



Basic Course Information

Semester:	Spring 2026	Instructor Name:	Bradford Wright
Course Title & #:	HIST 120 "US from Prehistory to Reconstruction"	Email:	bradford.wright@imperial.edu
CRN #:	20273	Webpage (optional):	
Classroom:	413	Office #:	203H
Class Dates:	Feb. 17-June 12	Office Hours:	M: 11:00-12:00 by email; T: 1:00-1:30 on campus; W: 11:00-12:30 by email; R: 1:00-2:00 on campus
Class Days:	Tuesday; Thursday	Office Phone #:	760-355-6597
Class Times:	9:40-11:05	Emergency Contact:	760-355-6144
Units:	3.0	Class Format/Modality:	On ground

Course Description

This course is a survey of American history from the pre-Columbian era to the end of Reconstruction. This course will cover the major political, economic, social, gender, racial, cultural and intellectual transformations of the colonial and early American eras. At the completion of this course students will have a broad understanding of the most important ideas, personalities, movements, and events in the colonial and early American periods.(CSU,UC)

Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

None

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Identify and recall key information from a historical text and/or a documentary film. (ILO1)
2. Describe the causes and/or impact of a historical event. (ILO1, ILO2)
3. Explain and analyze the key information contained in a primary source document. (ILO1, ILO2)



Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to: Identify the major events and key intellectual, cultural, social, political and economic trends in United States history from the pre-Columbian period to 1877, and identify and understand the significance of important personalities and ideas in United States history before 1877. Specifically: 1. Describe the peoples and cultures existing in North America before European contact; 2. Describe European exploration of North America and early colonization efforts; 3. Describe the British colonies of North America and explain the role of the colonies within the British empire. 4. Discuss and analyze labor relations, indentured servants and slavery in British North America; 5. Understand colonial-Native American and U.S.-Native American relations; 6. Understand the factors that led to the American Revolution and the key events, personalities and effects of the Revolutionary War; 7. Understand how the American political and legal system was created and how it functioned in the early national period; 8. Identify important political trends and figures and the rise of political parties in ante-bellum America; 9. Understand U.S. foreign policy before 1877; 10. Explain the evolution of the market economy of the nineteenth century; 11. Explain how technology shaped culture, social arrangements, leisure, family life, and work; 12. Understand how immigrants impacted society, politics and culture; 13. Explain the status of women before 1877; 14. Understand the role of sectionalism in early American history; 15. Describe how religion impacted society, intellectual currents, and political thought; 16. Analyze Westward expansion, Manifest Destiny and the Mexican-American War; 17. Discuss the major factors that led to the Civil War and the key events and personalities of that war; 18. Understand the significance of the Civil War on society, race relations, economics, and politics; 19. Describe the process of post-Civil War Reconstruction and the challenges and opportunities faced by the nation and people until 1877.

Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

The following textbook is **recommended** for the course:

Michael Schaller, *American Horizons: US History in a Global Context, vol. 1, 5th ed.* ISBN: 978-0197767375.

Course Requirements and Instructional Methods

Attend class by logging into Canvas daily, Mondays through Thursdays. Read assignments in textbook, read and view written and/or video lectures, and view required videos through links provided. Participate in weekly discussions, complete written assignments, quizzes, and exams by the dates due.

Out of Class Assignments: The Department of Education policy states that one (1) credit hour is the amount of student work that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of class time and two (2) hours of out-of-class time per week over the span of a semester. WASC has adopted a similar requirement.



Course Grading Based on Course Objectives

Final grades will be determined according to accumulated points for each exam.

Exam 1: 200 points

Exam 2: 200 points

Exam 3: 200 points

Exam 4: 200 points

Academic Honesty (Artificial Intelligence -AI)

IVC values critical thinking and communication skills and considers academic integrity essential to learning. Using AI tools as a replacement for your own thinking, writing, or quantitative reasoning goes against both our mission and academic honesty policy and will be considered academic dishonesty, or plagiarism unless you have been instructed to do so by your instructor. In case of any uncertainty regarding the ethical use of AI tools, students are encouraged to reach out to their instructors for clarification.

Course Policies

ATTENDANCE:

- Students are required to log into Canvas and review course materials, announcements, and complete any required assignments each day of the class week, Monday through Thursday.
- A student who fails to attend the first meeting of a class or does not complete the first mandatory activity of an online class will be dropped by the instructor as of the first official meeting of that class. Should readmission be desired, the student's status will be the same as that of any other student who desires to add a class. It is the student's responsibility to drop or officially withdraw from the class. See [General Catalog](#) for details.
- Regular attendance in all classes is expected of all students. A student whose continuous, unexcused absences exceed the number of hours the class is scheduled to meet per week may be dropped. For online courses, students who fail to complete required activities for two consecutive weeks may be considered to have excessive absences and may be dropped.
- Absences attributed to the representation of the college at officially approved events (conferences, contests, and field trips) will be counted as 'excused' absences.

Other Course Information

1. **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

In addition to the above warning about AI, there are many different forms of academic dishonesty. The following kinds of honesty violations and their definitions are not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, they are intended to serve as examples of unacceptable academic conduct.

- Plagiarism is taking and presenting as one's own the writings or ideas of others, without citing the source. You should understand the concept of plagiarism and keep it in mind when taking exams and preparing written materials. If you do not understand how to "cite a source" correctly, you must ask for help.
- Cheating is defined as fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.

Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero (0) on the exam or assignment, and the instructor may report the incident to the Campus Disciplinary Officer, who may place related documentation in a file. Repeated acts of cheating may result in an F in the course and/or disciplinary action. Please refer to the [General Catalog](#) for more information on academic dishonesty or other misconduct. Acts of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) plagiarism; (b) copying or attempting to copy from others during an examination or on an assignment; (c) communicating test information with another person during an examination; (d) allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment; (e) using a commercial term paper service.

How do I show academic honesty and integrity in an online "classroom"?

• KEEP YOUR PASSWORDS CONFIDENTIAL.

- You have a unique password to access online software like Canvas. Never allow someone else to log-in to your account.

• COMPLETE YOUR OWN COURSEWORK.

- When you register for an online class and log-in to Canvas, you do so with the understanding that you will produce your own work, take your own exams, and will do so without the assistance of others (unless directed by the instructor).

Examples of Academic Dishonesty that can occur in an online environment:

- Copying from others on a quiz, test, examination, or assignment;



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- Allowing someone else to copy your answers on a quiz, test, exam, or assignment;
 - Having someone else take an exam or quiz for you;
 - Conferring with others during a test or quiz (if the instructor didn't explicitly say it was a group project, then he/she expects you to do the work without conferring with others);
 - Buying or using a term paper or research paper from an internet source or other company or taking any work of another, even with permission, and presenting the work as your own;
 - Excessive revising or editing by others that substantially alters your final work;
 - Sharing information that allows other students an advantage on an exam (such as telling a peer what to expect on a make-up exam or prepping a student for a test in another section of the same class);
 - Taking and using the words, work, or ideas of others and presenting any of these as your own work is plagiarism. This applies to all work generated by another, whether it be oral, written, or artistic work. Plagiarism may either be deliberate or unintentional.

IVC Student Resources

IVC wants you to be successful in all aspects of your education. For help, resources, services, and an explanation of policies, visit <http://www.imperial.edu/studentresources> or click the heart icon in Canvas.

Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar:

Feb. 17: Introduction

Feb. 19: The Europeans' New World

Read Schaller, Chapters 1-2

Feb. 24: The New England Way

Read Schaller, Chapter 3

Feb. 26: English Transplantations and Growing Pains

Read Schaller, Chapter 4

March 3: The Colonies in the British Empire

Read Schaller, Chapter 5

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March 5: The Great Conspiracy

Read Schaller, Chapter 6

March 10: Independence

Read Schaller, Chapter 7

March 12: The War for Independence

March 17: Exam I

March 19: The American Revolution

Read Schaller, Chapter 7

March 24: The Framing of the Constitution

March 26: The New Republic and the Birth of American Politics

Read Schaller, Chapter 8

March 31: The Era of Jefferson

April 2: The War of 1812

Spring Break: April 6-10

April 14: Exam II

April 16: "Mill Times:" The Market Revolution

Read Schaller, Chapter 9

April 21: Individualism and Democracy: The Age of Jackson

Read Schaller, Chapters 10-11

April 23: Religion and Reform

Read Schaller, Chapter 12

April 28: The Old South and Slavery

April 30: The Abolitionists



May 5: Democratic Amusements and the Rise of American Literature

May 7: Exam II

May 12: Manifest Destiny and the Mexican War

Read Schaller, Chapter 13

May 14: Compromise and Crisis

May 19: A House Divided

May 21: Secession and Civil War

Read Schaller, Chapter 14

May 26: The Civil War, 1861-62 and Emancipation

May 28: The End of the Civil War, 1863-65

June 2: Reconstruction and the Legacy of the Civil War

Read Schaller, Chapter 15

June 4: Final Thoughts and Review

June 9: Final Exam

*****Subject to change without prior notice*****