



Core Course Designation Proposal

Historical Reasoning

Faculty Name: Beth Salerno		Department: History
Course Number: Hi199	Course Title: America: Origins to World Power	
Initial Offering: existing class - initial offering as core course Fall 2013		Frequency course will be offered: Each semester
Course Duration: One semester		Maximum enrollment: 20
Course Prerequisite(s): none		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Course syllabus attached

Course Description (as it appears in the College Catalogue)

(Note: This course was inadvertently left out of the catalog despite being approved in 2011.) This course covers crucial issues in American History from the American Revolution to the 21st century, with a heavy focus on processes which created, challenged and changed the Constitution and those which made the United States an international power. It is specifically designed to support Elementary Education majors by providing a deeper understanding of United States history and civics, with some focus on geography and economics.

Goals and Objectives

Historical reasoning is the ability to recognize and to analyze change and continuity in human society over time. Courses in historical reasoning provide students with knowledge of significant historical periods so that they can interpret the past and consider its relationship to the present. These courses should develop within students the ability to draw conclusions from historical material by relating persons and events to their specific context and to place them in the broader continuum of history. Historical reasoning enhances students' appreciation of their heritage and allows them to take a historical perspective on contemporary issues.

Student Learning Outcomes

Please describe how the proposed course will fulfill each of the following student learning outcomes. For courses with multiple sections or instructors, describe the range of activities that would fulfill each student learning outcome.

Students who have completed their historical reasoning requirement should be able to:

1. Explain the interplay of change and continuity in human society

This course highlights the processes by which the American nation was created and became a world power. It thus focuses on change (how our nation went from colony to nation; how it went from imperial outpost to world power) and continuity (what factors in those processes continue to shape the nation today). The course's foundational theme is that our current political, economic, social, and cultural structures and beliefs have evolved over time, blending long-term continuity (we are still a representative democracy) and change (with, for instance, markedly different voting laws). This is assessed directly by midterm and final exam essay questions that test student ability to incorporate both change and continuity in their explanations of historical events.

2. Recall the key dates, names, events, and dominant themes of significant historical periods

Students, particularly elementary education students, must have basic historical literacy in order to understand and explain historical events. This is assessed directly by multiple choice questions on quizzes or exams, as well as the ability to use dates, names, events and themes in essay answers and papers.

3. Evaluate, analyze, and comprehend primary source evidence within its historical context

Understanding that primary source documents reflect the specific uses of language and intellectual currents of the time of their creation, as well as the gender, race, class or education of their author, is a central necessity of historical reasoning. Placing the source in its context, including the source's public or private nature, its purpose and audience, are key parts of evaluating, analyzing and comprehending history as understood by the writer of the document. Students in this course are exposed to multiple forms of primary documents, such as Paul Revere's highly inaccurate engraving of the Boston Massacre, an autobiographical account of the Civil Rights Movement, the Declaration of Independence, Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms, the Constitution, and slave narratives. The variety of types, the frequency of exposure, and the required depth of contextual analysis build student skills which are assessed in class discussion and short writing assignments.

4. Use primary sources (written, oral, visual, and material) to develop and support a historical argument

Once a student has analyzed a primary source in its context, he or she can determine what types of historical arguments can be based on that source. They also learn this from reading historical monographs and analyzing how other authors use primary sources to develop and support their argument. The student's ability to do this is assessed through short papers which require students to draw from a pool of primary sources to develop and support their own argument about a historical event.

5. Recognize the complex process of constructing history from a fragmentary historical record and how the interpretation of specific historical events has changed over time

Because historians develop arguments based on primary sources understood in context, the availability of sources, recognition of their value, and intellectual orientations of the historian all shape the construction of historical narrative. Helping students see the difference between "what happened in the past" and "history" is our most difficult task as historians. This course addresses this regularly in lectures (as the professors explain changing understandings of historical events) and in the textbook (which discusses new types of evidence, or new readings of long-available evidence). This is assessed by the students' awareness of source issues and historical interpretation in the exams and written work.

6. Understand the distinct perspectives and values of past societies, their connections to the present, as well as the differences between past and present-day societies

Because this course focuses on the national past of the majority of our students, they often come thinking that past Americans must have thought like present ones. Yet American society has not only geographic, racial, ethnic, gendered, economic, and intellectual diversity, it has temporal diversity - people in the past did not think like people of the present because the factors affecting their lives were different and their value systems were different. Thus a central challenge of historical reasoning is to get students to see that even Americans in the past had distinct perspectives and values which made logical sense to them, including slave holders, Ku Klux Klan members, Nazi supporters, religious communitarians, abolitionist murderers, and Mormon polygamists. Student awareness of the distinctness of these ideas, the continuity of many of them in current society, and the factors that affect social values is tested in class discussion, exams, and other course assessments.

Assessment

Please describe how course assignments or other measures in the proposed course will provide evidence of students' achievement of student learning outcomes.

Please see description within each learning outcome.

☒ **Approved by department**

Signature of Department Chairperson

Date

If applicable, please list name(s) of faculty experts outside your department that were consulted during the departmental review process.

☐ **Approved by committee of the core**

Signature of Committee Chairperson

Date

Hi 199 America: Origins to World Power

Representative Syllabus

Class meets: 3 hours

Course Description: This course covers crucial issues in American History from the American Revolution to the 21st century, with a heavy focus on processes which created, challenged and changed the Constitution and those which made the United States an international power. It is specifically designed to support Elementary Education majors by providing a deeper understanding of United States history and civics, with some focus on geography and economics.

Course Format: The course is delivered through lectures supplemented by small group activities, debates, classroom analysis of primary sources, and group discussion.

Course Assignments:

Exams: Approximately 50%. This course has both a midterm and a final exam. Both contain “objective” questions (multiple choice or other short answer) and essay questions.

Writing Assignments: Approximately 40%. This course has multiple writing assignments. Depending on the professor and term taught, these can occur in multiple formats. Two examples: a) 8 one page papers focused on analyzing a primary source in context, a changing historical interpretation, an intellectual idea in two different time periods, etc. b) 2 four page papers on similar topics done with greater depth.

Class participation: Approximately 10%. Students are required to engage verbally in class, proposing and answering questions and engaging in debates. Some professors also require reading quizzes to ensure students keep up on the reading and are given feedback on their knowledge prior to exams. Some professors require reading guides completion to ensure students are keeping up with the reading for discussion. In-class quizzes are also used.

Required Books (These vary by professor but are representative of the types of primary and secondary sources and the level of reading):

Richard Beeman, *The Penguin Guide to the United States Constitution: A Fully Annotated Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution and Amendments, and Selections from The Federalist Papers* (NY: Penguin, 2010).

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty* (Brief Third Edition, volume 2) (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 2012).

Upton Sinclair, *The Flivver King: A Story of Ford-America* (Chicago: Charles H. Kerr, 1987).

Primary Sources and Selected Readings on Sakai (<http://learn.anselm.edu>)

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Revolutionary Origins

Beeman Chapter 1 and Declaration of Independence

Week 2: Shaping a National Government

Beeman, Chapters 2-4: (Articles of Confederation, Constitutional Convention, Ratification) and original Constitution and Bill of Rights.

Week 3: From Constitution to Civil War

Beeman, Chapter 5: Establishing Government

Sakai Reading: Eric Foner, A Short History of Reconstruction (NY: Harper and Row, 1990), chapter 1 “The World the War Made” and 2 “Rehearsals for Reconstruction” (34 pages).

Week 4 - Reconstruction

Foner chapter 15 (548-589) and Beeman sections on 13th-15th Amendments

Sakai reading: John Hollitz, Thinking Through the Past: A Critical Thinking Approach to U.S. History, volume 2, 3rd edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), chapter on the “story” of Reconstruction in history textbooks.

Week 5 –Second Industrial Revolution

Foner, chapters 16

Sinclair Intro and section on early Ford industrialization

Week 6 – Imperialism and Midterm

Foner chapter 17

John Hollitz, Thinking Through the Past: A Critical Thinking Approach to U.S. History, volume 2, 3rd edition (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005), chapter on evaluating primary sources: “Saving” the Indians in the late 19th century and chapter on evaluating secondary sources “American Manhood and Philippine Annexation”

Midterm

Week 7 – Progressive Era, World War I and Immigration

Foner chapters 18 and 19

Sinclair, up to World War I section.

Week 8 – Twenties and Thirties

Foner chapters 20 and 21 (768-806)

Sinclair to end.

Week 9 – World War II

Foner chapter 22

Sakai: Propaganda posters home and abroad

First paper due.

Week 10 Cold War

Foner chapter 23

Week 11 – Fifties and Sixties

Foner chapters 24 and 25

Sakai: Excerpts from biographies including Anne Moody, [Coming of Age in Mississippi](#)

Week 12 – Seventies and Eighties

Foner chapter 26

Second paper due.

Week 13 – Globalization

Foner chapter 27

Week 14 – Post September 11 world; Supreme Court decisions overview

Foner chapter 28.

Beeman chapter 6