

# COURSE OUTLINE

**1. Course Number and Title:** Hist4101, U.S. History to 1800

**Prerequisites:** None

**Credits:** 3 Hours

**2. Course Description:** “U.S. History to 1800” investigates how the colonization experience in North America shaped not only the American character and its peoples’ unalterable love of liberty but much of its future history, from revolution to its founding, to its civil war, to the powerful, sometimes hegemonic, role it plays in world affairs today. The question about how inevitable that history was and what this experience portends for America’s future will guide discussion and inquiry.

**3. Course Goals:** This course will establish an intellectual framework about the “American experience” that will guide students’ subsequent interpretation of American character and history and how they continue to influence public policy on domestic and international affairs.

**4. Course Outcomes:** Through the course’s assignments, students will achieve and demonstrate the following outcomes:

1. Analyze regional differences among the colonists in order to explain how among a culturally homogenous group (the English) different cultural and political arrangements arose.

2. Apply the framework they constructed in terms of the particular relationships between the various colonies (Southern, New England, and Middle Colonies) to their political relationship with the English King.

3. Analyze the influences leading to disaffection of the American Colonists with the British Crown during the Seven Years War.

4. Apply the framework they developed in terms of the colonial experience to the political, economic, and military events that led up to the first shot at Lexington and Concord.

5. Identify and explain the formation and dissolution of the Confederation of the thirteen states. Defend the rationale behind the Articles of Confederation as well as the backlash against its radical decentralization.

6. Construct the various classical arguments behind the two opposing views regarding the inherent dangers of a republican government: either succumbing to anarchy, from too little governance, or to tyranny, from too

much governance. Working from that construct, identify the unique qualities the proposed state constitutions derived from historical and philosophical knowledge, on the one hand, and the American experience, on the other.

7. Argue how the fragile government formed both as the confederation and a strong national government under the constitution managed to avoid the curse of all new democratic governments: severe instability and dissolution through lack of power-sharing

## 5. Course Concepts

1. The Settlement and Development of Virginia, Massachusetts, and Pennsylvania
2. The Articles of Confederation
3. The Federalists and The Philadelphia Convention
4. The Federalists and the Anti-Federalists

## 6. Required Texts:

Anderson, Fred, *Crucible of War, The Seven Year's War and the Fate of Empire in British North America, 1754-1766*. ISBN: 0-375-70636-4. \$15.53.

Hackett Fischer. David, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, New York: Oxford University Press, USA, 1991. ISBN: 0195069056. \$25.15.

## 7. Recommended Reading

Herbert Storing, ed. *The Anti-Federalists: Writings by the Opponents of The Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985). \$20.74

## 8. Resources [Located in Resources in IZIO]

# SYLLABUS

**Course Number:** Hist4101

**Course Title:** U.S. History to 1800

**Faculty:** Carey Roberts, Ph.D., Dennis Bowman, Ph.D., Richard Bishirjian, Ph.D

**Preliminaries:** (Review Announcements)

**Performance Requirements/Course Grade:**

All course deliverables will be graded according to Yorktown University's grading rubrics, which are posted in the Student Handbook located at [www.yorktownuniversity.edu/students](http://www.yorktownuniversity.edu/students)

**Assessments:** Students will be graded on the basis of three assessments.

**Discussion Topics (40%)**

Discussion topics are listed at the end of each session. Choose a topic, submit a response and wait for your instructor's comment. Respond to his comment and choose a second topic. Each Discussion is valued at 5%. Quizzes.

**Quizzes (40%)** At the end of each Session of the course several essay questions are presented. Students will answer one question for each session, save their answers to a Word document, and upload their answer from the Assignments area of Izio. Each quiz is valued at 5% of the final grade. [Located in Assignments]

**Term Paper (20%)**

By analyzing the primary sources above, students will write a well-argued paper defending or refuting the following statement:

The U.S. Constitution, at the time of its ratification, and the federal republic it established offered the best solution for dealing with the country's cultural diversity and competing interests. In your answer you will explain and examine prevailing and sometimes incompatible cultural traditions present in the United States as well as explain whether the Constitution overcame the issues of having a large-scale republic or a federation. Due at the end of Session 8.

**Summary of Assessments**

Discussion Topics	40%
Quizzes	40%
Term Paper	20%

Yorktown University official grade and writing rubrics are located at

[http://www.yorktownuniversity.edu/new\\_rubrics.cfm](http://www.yorktownuniversity.edu/new_rubrics.cfm)

**Course Participation and Assignment Submissions**

Students are responsible for participating in the course through the following academic activities: uploading assignments, posting to comments in the discussion fora, and responding to faculty inquiries. In order to actively participate in a course according to a schedule of eight to ten weeks.

**Academic Integrity**

Available both in the student and faculty handbooks.

## Recommended schedule for course completion

**Session 1: The Settlement and Development of New England**. The Puritans sought to establish a unique religious colony which would serve as a model for the rest of the world. This settlement was strongly influenced by the culture and polity of East Anglia, England, from where a large proportion of the immigrants originated. Other influences upon the Puritans of New England were the environment, the climate, and interaction with the Amerindian tribes indigenous to the region.

### Assignments

#### Required Reading:

Fischer, *Albion's Seed* (part I): New England  
pp. 1-36,  
pp.39-93,  
pp.87-111,  
pp.117-130,  
pp.134-139,  
pp.151-174,  
pp.181-205.

**Lectures** [Located in Lectures/Texts]

#### Discussion Topics:

1. From what you have learned about colonial New England, do you consider it a desirable society in which to live?
2. Of the different folkways mentioned in *Albion's Seed* (pp. 8-9), which do you find most interesting? Why?
3. Do you think you would have felt comfortable with the courting customs and sexual mores of seventeenth-century New England?
4. If you were transported to a seventeenth-century town in Massachusetts, what changes to its polity would you wish to make?

**Quiz I** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Session Outcome:** 4:1 and 4:2

**Session 2: The Settlement and Development of Virginia**. Governor William Berkeley recruited to Virginia a number of Royalist aristocrats, who became the elite ruling class there for several generations. Large numbers of indentured servants, and later African slaves, were brought to Virginia to cultivate tobacco, the colony's cash crop. Landowners established large plantations similar to those in southern England from where most of the elite originated.

## Assignments

### Required reading:

Fischer, *Albion's Seed* (part 2): Virginia  
pp. 207-306,  
pp. 311-320,  
pp. 332-354,  
pp. 360-73,  
pp. 389-418.

**Lectures** [Located in Lectures/Texts]

### Discussion Topics:

1. Do you think that you would have liked William Byrd II and his wife Lucy? While traveling and given the choice, would you prefer to stay with them or in a more modest household with less volatile hosts?
2. Would you wish to live in a society like that of colonial Virginia? What parts of the culture would you most appreciate? What would you question most?
3. Why do you think the colonies of Virginia and Massachusetts Bay became the leading centers of British North America?
4. If you had a choice, which cuisine and diet would you prefer, that of New England or that of Virginia?
5. What difference did it make that Virginia was initially settled by a private company rather than directly by the Crown?

**Quiz 2** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Session Outcomes:** 4:1 and 4:2

**Session 3: The Settlement of Pennsylvania and the Delaware Valley.** William Penn founded a colony dominated by the Quakers, where different Christian sects were tolerated and encouraged to settle. The founding document called the "Frames," explicitly welcomed all religious and ethnic groups and created the notion of "reciprocal" liberty.

## Assignments

### Required Reading:

Fischer, *Albion's Seed* (part 3): Delaware Valley  
pp. 419-476

pp. 481-502  
pp. 507-513  
pp. 522-544  
pp. 530-555  
pp. 556-573  
pp. 584-603.

**Lectures** [Located in Lectures/Texts]

**Discussion Topics:**

1. What is most appealing to you about the Quaker religion? What is unappealing?
2. Perhaps the most unique aspect of Quaker teaching concerned their system of childrearing. How does it compare to parents' attitudes today?
3. Whose "sports ways" would you prefer, the Quakers' or the Virginians'?

**Quiz 3** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Session Outcomes:** 4:1 and 4:2

**Session 4 The Borderlands and the Backcountry.** The Scots-Irish dominated this region. Looking for "material betterment," families and clans immigrated together from northern England and were famous for their fierce independence, combativeness, and their hostility to strangers. These characteristics naturally caused most of the Scots-Irish to settle in frontier and border regions beyond the reaches of political authority.

**Assignments**

**Required Reading:**

Fischer, *Albion's Seed* (part 4): The Backcountry  
pp. 605--683,  
pp. 687-690,  
pp. 703-708,  
pp. 715-731,  
pp. 743-758,  
pp. 765-782.

**Lectures** [Located in Lectures/Texts]

**Discussion Topics:**

1. Does the Scots-Irish sense of independence still affect the United States?
2. What aspects of backcountry life do you find most appealing? Least appealing?
3. Do you think the circumstances and role of women in the backcountry preferable to those of women in the rest of British North America?

**Quiz 4** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Session Outcomes:** 4:1 and 4:2

**Session 5: Origins of American Revolution.** American Colonists are drawn to independence from Great Britain as a consequence of the British attitudes experienced during the Seven Year's War between France and Great Britain. The American Revolution did not constitute a single people rising up and overthrowing the British crown *en masse*. Rather, each of the four cultural groups fought the British in distinct ways and for distinct reasons. That led to a decentralized government in the Articles of Confederation and why even though the Constitution established a strong national government, that government was limited by principles of Federalism.

## Assignments

### Required Reading

Anderson, Fred, *Crucible of War*,  
pp. 42-73  
pp. 387-420  
pp. 657-687

Fischer, *Albion's Seed: American Revolution*  
pp. 821-834  
pp. 839-847

**Lectures** [Located in Lectures/Texts]

### Discussion Topics

1. Anderson's history of the Seven Years War suggests that the arrogance of British officers created a chasm between previously loyal Colonists and the British Crown. Which officers and which colonials?
2. How essential was it that the seceding colonists fight a united front against the British during the War for Independence?

3. Did the different ways each colonial group defined “liberty” make a difference in why they wished to secede from the Empire, or how they fought?

4. Why is it that most Americans no longer pay attention to the War for Independence? Is it still relevant to us today?

**Quiz 5** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Session Outcomes:** 4:2, 4:3, and 4.4

**Session 6:** In their essays, the anti-Federalists opposed the ratification of the new constitution citing concerns over the extent of its powers and its impact upon the state governments and judiciaries. Moreover, they believed that the new constitution would threaten individual rights, for it did not include an enumeration of them. While the Federalists cited the writings of authorities such as Montesquieu to bolster their arguments, much of their concern stemmed from their colonial experience.

## Assignments

### Required Reading

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/ratification/timeline-state.html> .

Please carefully review this site for each reading assigned in Sessions 6-8. By easily navigating the document hierarchy and opening the full document “tree,” you will find useful summaries of most of the assigned documents.

Brutus [I](#), [II](#), [VI](#), [VII](#) (pp. 108-117, 121-127, 138-45, 145-50). A description of Brutus and his writings along with links to these documents can be found at <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/ratification/timeline-brutus.html>

Agrippa I, II, IV, VI, VII (pp. 227-254) Online versions of these documents can be found at <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/ratification/timeline-agrippa.html>

Centinel I, IV, VII, and VIII, available online at <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/ratification/timeline-centinel.html>

**Lecture:** [Located in Lectures/Texts]

### Discussion Topics:

1. What difference does it make when we call the opponents of the Constitution the “anti-Federalists”?

2. Do you think the anti-Federalists got anything right in their criticism of the Constitution? Are they still relevant to us today?
3. Were the Anti-Federalists justified in their fear that the proposed Constitution would create a powerful central government? Has history proven them correct?
4. Is today's Tea Party movement a reflection of Anti-Federalist political philosophy?
5. To what extent do you agree with the Anti-Federalists' critique of the Constitution? What was their most persuasive argument? Least persuasive?
6. Do you think the Anti-Federalists were correct in their concerns about how the new constitution would affect the economies of the states?
7. How different would American history be, if the Anti-Federalists successfully amended the Articles as alternatives to the new constitution?

**Quiz 6** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Session Outcomes:** 4:5, 4:6, and 4:7

**Session 7:** In their eighty-five essays, the authors of the Federalists (John Jay, James Madison, and Alexander Hamilton), provided an excellent overview and analysis of the new constitution. Because these essays were written to gain ratification, the authors, all of whom used the pseudonym Publius, explained the deficiencies of the Articles of Confederation, the advantages and strengths of the new constitution, and answered the Anti-Federalists' objections to it.

## Assignments

**Required reading:** *The Federalist Papers*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001

Federalist Number 1: General Introduction (Hamilton)

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=7>

Federalist Number 2: Dangers from Foreign Force and Influence (Jay)

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=744>

Federalist Number 9: A Safeguard Against Domestic Faction (Hamilton)

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=60>

Federalist 10: Against Domestic Faction, cont. (Madison)

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=8>

Note: an extensive overview of Federalist No. 10 with summary notes can be found on the “[Timeline of Ratification](#)” page of the [teachingamericanhistory.org](http://teachingamericanhistory.org).

Federalist 17: Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation (Hamilton)  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=760>

Federalist 23: Necessity of an Energetic Government (Hamilton)  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=9>

**Lectures** [Located in Lectures/Texts]

**Discussion Topics:**

1. What do you think are Publius (a.k.a. Madison, Hamilton, and Jay) best arguments for strengthening the national government?
2. On the level of literary style, is Publius’s argument and writing of a higher quality than that of the Anti-Federalists? How do you judge this?
3. What difference did it make that Madison, Jay, and Hamilton worked together to flesh out their arguments in favor of the Constitution as opposed to the way the anti-Federalists worked out their arguments?
4. Now that we’ve lived with the Constitution for over 200 years, do you think Publius overstated his case for a strong, “energetic” government or was he proven correct?

**Quiz 7** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Session Outcomes:** 4:5, 4:6, and 4:7

**Session 8: The Federalists, cont**

**Required reading:** *The Federalist Papers*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2001

Federalist 39: Republican Principles (Madison)  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=818>

Federalist 41: Powers Conferred by the Constitution (Madison)  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=820>

Federalist 51: Checks and Balances  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=14>

Federalist 70: The Executive (Hamilton)  
<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=16>

Federalist 78: The Judiciary (Hamilton)

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=58>

**Lectures** (Located in Lectures/Texts)

**Discussion Topics:**

1. What does Publius's interpretation of the Constitution leave to the states? Do they still matter? Should they have still matter?
2. How would you characterize Publius's judgments about government? Do you think his essays demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of human nature and of practical politics?
3. How different would American public policy be if the federal Supreme Court judges were elected for four-year terms?
4. In hindsight, was it a mistake for Publius to advocate a powerful chief executive and a separate judiciary in the new Constitution holding office for life?

**Session Outcomes:** 4:5, 4:6, and 4:7

**Quiz 8** (Located in Assignments. Answer One)

**Term Paper Due**