

**History 131, America History I (Online)
Fall 2012**

Section, HIS 131-85

Mark Levensgood, course instructor

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On-campus Office Hours: T, 5-6pm; W, 11-5pm; Th, 5-6pm; if these times do not work for you, email me to set up another meeting time

Online Office Hours: held periodically throughout term

Email is the best way to contact me to discuss any issues or problems or to set up a time to meet

Course Summary: This course is a survey of American history from pre-history through the Civil War era. Topics include the migrations to the Americas, the colonial and revolutionary periods, the development of the Republic, and the Civil War. Upon completion, students should be able to analyze significant political, socioeconomic, and cultural developments in early American history. This course has been approved to satisfy the Comprehensive Articulation Agreement general education core requirement in social/behavioral sciences. This course is a survey of American history from pre-History through the Civil War era. Topics include the migrations to the Americas, the colonial and revolutionary periods, the development of the republic, and the Civil War. Upon completion, students should be able to analyze significant political, socioeconomic, and cultural developments in early American history. This course is intended for all associate degree programs.

This course is an online course. We do not meet face to face. All lessons will be conducted online at our Blackboard site.

Thirteen 30-minute video lessons from *A Biography of America* provide the basic outline for the course. Go to the Video on Demand section of the Blackboard site to view the episodes online. You are also welcome to view any of the episodes at the campus library. Reminder: while the videos are important, and give us a general timeline and framework for the course, they

are only one resource. To do well in the course, you need to do all of the readings and video assignments.

Prerequisites: Please note that HIS 131 and HIS 132 both have an English prerequisite: RED-090, ENG-090, ENG-090A or ENG-095, ENG-095A, or EFL-111, EFL-112 (S20514), or ENG 090, ENG 090A, EFL 112 or RED 090, EFL 111, or ENG 111 with a grade of C or better, or appropriate CPT scores.

Note: This course is reading- and writing-intensive. It would be wise for you to work on and improve these skills before taking this class. I will do my best to provide assistance with assignments, but you should take necessary coursework before taking this class.

Requirements and Expectations:

Goals: This course is designed to help students: 1) gain a basic factual knowledge of this historical period; 2) develop the ability to assess and think critically about historical issues and about how people interpret those issues; 3) develop skills in analyzing historical data, especially primary sources, and reaching informed conclusions about those data; and 4) develop skills to express thoughts and conclusions in a competent and insightful manner, including discussion and writing skills.

Core Competencies: In support of the Learning College initiative, four core competencies have been identified as critical to the success of CPCC graduates (Communication, Critical Thinking, Personal Growth and Responsibility, Information Technology and Quantitative Literacy). The History Department formally applies the following Core Competency to each of its classes/sections:

Critical Thinking: the ability to think using analysis, synthesis, evaluation, problem solving, judgment, and the creative process.

Key Indicators:

- Thinks critically and creatively
- Formulates and re-evaluates position based on available evidence
- Asks appropriate questions that challenge assumptions and conventional wisdom
- Integrates ideas and values from different disciplines and contexts
- Uses reflection as a way to monitor and adjust thinking

- Understands and applies principles of learning and learning styles to own education
- Applies knowledge in practical ways
- Analyzes and evaluates data, ideas, patterns, principles, and perspectives
- Recognizes own biases and suspends judgmental thinking
- Employs values and standards of judgments from different discipline
- Uses problem solving strategies in a wide variety of professional situations

While this course will focus on critical thinking, it is my hope that you will hone skills in all of the core areas.

Success in this course will depend on your consistent and thoughtful effort. This course is video, text, and student-centered, entailing your close and critical reading of the assigned texts, viewing of video lessons, and examination of other sources in the course. You will be given numerous venues to exhibit your thoughts about the texts, but the most important (and graded) will be online journals and discussions. You can succeed in this course if you are willing and prepared to discuss the assigned texts. The best way to earn high marks for discussion is to complete required reading BEFORE discussion, and to raise specific questions and issues for discussion.

A small class, such as this, is an opportunity for teacher and students to share ideas and interpretations in a more informal and conversational way than the large lecture. As a result, there is a much higher expectation for your input and ideas than in the traditional history course. My role in this course is as a facilitator. I provide the texts and sources for your examination. I will also ask questions and provide venues for you to express your thoughts, interpretations, and ideas. At times, I will jump in to spur conversation, to guide discussion in fruitful directions, and to correct factual mistakes. I will always emphasize and guide discussion towards central questions, themes, and data.

Since this is an online course, it requires an extra level of self-motivation on your part. I do not get the chance to see you in person or to reach out to you in the typical face-to-face ways to help keep you motivated. Although some assignments for this class are collaborative and discussion-based, much of your work is done individually. You may embrace the online experience or you may find it isolating. Be sure to keep me informed of your general outlook on the course. Reach out to me if you are

having trouble staying motivated or keeping up with the work. Try to engage with your fellow students on a regular basis; your engagement will help keep everyone motivated.

You need to purchase one text for the course:

Oakes, et. al. *Of the People: A History of the United States, Concise edition, volume 1: To 1877* (New York: Oxford UP, 2011). ISBN: 9780195390735

This text can be found at the CPCC Bookstore in the first floor of Hall Building, 1112 Charlottetowne Avenue or purchased through the bookstore website.

Additional texts will be provided online through the course Blackboard site. Check the current folder in Blackboard for assignments, both textbook and online.

Tips for successful preparation and discussion:

1. When reading a text (or watching a film, etc.), take notes or highlight particular ideas or passages that interest you, or those that are provocative, confusing, or with which you agree or disagree. Share these with the class in the online discussion board.
2. Look for recurring themes or questions that run through the course. Share these with the class.
3. Read the ideas and questions of others and respond in insightful or helpful ways.
4. Be open to sharing your ideas, particularly if you are unsure or confused about them.
5. Be open to the ideas of others.
6. Use this class and its particular assignments as means to explore particular themes or ideas in more depth.
7. Think of history as a puzzle. Every text and assignment is meant as an opportunity for you to understand one more piece of the history of postwar U.S. history. The puzzle may never be complete, but you will hopefully gain insight into the larger pieces and how they fit together.

Grading: Course grades will be calculated as follows:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Date due</u>	<u>Percent of course grade</u>
Class Participation - Online Discussion	Graded 4x a semester	25%
Reading Journal	Graded 4x a semester	35%
Quizzes – varying from essays, T/F, multiple choice/answer	Once or twice a unit	20%
Short Paper	To Be Determined	5%
Final Paper	Last day of class	15%

Letter Grades for assignments and final grade: A=100-90; B=89-80; C=79-70; D=69-60; F=59 and lower

All grades will be posted in the Blackboard Grade Center so you can see your status throughout the semester.

Attendance: Unlike a face-to-face course, we do not have set meeting times. But you must still attend class – by logging in to the Blackboard space on a regular basis and completing assignments – to do well. Attendance is taken in this class. I am required by the college to verify that you have taken part in the course through two means:

1. I have to verify that you signed into Blackboard before the 10% date of the course, therefore, before 10% of the course is complete on August 20th.
2. You must also complete one specified ungraded assignment in Blackboard (the EVA assignment) before the 10% date on Aug. 20th.

In addition, regular class attendance is required to remain eligible for financial aid and veterans' benefits. Faculty are required to report irregular attendance to the College which may result in the loss of benefits.

Failure to attend class and/or withdrawal from class may also impact your financial assistance.

For more information go to: http://www.cpcc.edu/financial_aid/fyi/withdrawal

Class Participation: Class participation comprises the second largest part of your grade. It will consist of posts to the class discussion board in Blackboard. Class discussion will be graded per unit. Participation will be graded according to quality of participation and engagement with the issues and sources. Original insights, willingness to ask questions, and willingness to respond to the comments of others will be highly valued in discussion and particularly beneficial to your grade.

Journal Requirement: Each student is required to keep a journal on the course readings. Assignments will be listed in Topics and Assignments for the section on which you are working. The actual journal entry will be posted in the Journal section of the Discussion Board. Course Instructor will assign topics for journal entries on selected days. Each entry should consist of a couple paragraphs on the assigned topic or question. For those days that topics are not assigned, students should comment on the content of readings. Suggested posting topics for those days: comments, questions, summary of important passages, comparisons to former readings or other documents from the course, critical analysis, connections to ongoing themes in the course. Postings will be graded for content and level of engagement with texts and course themes. Journals are graded 4 times a semester.

Short Paper Assignment: One short paper assignment will be assigned approximately halfway through the semester. The primary goals of this assignment are to work on historical analysis and writing skills. I will provide feedback on this assignment so you can improve for the final paper assignment.

Final Paper: There is a final full-length paper for this class, due at the end of the course. This will be assigned and explained in class with ample time for completion. The final paper will build upon the progress you made in the short paper and journal assignments throughout the semester.

Quizzes: Rather than a midterm and final, this course will use short quizzes. Each unit of the course will contain quizzes which will be timed and completed online. Quizzes will be based on course materials, including textbook and document readings, the video lessons, as well as other sources offered in the course. Some quizzes will be open book, others closed-book. You will always have a window of time -- a few days, at least --

to log on and take the quiz, although once you start the quiz, you have to complete it.

Policies:

Academic Integrity. As a student you are responsible for upholding standards of academic integrity. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. The purpose of the CPCC Code of Student Academic Integrity (see CPCC Student Handbook) is to support the continued growth and development of a strong academic community based on the principles of academic honesty and integrity. Any student who violates the CPCC Code of Student Academic Integrity is subject to academic disciplinary action. Such action may include, but is not limited to, entry of the incident in the records of the Office of Student Development; reduced grades; and dismissal from college classes, programs, and activities.

For additional information, please visit:

<http://www.cpcc.edu/administration/policies-and-procedures/7-10-student-academic-integrity>

Online Academic Integrity. Academic Integrity takes on different dimensions in a course in which the participants do not meet face-to-face. The College and I trust you to uphold the Code of Student Academic Integrity in the digital academic environment without surveillance or direct monitoring. While the course will use digital tools for content delivery, communication, and other means, that does not change the fact that you are expected to rely on your own intellect and skills rather than those of others. Closely follow instructions for assignments, never relying on the information of other people, sources, or internet sites, unless explicitly directed to do so. If you have any questions or are confused about expectations or limits, ask the instructor before going forward. Do not put yourself in jeopardy of failure on the assignment or course.

No outside information, sources, or websites should be used for assignments in this course without the express direction and permission of the instructor. If you are asked a question or given an assignment, please consult the sources and information provided by the instructor, whether that be the textbook, additional readings, or other sources. Trust yourself that you can answer questions using the materials provided for the course and your own thoughts on the materials.

All sources of information in this course must be cited. When answering a question or providing information, you must provide the source of information for your answer, including the author, title, and page number. Using or quoting someone else's ideas without proper citations is plagiarism. If you are caught plagiarizing in this course, you will earn a zero on the assignment, possible failure in the course, as well as possible further action at the college level.

Make-up Assignments. There are no make-up assignments for this class. All assignments will be announced well in advance, giving you ample time to prepare and complete them on time. If for any family or medical reason you find it absolutely necessary to miss a due date, you must provide written documentation if you wish to be given the opportunity to make up an assignment.

Students with Disabilities. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the term if you require any disability-related accommodations. Students who have a documented disability or think they may have a learning problem may contact the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities at 704-330-6556. I will be happy to provide the necessary accommodations upon the advice of the Office of Services for students with disabilities.

For additional information, please visit: <http://www.cpcc.edu/disabilities>

Religious Observances. Students will not be penalized because of observances of religious beliefs, but rather shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Please inform the instructor at the beginning of the term of any religious observances which may interfere with your performance in the course. Written notification of the projected absence should be emailed within a week of the start of the term.

Disputing Grades. If you believe one of your assignments was graded unfairly, please follow these steps: 1) Take at least 24 hours to read and think about the comments and grade. But do not wait more than a few days to follow the steps 2-4; 2) Reread the assignment; 3) Write down the reason or reasons why you think the grade is inappropriate; 4) Arrange a time to talk with me to discuss your concerns.

Withdrawals and Incompletes. While withdrawing from a course is sometimes necessary, it is advisable to discuss this with the instructor before withdrawing. For those experiencing academic difficulty, CPCC's Academic Learning Center offers free individualized and small group tutoring, computer tutorials, and strategies for improving learning skills. Additionally, before withdrawing, consider whether this course is a prerequisite for another course; whether the course will be offered again in the future; whether withdrawing will delay plans to transfer graduation; or whether withdrawing will affect eligibility for honors designation, health insurance benefits, or other financial arrangements.

When a student determines that he/she will be unable to complete courses in which he/she is currently enrolled, it is the student's responsibility to initiate procedures leading to a formal withdrawal ("W") in order to avoid a failing ("F") grade. For additional information, go to the following links:

<http://www.cpcc.edu/administration/policies-and-procedures/5-09-withdrawal-from-classes>

A student who for any reason cannot complete a course must take the responsibility to formally withdraw (W) in order to avoid a failing grade. To receive a W grade, a student must withdraw prior to the 35% date of the class.

The last day to withdraw from this class is September 24th.

The request for official withdrawal must be presented to the Registration Center. The instructor may also assign a W at the end of the term when circumstances warrant such action (See Note Below). A W will remain on the transcript. A W will not count as credit hours attempted. To receive credit, a student who received a W must re-register and pay for the course in a subsequent term. Withdrawals may affect student financial aid.

Note: I DO NOT have to grant a withdrawal to a requesting student after the 35% date. I only grant withdrawals for serious personal, family, or medical problems. I DO NOT grant withdrawals to students just because a student has done badly in my course. If you have questions about your grade or the withdrawal process, please ask.

CPCC Letter Grading and GPA

policies: <http://www.cpcc.edu/administration/policies-and-procedures/5-10-grading-policy>

Student Code of Conduct. Students are required to follow the Student Code of Conduct. Detailed information can be found at http://www.cpcc.edu/student_handbook/conduct

Rules for Online Behavior. These rules are non-negotiable.

Respect other students, instructor, the school, and the educational process.

Adopt a spirit of kindness and helpfulness to others.

No discrimination or harassment of any kind.

Use good listening (reading) skills: Listen to (read) what others are saying, then respond respectfully and thoughtfully.

Do not discuss personal problems, issues, and grade questions in your journal or discussion board. Contact the instructor instead.

Think for yourself.

Cite your sources.

Do not cheat or plagiarize.

Turn your work in on time.

Do your work.