DRAFT SYLLABUS ONLY!!!

Development of the United States  512:103  Spring 2006

(The reading, topics covered in class, and methods of assessment will be in the same in 2008 as they were in 2006)

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Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 5:30-6:30, or e-mail me for appointment.

Assigned Texts

William Rorabaugh et al., America's Promise, vol. 1: isbn: 0-7425-1189-8

The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin (any edition)

Frederick Douglass, Narrative of the Life (any edition)

Course Web Page: https://webct.rutgers.edu

Class Meetings

1/17  WHAT IS HISTORY?

   Read: America's Promise (AP), ch. 1.  [Always check webct for class notes! Bring them to class and read them in advance]

1/19  THE MODERN WORLD SYSTEM

1/24  THE COLUMBIAN EXCHANGE

   Read: AP, ch. 2 and start reading Franklin's autobiography.

1/26  THE PLANTATION SYSTEM

1/31  TROUBLED ENGLISHMEN AND THEIR CONSTITUTION

   Read: AP, ch. 3.

2/2   PILGRIMS AND PURITANS

2/7   POPULATION GROWTH AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, or
The History of Premarital Pregnancy in New England

Read: AP, ch. 4.

2/9 THE QUAKER EXPERIMENT

Read: You should be finished with Franklin.

2/14 THE HABIT OF INDEPENDENCE

Read: AP, ch. 5.

2/16 THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

2/21 Discussion of The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin

2/23 Examination


Read: AP, ch. 6

3/2 FEDERALISTS VERSUS REPUBLICANS

Read: Start Douglass.

3/7 THE SPIRIT OF ENTERPRISE: PIONEERS AND INVENTORS

Read: AP, chs. 7-8.

3/9 THE AGE OF JACKSON

Read: AP, ch. 10.

Spring Break (finish Douglass!)

3/21 ANTEBELLUM REFORM: THE PROCESS OF SOCIAL DIFFERENTIATION

Read: AP, ch. 9.

3/23 ANTEBELLUM REFORM: CIVIL RIGHTS AND COMMUNES

Read: AP, chs. 11-12
3/28  DISCUSSION OF DOUGLASS, AUTOBIOGRAPHY

3/30  Examination

4/4   PATTERNS OF ETHNIC CONFLICT AND NATIVISM

       Read: AP, ch. 12

4/6   THE SECTIONAL CRISIS I

       Read: AP, ch. 13

4/11  THE SECTIONAL CRISIS II

       Read: AP, ch. 14

4/13  Voluntary Review Session (Religious Holidays)

4/18  THE CIVIL WAR I

       Term Paper Due: April 18

4/20  THE CIVIL WAR II

4/25  RECONSTRUCTION

       Read: AP, ch. 15

4/27  LOOKING FORWARD AND BACKWARD FROM 1877

FINAL EXAMINATION: Tuesday, May 9: 8:00pm, Van Dyck 211

Evaluation of Students

Grades will be based upon two examinations given in class (25% each), a term paper (25%), and the final examination (25%). You are expected to attend all classes and to read and to review the texts and the web pages as suggested in this syllabus.

The three examinations given in class will have a common format: there will be an essay question and 5 identification questions.

Examples of essay questions:

i) What were the causes of the American Revolution? Why did the Patriots win the war for independence?
ii) Andrew Jackson is sometimes called the first modern president. Discuss the goals that Andrew Jackson pursued during his presidency and the opposition to his program. Why do we find Jackson "modern" and how useful is this characterization?

Examples of identification questions:

Identify and explain the significance of each of the following:

i) Kentucky and Virginia Resolutions

ii) Elizabeth Cady Stanton

iii) "The Constitution is a covenant with death, an agreement with Hell."

iv) rice

v) Joseph Smith

vi) The Wilmot Proviso

vii) The Fifteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

viii) John Marshall

ix) Jim Crow

A week before the examinations, you will be provided with the universe of possible essay and identification questions. The test items will be selected from this list.

Final Examination

The final examination essay will be comprehensive, that is, it will test all of the materials of the course, with special emphasis on social and economic development between 1789 and 1877. The IDs will be from material covered since the second exam.

Paper Instructions: On April 18, a 7 page essay is due. The purpose of the paper is to demonstrate that you have read the autobiographies of Benjamin Franklin and of Frederick Douglass and can compare their lives with your own. You may title your essay as you wish. "Ben, Fred, and I" or "Getting Right with the Forefathers" are examples of titles you might use, but they are merely suggestions. In your essay you should describe and analyze your personal reaction to reading the lives of Franklin and Douglass. Compare your life experiences and prospects with theirs. Explain what you have in common and how you differ.

Please do not plagiarize. Your authentic voice will be recognized and rewarded.

Second-hand opinions from
secondary sources will be recognized and devalued. Academic dishonesty will be punished.

Your paper should have one-inch margins and no cover. Simply staple the pages on the left upper corner.

**Goals of the Course:** In this course you need to construct a narrative for yourself, drawn primarily from the text, web pages, and lectures. Conscientious use of the lecture notes on the class webpage will aid you in this task, but the web notes and lectures cannot be a substitute for the factual account provided by the textbook. We assume that you have read the assigned chapters in the textbook as scheduled. The lectures will review some of the materials; they may provide additional interpretations or perspective, but they cannot serve as a substitute for mastery of the textbook.

By participating in this course, you should acquire the basic vocabulary of American history and be able to explain the major events in American history with some sophistication. Thus, if a friend or relative asked "What is an 'Indian Giver'?" or "What caused the American Revolution?" or "What do think about Andrew Jackson?" or "When was the Erie Canal built?" or "Why did the North win the Civil War?" or "Who was Jim Crow?"—you should be able to provide them with a robust answer. Finally, in constructing your narrative of American history, you should acquire knowledge and ways of thinking that provide perspective on major social issues. What role has the state played in the economy? What is the basis of American nationality? What are the sources of equality and inequality? Why can't we all just get along with one another?