

## **History 3060 Early America Syllabus / Prof. Hoffer / Maymester 2008**

This short semester we will survey together early American history from the pre-contact period through the Revolution. In lectures I will provide a chronological account of the encounter of diverse peoples, the development of colonial institutions, and the movement toward American independence. The readings correspond to the lectures. In our discussions we will link topical themes to chronological narrative. I can be reached at [pchoffer@uga.edu](mailto:pchoffer@uga.edu), 542-2519, or after class in my office, 317 LeConte.

Grades will be based on short quizzes at the end of ten of our fifteen sessions and a final essay question examination. Informed and regular participation in class discussion can raise a borderline grade, and, of course, you cannot take the quiz if you are not in class.

The books required for the course are: Hoffer, The Brave New World: A History of Early America, second edition (don't buy the first edition!) and Kupperman, comp., Major Problems in American Colonial History, second edition. Both are paperbacks and can be purchased at the university bookstore.

The readings will be heavy—some fifty or so pages a day—so here are some hints to ease your burden for reading. Hoffer's Brave New World is a textbook, heavy on detail and wide in scope. But it has a theme or thesis that it is trying to prove, which makes it a little different from most textbooks. You'll find the thesis statement in the introduction to the book. Keep it in mind as you read each day's assignment. In the course of the latter task, 1) underline or highlight the key ideas in each paragraph. Often the topic sentence will suffice. 2) Ask yourself: What is the argument in each section of the chapter you are reading? Can you put that argument or thesis into your own words? How does it fit the overall thesis of the book as stated in the Introduction? 3) Be alert to the difference between key facts, that is, major causes or consequences of events, and illustrative details and stories. You have to know the former. The latter are there for your enlightenment.

The Kupperman book is an anthology, a collection of primary sources (letters, reports, etc. written long ago by people living in the historical period we are studying) and secondary sources (essays by historians and others describing the past). To read the primary sources: 1) ask yourself: Who is the author, and what is his or her intended audience for the piece? 2) What is the overall message—what point was the author trying to convey? 3) What kinds of literary or rhetorical devices does the author use to make the point? What kinds of evidence does the author marshal to support the argument? To read the secondary sources, use the same methods you used to read Hoffer.

The university requires the following statements on the syllabus: *All academic work must meet the standards contained in A Culture of Honesty. Each student is responsible [for informing himself or herself] ...about those standards before performing any academic work. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*

The History Department recommends the inclusion on all syllabuses of the following two statements:

1. The principal objective of the course is to teach students to think critically for themselves about the relationships between the past and the present, to learn to ask questions of the past that enable them to understand the present and mold the future, and to become attuned to both the limitations and possibilities of change. The course seeks to acquaint students with the ways in which past societies and peoples have defined the relationships between community and individual needs and goals, and between ethical norms and decision-making. In line with these objectives, students will be expected to: 1. read a wide range of primary and secondary sources critically. 2. polish skills in critical thinking, including the ability to recognize the difference between opinion and evidence, and the ability to evaluate--and support or refute--arguments effectively. 3. write stylistically appropriate and mature papers and essays using processes that include discovering ideas and evidence, organizing that material, and revising, editing, and polishing the finished papers.

2. The University of Georgia ("the University") is committed to maintaining a fair and respectful environment for living, work and study. To that end, and in accordance with federal and state law, Board of Regents' policy, and University policy, the University prohibits any member of the faculty, staff, administration, student body, or visitors to campus, whether they be guests, patrons, independent contractors, or clients, from harassing and/or discriminating against any other member of the University community because of that person's race, sex (including sexual harassment), sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin, religion, age, disabled status, or status as a disabled veteran or veteran of the Vietnam era. Incidents of harassment and discrimination will be met with appropriate disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the University.

A tentative list of topics, readings and assignments appears below. We move swiftly, so don't fall behind. Each quiz will count five points. The final examination counts 50 points. Participation can raise a borderline grade.

Day one: The problem of defining early America. Read: Hoffer, introduction.

Day two: Native Americans. Read Hoffer, Ch. 1; Kupperman, Ch. 2

Day three: European and African backgrounds. Read Hoffer, Ch. 2, Kupperman, Ch. 1. **Quiz**

Day four: Spanish America. Read Hoffer, Ch. 3; Kupperman Ch. 6

Day five: Empire in the North. Read Hoffer, Ch 4. **Quiz**

Day six: Southern colonies. Read Hoffer, Ch. 5; Kupperman, Chs. 3 and 9. **Quiz**

Day seven: A New England. Read Hoffer, Ch. 6; Kupperman, Ch. 4. **Quiz**

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Day eight: Middle colonies. Read Hoffer, Ch. 7; Kupperman, Ch. 7. **Quiz**

Day nine: Critical period. Read Hoffer, Ch. 8; Kupperman, Ch. 5.

Day ten: Empires. Read Hoffer, Ch. 9; Kupperman, Ch. 12. **Quiz**

Day eleven: Colonial people and places. Read Hoffer, Ch. 10; Kupperman, Ch. 10. **Quiz**

Day twelve: Colonial cultures. Read Hoffer, Ch. 11; Kupperman, Ch. 11. **Quiz**

Day thirteen: Colonial economies. Read Hoffer, Ch. 12; Kupperman, Ch. 14. **Quiz**

Day fourteen: French and Indian War and its consequences. Read Hoffer, Ch. 13; Kupperman, Ch. 13.

Day fifteen: Revolutionary crisis continued Read Hoffer, Ch. 14 **Quiz**

June 4th: Final examination.