

History 387: Revolutionary America

Fall 2015

Section 1: TR 9:35-10:50, 224 CCC

“Each age writes the history of the past anew with reference to the conditions uppermost in its own time.” —Portage’s own Frederick Jackson Turner, 1891.

“Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere we believe the great state University of Wisconsin should ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth can be found.” —UW Board of Regents, 1894.

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30–4:30, and by appointment

Course Description and Learning Outcomes

History 387 introduces students to the study of North America in the era of the American Revolution (roughly 1763-1800). After completing the course, you will be able to:

- Describe key aspects of the history of revolutionary America
- Identify and interpret primary sources useful for studying revolutionary America
- Explain recent developments in the historiography of revolutionary America

Required Texts

- Fenn, *Pox Americana* (PA), text rental
- Risjord, *Jefferson’s America* (JA), text rental
- Young et al, eds., *Revolutionary Founders* (RF), text rental
- A pocket dictionary (don’t leave home without it!)

Contacting Me

*Helping you learn is the **most important** and **most rewarding** part of my job.*

If you have questions about the course, or want to improve your performance, please either visit me during office hours or contact me by email at <rharper@uwsp.edu> to make an appointment. I receive and reply to email more quickly than phone messages. Please include “History 387” in the subject line.

Assignments and Workload

To succeed in this class, you must attend and participate regularly, complete all assigned reading, and take effective notes on readings, lectures, and class discussions. Absences from class, either physical or mental, will bring down your grade. As with any three-credit course, you should expect to spend **6-9 hours each week** on coursework outside of class. If you spend at least six hours each week on coursework and are worried about your progress, please contact me ASAP to discuss how to improve.

During the semester, you will write two major essays (4-5 double-spaced pages each). At the end of the semester you will also complete a take-home essay exam (4-5 double-spaced pages total). You will also complete in-class assignments, both individually and in small groups. I will collect and grade many of these; others will be “for your eyes only.” During in-class quizzes, you may not consult any books or electronic devices, but you may ALWAYS consult handwritten notes. During the second half of the semester, you and a small group of classmates will organize an in-class discussion of the readings.

History 387 emphasizes group activities both because they will help you do well in the course and because learning to work productively with others is essential for success in any career path you may pursue. To facilitate this collaboration, I will periodically require you to sit in assigned groups. Mixing up the seating will enable you to work with many different classmates over the course of the semester.

Attendance

If you must miss class, please obtain notes from a classmate. You will receive a zero on any quiz or in-class work you miss. To accommodate scheduling conflicts and emergencies, your two lowest in-class work scores will not count toward the final grade. If you must miss many class meetings, please see me ASAP to discuss your options.

Grading

Attendance & participation:	10%
In-class work:	15%
Discussion leading:	10%
Essay #1:	20%
Essay #2:	20%
Final exam:	25%

Students with Disabilities

I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. Any student requesting such accommodation must first meet with UWSP Disability Services staff. That meeting should take place as early in the semester as possible. No accommodation will be granted until I receive and agree to a formal plan approved by Disability Services.

Desire2Learn (D2L)

All course handouts, grades, PowerPoint slides, and other useful information will be posted on our D2L site, available at <<http://www.uwsp.edu/d2l>>.

Academic Integrity

Cases of academic misconduct, including plagiarism, will be formally reported following the policies laid out in UWSP's Student Academic Disciplinary Procedures. Plagiarism consists of submitting work created by someone else as your own. For more information on academic integrity, please ask me or consult the resources at <<http://library.uwsp.edu/Guides/VRD/plagiarism.htm>>. Students found to have committed academic misconduct will receive an F for the course.

Course Outline

Everything in the following course schedule is subject to revision. Any changes will be announced in class and on D2L.

Unit 1: Empires and crises

Thursday, Sept. 3: Talking about a revolution?

Tuesday, Sept. 8: Historians

- Read the syllabus; pick up text rentals & pocket dictionary; log into D2L
- "The Strange Death of Silas Deane"
 - ⇒ What happened to Silas Deane? Why should we care?
- RF, introduction
- JA, preface and "Prelude: the American Landscape in 1760"
 - ⇒ Risjord writes that revolutionary Americans "seemed more concerned with their mutual interests than with their differences." How would the editors of RF respond to that?

Thursday, Sept. 10: Variola Major

- PA, intro. and ch. 1
- Watch excerpt of HBO's *John Adams*: https://youtu.be/TWxDLG9_eOU
- Watch "How we conquered the deadly smallpox virus": <https://youtu.be/yqUFy-t4MIO>
 - ⇒ What factors made smallpox so deadly? What factors limited its deadliness?
 - ⇒ Why, according to Fenn, was smallpox deadlier for Native Americans than Europeans?
 - ⇒ How accurately does the HBO video depict the inoculation of the Adams family?

Tuesday, Sept. 15: Context

- JA chs. 1-2
 - ⇒ Why does Risjord begin *Jefferson's America* with two chapters about the Atlantic world?
 - ⇒ What aspects of these "Atlantic communities" seem most important to the origins of the United States?

Thursday, Sept. 17: Foreshadowing

- JA ch. 3
- RF ch. 1 ("Ebenezer Macintosh")
 - ⇒ Forget that a revolution is coming. How would you describe the protests of the 1760s?
 - ⇒ In what ways does Young's account of these events differ from Risjord's?

Tuesday, Sept. 22: Resisters

- JA ch. 4
- RF ch. 2 OR ch. 3 OR ch. 4 OR ch. 6
 - ⇒ What do the stories of Bigelow, Thompson, Wheatley, and the Radical Caucus add to our understanding of the imperial crisis? What do they leave out?

Unit 2: Independence and War

Thursday, Sept. 24: From Resistance to Revolution

- JA ch. 5
- RF chs. 5 (Paine)

Tuesday, Sept. 29: Rebels

- RF chs. 7-8, 12

Thursday, Oct. 1: Loyalists

- RF chs. 9, 11
- Jasanoff, "Loyalists in the British Empire" (2008), on e-reserves
- Primary sources, TBA, on D2L

Tuesday, Oct. 6: Epidemic and inoculation

- PA chs. 2-3

Thursday, Oct. 8: War, and Variola, go south

- JA ch. 6
- PA ch. 4

Tuesday, Oct. 13: Unsettling the west

- Readings TBA

Unit 3: Society and culture

Thursday, Oct. 15: Who shall rule at home?

- JA chs. 7, 10

Essay #1 due on D2L before class on Oct. 15

Tuesday, Oct. 20: Establishments and dissidents

- RF chs. 10, 18
- Primary sources TBA, on e-reserves

Thursday, Oct. 22: Liberty for... all?

- RF ch. 19
- Sinha, "Black Radicalism in the Age of Revolution" (2007), on e-reserves

Tuesday, Oct. 27: Hopeful housefuls

- Hartigan-O'Connor, "Urban Housefuls," from *The Ties that Buy: Women and Commerce in Revolutionary America*, on e-reserves
- Lyons, "Sex among the Revolutionary Rabble," on e-reserves

Thursday, Oct. 29: A sexual revolution?

- Excerpts from Godbeer, *Sexual Revolution in Early America*, on e-reserves
- Excerpts from Block, *Rape and Sexual Power in Early America*, on e-reserves

Tuesday, Nov. 3: Rights of Women

- RF chs. 16-17
- Crane, "The Revolution was hardly Radical for Women," (1998), on e-reserves
- Adams letters, on e-reserves
- Judith Sargent Murray, "On the Equality of the Sexes,"
<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/women/murray/equality/equality.html>

Unit 4: The Continent

Thursday, Nov. 5: The Gulf Coast

- Excerpts from Duval, *Independence Lost*, on e-reserves
- Supplementary readings TBA

Tuesday, Nov. 10: the Southwest

- Read PA ch. 5
- Supplementary readings TBA

Thursday, Nov. 12: The north country

- Read PA ch. 6
- Murphy, "Creole Communities," in *A Gathering of Rivers*, on e-reserves

Tuesday, Nov. 17: The plains

- Read PA ch. 7
- Hamalainen, "New Order," in *Comanche Empire*
- Recommended: White, "The Winning of the West," on e-reserves, and Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land*

Thursday, Nov. 19: The northwest

- Read PA ch. 8

Tuesday, Nov. 24: Empires

Essay #2 due on D2L before class on Nov. 24.

Thursday, Nov. 26: give thanks

Unit 5: Constitutions

Tuesday, Dec. 1: A critical period?

- JA ch. 8
- RF ch. 13

Thursday, Dec. 3: Constitutions

- JA ch. 9
- Excerpts from Holton, *Unruly Americans*, on e-reserves
- Excerpts from Philadelphia convention debates, TBA

Tuesday, Dec. 8: Yes or no?

- RF ch. 15
- Primary sources from ratification debates, TBA
- The Bill of Rights,
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/bill_of_rights_transcript.html

Thursday, Dec. 10: Founders and factions

- JA ch. 11
- RF ch. 14

Tuesday, Dec. 15: Freeing the press?

- JA ch. 12
- RF chs. 21-22
- Primary sources TBA

Final Exam Period: Friday, Dec. 19, 12:30-2:30 pm