GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
Department of History & Art History  

U.S. HISTORY 120 - Spring 2007  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Building/Hall</th>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hist 120-010</td>
<td>Robinson B</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>Tuesday/Thursday</td>
<td>Noon-1.15 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hist 120-016</td>
<td>Robinson B</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>4.30-7.10 p.m.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hist 120-018</td>
<td>Robinson B</td>
<td>203</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>4.30-7.10 p.m.</td>
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INSTRUCTOR: Dr Kevin Matthews  
OFFICE: Robinson B 357A  
OFFICE HOURS: 2.30-4.15 p.m. Tuesdays & Thursdays, or by appointment.  
TELEPHONE: 703/993-1260  
E-MAIL: cmatthe2@gmu.edu  

TEACHING ASSISTANT: Ms. Giny Cheong  
E-MAIL: gcheong@gmu.edu  
OFFICE HOUR: To be announced  

REQUIRED TEXT & MATERIALS:  

1. Brinkley, Alan. *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People* - 4th edition (the combined edition covering history from the colonial period to the present)  
2. Three Scantron cards Form No. 882-E: three large blue books (11" x 8.5"). All three of your blue books must be delivered to the instructor no later than one week prior to the first exam. Failure to meet this deadline will be grounds for a failing grade on the first exam. (Note: If you drop the course, your unused blue books will be returned to you - but only after you have officially dropped the course.) You do not have to hand in your Scantron cards, but make sure you have one with you on each exam day.  

THE GENERAL EDUCATION MISSION:  

The mission of George Mason University's General Education Program is to educate, liberate, and broaden the mind, and to instill a lifelong love of learning. In conjunction with each student’s major program of study and other electives, minors, or certificates, this program seeks to produce graduates with intellectual vision, creative abilities, and moral sensibility, as well as the skills to assure a well-rounded and useable education. The General Education Program seeks to fulfill four specific goals:  

1. General education courses should first ensure that all undergraduates develop skills in information gathering, written and oral communication, and analytical and quantitative reasoning.  
2. General education courses should expose students to the development of knowledge by emphasizing major domains of thought and methods of inquiry.  
3. General education courses should enable students to attain a breadth of knowledge that supports their specializations and contributes to their education in both personal and professional ways.
4. General education courses should encourage students to make important connections across boundaries (for example: among disciplines; between the university and the external world; between the United States and other countries).

COURSE SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES - “An Ocean Apart?”:

This course is designed to provide a basic understanding of US history from the colonial period to the present. More to the point, it means to show how events through the course of this nation’s history continue to affect Americans politically, economically, and socially.

While most surveys of US history tend to look at the American past in isolation, I reject that approach. Nor do I see any purpose in forcing students to memorize a series of names, dates, and places.

Although the structure of this course will be broadly chronological, its approach is thematic. More to the point, it will examine trends and events in the American past within a broader, global context. For instance, this course will examine slavery within the wider Atlantic slave trade and, later, how slavery expanded as a result of the Industrial Revolution. Elsewhere, this course will look at the impact of the European Enlightenment on the American Revolution and the writing of the US Constitution and Bill of Rights; the ways in which patterns of immigration from both Europe and Asia have expanded the idea of what it means to be an “American”; the nation’s role in a period of world history known as imperialism - whose legacy is still being felt today in places such as Iraq. Finally, this course will examine the country’s evolution from a small, insignificant collection of states to the world’s single remaining superpower.

The overriding objective of this course is demonstrate that the United States has never been an isolated country - that it has never been “an ocean apart” - and to give to students a clear understanding of how the people and events covered in these sessions still affect their lives, today.

TEACHING TECHNIQUES & EXAMINATIONS:

Varied, although the emphasis will be on lectures, classroom discussions, and readings. Typically, I use what is called a “semi-Socratic” method of teaching. If you are prepared, your individual contribution to these discussions will lead to a more lively and interesting experience for everyone concerned. On a more prosaic level, your participation in class will benefit your final grade. Students who excel in this respect will benefit if their grades are borderline between a plus or minus; for example, a C might become a C+, or a B+ might become an A-.

All of the examinations will be composed of a mix of multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay questions. A study guide will be supplied prior to each of the three tests. The first exam will cover material assigned commencing with the first day of class up through the session prior to the exam itself. The second exam will only cover material between the first and second exams. Similarly, the final exam will only cover material after the second exam. In other words, these exams are not cumulative.

You are personally responsible for ensuring that you know the time and date of the exams that will be given for the section of the course in which you are enrolled. (Note: the dates for the first and second exams given in the course calendar are tentative.) You are expected to take the exam with your course section; students are not allowed to take exams at a time of their choosing. If you fail to show up
for an exam without a **documented excuse** (usually medical in nature), you will not be allowed to take a make-up exam. You will, instead, be given a zero grade without appeal. This applies, in particular, to the final exam; the dates for those tests are given at the end of the syllabus calendar.

**Make-up exams and quizzes** will be administered at a time and date that is mutually convenient to the instructor and student. It is up to each student to resolve the matter of make-up work with the instructor - not the other way around. Also, students who are permitted to take exams at the **testing center** must obtain the paperwork needed to do so **prior to each examination**.

**GRADING SCALE:**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First examination</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second (mid-term) examination</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final examination</td>
<td>35 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom participation/attendance and quizzes</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong></td>
<td>100 percent</td>
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90-100  A - signifies genuinely **remarkable, outstanding** work setting itself apart.

A+  97 - 100
A  93 - 96.9
A-  90 - 92.9

80-89  B - signifies work that is **above the average** expectations for this course.

B+  87 - 89.9
B  82 - 86.9
B-  80 - 81.9

70-79  C - signifies work that meets **average** university standards.

C+  77 - 79.9
C  72 - 76.9
C-  70 - 71.9

60-69  D - signifies work that is far **below average** but which is passable.

59-below  F - signifies failure.

**I do not, and I will not, grade on a curve. Nor is it possible to offer extra credit work - for any reason.** Students should instead devote their energies to the assignments laid out in this syllabus. If a student merits an “A”, that is the grade that he or she will receive. At the same time, I do not distribute grades based on some sort of percentage basis, meaning that only a certain number of students can earn an “A”, a certain number a “B”, and so forth. If every student deserves an “A”, that is the grade that each student will be given. Having said that, I again point out that “A” work as defined above is genuinely outstanding and shows complete mastery of the subject. While I hope that every student will strive to meet this standard, **it will not be easy to obtain such a grade.**
ATTENDANCE:

Since lectures and discussions are the foundations of this course, attendance of class sessions is mandatory. Each student is responsible for all material and all announcements presented at each lecture. Students should also be aware that they will be tested on material covered in class but which will not necessarily be found in the assigned readings - and vice versa. If a student must miss a class, (s)he should arrange to obtain class notes from a fellow student. Lecture notes will not - under any circumstances - be provided by the instructor or the Teaching Assistant.

Students should also note that a great amount of reading is required for this course. It is, therefore, important that each student should stay ahead of the readings so as to be prepared for classroom discussions. Failure to attend class on a regular basis will make it extremely difficult to keep abreast of the course as it develops and can only result in a lowering of the student’s final grade and, possibly, failure in the course. Specifically, the final course grades for students who fail to attend class on a regular basis (as determined by the instructor) will drop an entire letter grade - without exception. This is beyond the 10 percent part of your grade covered by “classroom participation/attendance and quizzes”. Valid excuses for missed lectures (again, usually medical in nature) must be in writing; verbal explanations will not be accepted for any reason.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Cheating and plagiarism - Either offense will constitute grounds for failure in the course. The university has a code governing academic ethics. Any student who is caught cheating on a quiz or exam or who plagiarizes will have his or her case sent to the Dean’s office for adjudication.

The Internet - The instructor’s and teaching assistant’s E-mail addresses are at the top of this syllabus & I will check messages on a regular basis. However, I prefer face-to-face communication. In other words, do not abuse the internet, i.e. please write to me only in an emergency. If a student repeatedly sends unnecessary messages, I will simply decline to respond.

Classroom decorum - Students are expected to show up for class on time and, once in class, to remain for the entire session, except in case of dire emergency. Arriving late or leaving in the middle of a lecture is disruptive and disrespectful to your fellow students. Those violate this rule can expect to receive a lower course grade.

Pagers and cell phones are to be turned off at the beginning of each class. Any attempt to use unauthorized devices during an examination will constitute grounds for failure of the course. You are welcome to bring drinks to class. However, eating during lectures & exams is forbidden. Put another way - I don’t lecture in your kitchen; don’t eat in my classroom.

University resources - George Mason University offers a range of services to assist students in achieving their academic goals and you are encouraged to make use of them. Among the services that you may find beneficial are:

* ACADEMIC SKILLS WORKSHOPS:
http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/acadwksp.htm
* COUNSELING CENTER AND LEARNING SERVICES (ACADEMIC WORKSHOPS, TUTORING, HELP WITH PERSONAL PROBLEMS) 703-933-2999, SUB I ROOM 354 http://www.gmu.edu/departments/csdc/

* ENGLISH LANGUAGE INSTITUTE (FOR NON-NATIVE SPEAKERS OF ENGLISH) 703-993-3664,  http://eli.gmu.edu/gmu_comm/workshops.htm

IMPORTANT DATES & READING ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments for Brinkley’s *Unfinished Nation* are listed below under “Readings”. You should read the assignments so that you will be able to discuss them during the week in which they are listed. For example, at the class meetings during Week 2, we will discuss the American Revolution. You should have read those parts of Chapter 5 that are listed for that week before you come to class. Sections of a chapter that should be given special attention are marked “Read”. Other sections that should be read are marked “Skim”. Sections marked “Skip” do not have to be read.

Week 1  22 - 26 January  

**Exploration & early settlement of North America**

22nd - **First** day of classes  
23rd - **First** meeting of HIST 120/010, HIST 120/016  
25th - **First** meeting of HIST 120/018

Readings: Chapters 1-3

**Chapter 1** - Skim (lightly) p. 1-19; Read “The Arrival of the English”, p. 19-25.

**Chapter 2** - Skim p. 27-34; Skip “Bacon’s Rebellion, p. 34-35; Read “Growth of New England”, p. 36-40; Skip “King Philip’s War”, p. 41-42; Read “The English Civil War”, p. 42-43; Skim from “The Carolinas”, p. 43-47; Skip “The Caribbean Islands”, p. 47-54; Read “Development of Empire”, p. 54-57.

**Chapter 3** - Skim p. 59-61; Skip “Medicine in the Colonies”, p. 61-62; Skim “Women & Families”, p. 63; Read “The Beginnings of Slavery” & “Changing Sources of European Immigration”, p. 64-67; Skip “Colonial Economies”, p. 69-72; Read “Rise of Colonial Commerce”, p. 72-73, & make special note of the map on p. 73; Skip from the bottom of p. 73 to p. 81; Read the “Great Awakening” & “Enlightenment”, p. 81-82; Skip up to p. 87 & Read “Conclusion”, p 87.

Week 2  29 January - 2 February  

**Colonial America & Revolution**

Readings: Chapters 4-5

**Chapter 4** - Read from the beginning of the chapter, p. 91 to p. 101; Skim from “Stirrings of Revolt” to the end of the chapter.

**Chapter 5** - Read p. 117-122; Skip “Debating the Past”, p.120-121; Skim from “War of Independence”, p. 122-133; Skip from “Native Americans”, p. 133 to p. 135; Skim from “Creation of State Governments”, p. 135 to the end of the chapter.
Week 3  5 - 9 February  The Constitution & the Bill of Rights

6th - **Last day to add a course** or to **drop a course for a 100% refund**

Readings: **Chapter 6-7**
- **Chapter 6** - Read p. 147-158; Skim “Establishing National Sovereignty”, p. 158-165.
- **Chapter 7** - Read p. 167; Skip p. 168-171; Read “Religion & Revivalism”, p. 171, only; Skip p. 172-173; Read from “Stirrings of Industrialism”, p. 173-185; Skip “Burr Conspiracy”, p. 186-187; Skim “Expansion and War”, p. 188-197; Read “Peace Settlement” & “Conclusion”, p. 197-198.

Week 4  12 - 16 February  The early American republic

13th - Last day to drop a course for a 33% tuition penalty

Readings: **Chapters 8-10**
- **Chapter 8** - Read Introduction, p. 201; Skip “Stabilizing Economic Growth”, p. 201-202; Read “Transportation” through “Great Migration”, p. 202-205; Skip p. 205-213; Read “Marshall & the Court”, p. 213-217; Skip “Revival of Opposition”, p. 217-218; Read from “Jackson Triumphant”, p. 219-220.
- **Chapter 9** - Read introductory paragraph, p. 223; Skip from “Rise of Mass Politics”, p. 223-231; Read “Removal of the Indians”, p. 231-235; Skip from “Jackson & the Bank War”, p. 235-245; Read “Conclusion”, p. 245.
- **Chapter 10** - Read p. 249-259; Skip from “Commerce & Industry”, p. 259-middle p. 262; Read “Men & Women at Work”, p. 262-264; Skip “Factory System & Artisan Tradition”, p. 264 to p. 270; Read “Changing Family” & “Cult of Domesticity”, p. 270-271; Skip up to then read “Conclusion”, p. 277.

Week 5  19 - 23 February  Staring into the abyss

19th - Mid-term progress reporting period begins (ends 23 March)
20th - **First examination** for HIST 120/010, HIST 120/016 (tentative date)
22nd - **First examination** for HIST 120/018 (tentative date)
23rd - Last day to drop a course for a 67% tuition penalty; **Last day to drop a course**

Readings: **Chapters 11-13**
- **Chapter 11** - You can skip the entire chapter - but Read “Slave Resistance”, p. 296-298.
- **Chapter 12** - Read the introduction, p. 305; Skip up to p. 320; Read “Crusade Against Slavery”through “Conclusion”, p. 320-327.
- **Chapter 13** - Skim p. 331-346; Skip p. 347-348; Read p. 349-351; Skip from “Pro-Slavery Argument, p. 351-353; Read “Dred Scott Decision”, p. 353, through the end of the chapter, p. 358.
Week 6  26 February - 2 March  Civil War & Reconstruction

Readings: Chapters 14-15

- **Chapter 15** - Read p. 397-410; Skip “Debating the Past”, p. 404; Skip p. 411-415; Read “Abandonment of Reconstruction”, p. 415-419; Skip “New South”, p. 419-422; Read “Birth of Jim Crow”, p. 423-427.

Week 7  5 - 9 March  Industrial America/Imperial America

Readings: Chapters 16-20

- **Chapter 16** - Read p. 429-430; Skip p. 431-432; Read from “Chinese Migration”, p. 432-435; Skip from mid-p. 435- middle of p. 441; Read “The Romance of the West”, p. 441-449, but Skip “Debating the Past”, p. 444-445; Skip, p. 450-454; Read “Conclusion”, p. 454-455.
- **Chapter 17** - Read p. 457; Skip p. 458-467; Read “Capitalism & its Critics”, p. 467-469; Skip p. 470-472; Read “The Ordeal of the Worker”, p. 472-474; Skim p. 474-479; Read “Conclusion”, p. 480.
- **Chapter 19** - Read Introduction, p. 517; Skip to “Conclusion” & Read p. 532-533.
- **Chapter 20** - Read p. 535-537; Skip “Hawaii & Samoa”, p. 537-541; Read “Imperialism”, p. 538-539; Read “War with Spain” p. 541, to the end of the chapter.

Week 8  12 - 16 March  Spring Break (no class meetings)

Week 9  19 - 23 March  The Progressives

23rd - Mid-term progress reporting period ends

Readings: Chapters 21-22

- **Chapter 21** - Read p. 557-559; Skip from “Settlement House Movement”, p. 559-570; Read “Sources of Progressive Reform”, p. 570-573; Skip “Crusades for Order & Reform”, p. 573-577; Read “Conclusion”, p. 578.
- **Chapter 22** - Read Introduction and “Theodore Roosevelt & the Progressive Presidency”, p. 581-584; Skip p. 585-588; Read, p. 589 to the end of the chapter.

Week 10  26 - 30 March  The “Great War”: America as a world power

Readings: Chapter 23

- **Chapter 23** - You are required to read the entire chapter.
Week 11  2 - 6 April  America between the wars

  3rd - **Second examination** for HIST 120/010, HIST 120/016 (tentative date)
  5th - **Second examination** for HIST 120/018 (tentative date)

Readings: **Chapters 24-26**
  **Chapter 24** - Skim p. 627-640; Read “Religious Fundamentalism”, p. 641-642; Skip to but Read the “Conclusion”, p. 646.
  **Chapter 25** - Read p. 649-653; Skip p. 654-655; Read “The Global Depression”, p. 656-657; Skip from bottom of p. 657 to the bottom of p. 662; Read “The Movies”, p. 662-664; Skip from the bottom of p. 664 to the middle of p. 669; Read from “Popular Protest”, p. 669 to the end of the chapter.
  **Chapter 26** - Read p. 677-679; Skim from “Agricultural Adjustment”, p. 679-689; Read “Social Security”, p. 689-690; Skim from middle p. 690 to middle p. 694; Skip from “Limits and Legacies of the New Deal” to p. 698; Read “The New Deal, the Economy, & Politics” & “Conclusion”, p. 698-699.

Week 12  9 - 13 April  From world war to cold war

Readings: **Chapters 27-29**

Week 13  16 - 20 April  “The Affluent Society”: America in the 50s & 60s

Readings: **Chapter 30**
  **Chapter 30** - Read p. 779-781; Skip “Rise of the West”, p. 781-787; Read from “Bombs, Rockets, & Missiles”, p. 787-793; Skip “Organized Society” p. 793-795; Skim from “Rock ‘n’ Roll”, p. 795 to p. 799; Read from “Rise of the Civil Rights Movement” p. 799 to the end of the chapter.

Week 14  23 - 27 April  The agony of Vietnam

Readings: **Chapters 30-32**
  **Chapter 31** - Skim p. 813-824; Skip “Flexible Response”, except for any pages mentioned in lectures, p. 824-827; Read from “Agony of Vietnam” p. 827 to the end of the chapter.
  **Chapter 32** - Skim p. 843-847; Skip p. 848-852; Skim “New Feminism”, p. 852-855; Skip “Environmentalism”, p. 855-859; Read “Nixon, Kissinger, & the War”, p. 860-875.
Week 15 30 April - 4 May  Modern Times

1st - Last class meeting of HIST 120/016
3rd - Last class meeting of HIST 120/010, HIST 120/018

Readings: Chapters 33-34

Chapter 33 - Skim 879-883; Read beginning with “The Year of the Hostages”, p. 883 through p. 890; Skim “The Reagan Revolution”, p. 890-897; Read “America and the waning of the cold war”, p. 897 to the end of the chapter.

Chapter 34 - Skim p. 909-910; Read “A Resurgence of partisanship”, p. 910 to the bottom of p. 916; Skim “The Election of 2000”, p. 916-924; Skip “Science and technology in the new economy”, p. 924-936; Skim “A contested culture”, p. 936, to the end of the chapter.

Week 16/17 7 - 16 May  Final exams period

7th - 8th - Reading Days

Final exam schedule

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hist 120-010</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>15th May</td>
<td>10.30 a.m. - 1.15 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hist 120-016</td>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>8th May</td>
<td>4.30 p.m. - 7.30 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hist 120-018</td>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>10th May</td>
<td>4.30 p.m. - 7.30 p.m.</td>
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PLEASE NOTE: ALL DATES AND ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO SLIGHT MODIFICATION DEPENDING UPON UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES.