important skills including reading, research, communication, geography, and critical thinking**
- You will develop a body of historical knowledge with breadth of time and place—as well as depth of detail.**
- More specifically, you will build historical knowledge as you learn about what happened in America to the end of Reconstruction including:**

1. Learn about Native Americans, Europeans and Africans prior to and following the Columbian Exchange

2. Learn about the motivations for colonization in the seventeenth century and eighteenth centuries and explore the foundations and development of different colonies, including Saint Augustine, New England, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Georgia
3. Learn about the growing tensions that led to the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution: its causes, the fighting, and the results
4. Learn about the way separate states became the United States, creating a Constitution and the First Party System
5. Learn about territorial, industrial, and market expansion in the nineteenth century
6. Learn about the expansion of slavery prior to the Civil War
7. Learn about the Civil War: its causes, the fighting, and the results
8. Learn about the Reconstruction Period and how it ended

- **This course will also introduce you to the historian's craft. The historical record is complicated, contradictory, and incomplete, therefore decoding the past draws on assessing multiple perspectives. Understanding what happened in the past and how it has shaped the present requires the thoughtful synthesis of different historical sources and perspectives.**

Required course materials:

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty* (Brief Volume – Seventh Edition), Volume 1.

Please use the electronic version.

Grading policy:

- Class and review work: 600 points
 - 200 points for review quizzes
 - 200 points for class attendance
 - 200 points for class group work
- Test 1 for Module 1 200 points
- Test 2 for Module 2 200 points
- Test 3 for Module 3 200 points

Grading Policy

A: 900-1000 or more points

B: 800-899

C: 700-799

D: 600-699.

F: 0-599

Completion of all tests is required to pass the course

Attendance policy:

This is an in-person class that values class attendance and participation. Attendance is assumed; however, the point system provides a lot of leeway for students to miss an occasional class if they cannot attend for whatever reason -- including sickness, job interviews, and so on. Additionally, students who have a university excused activity or a note from the Dean of Students may apply for make-up work prior to missing class (for university excused activities) or as soon as possible (after an emergency miss).

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Political Science and U.S. History area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I prepare for my responsibilities as an engaged citizen?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the history of the United States, the history of Georgia, and the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution and the Constitution of Georgia.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Critical Thinking
- Intercultural Competence
- Persuasion

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social or geographic relationships develop, persist or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion