

Course Info & Requirements

Description

At its most rudimentary level, **History 621** is a chronological survey course examining the history of the region we now call the United States. By the time June comes along, you will be expected to know the major events, figures, and social, cultural, economic, and political developments dating from the pre-Columbian era to the mid-20th century. To provide the necessary background, we will use a concise textbook, *The American Nation: Creating a Nation and a Society* (Concise Seventh Edition) [hereafter referred to as **Nash**]. I will also deliver background lectures. At the same time, History 621 is also a course that asks each student to consider seriously what it means to be a historian. The most important materials that we will work with will be a rich variety of primary sources and scholarly writings. The primary sources include everything from legislation, speeches, and broadsides to paintings, photos, and artifacts and even to music, movies, and radio broadcasts. Like professional historians, we will closely examine these primary materials, make efforts to place them in their historical context, and use them to make historical arguments of our own. Our classroom work will also focus around the discussion of historical accounts and interpretations offered by a range of historians. These “secondary” works, often in the form of scholarly articles from major historical journals, will serve a number of purposes. The readings will show you how historians make arguments and reach conclusions. They will introduce you to many of the most important historical debates and controversies. The readings will also introduce you to new and, sometimes, less conventional areas of historical study.

Outline

We will generally follow the chronology of your textbook; as such, the major themes that we will address are as follows:

Unit 1: Approaching History

Why Study History?
From History to Historiography
The Rise of the New Social History
Writing a History Essay
The History Standards Controversy

Unit 2: Contact & Colonization

The Americas before Columbus
Native Americans & Contact
European Settlement, 1492-1730
Early Colonial Society

Unit 3: Paths to Revolution

The Great Awakening
Imperial Wars
Prelude to the Revolution
Interpreting the Revolution

Unit 4: Creating a Republic

Independence
The Revolution Within
Creating Republican Institutions
Shays Rebellion & the Constitution
Crisis of the 1790s

Unit 5: A Nation in Transformation

The Market & Industrial Revolutions
Democratic Expansion
Jacksonian Democracy
The Whig Worldview

Unit 6: A House Dividing

The 2nd Great Awakening
The Peculiar Institution
Abolitionism
Manifest Destiny & Westward Expansion
The Crisis of the 1850s
The Election of 1860 & Secession
Strategy & Tactics
Emancipation
Lincoln
Why the North Won (or the South Lost)

Unit 7: A Gilded Age

Political Dimension of Reconstruction
Social Dimension of Reconstruction
The West
Industrialization
Capitol and Labor
Gilded Age Politics
Jim Crow and Segregation
Populism

Unit 8: A Progressive Era/A New Deal

Progressivism
America in the World
The Great War & its Aftermath
The Twenties
Depression & New Deal

Unit 9: World War II & its Aftermath

WWII
The Cold War Abroad
The Cold War at Home

Assignments

History 621 meets four or five times a cycle (the Red Section does not have a double period). Assignments are always posted on the course website, located at <http://www.trinityhistory.org/AH>, which should be your starting point each day. It is where all assignments, study questions, readings to be downloaded as well as ancillary materials such as maps, images, charts, optional readings, and web links can be found. You are expected to come to class on time, having done the readings, completed written assignments if requested, and ready to talk, discuss, and ask questions. The goal of nightly assignments is to stimulate engagement on your part. I **do not** expect you to have mastered the material in preparation for each class meeting, to come to class with a competency that will enable you to participate. As this is a discussion-based course,

everyone is expected to participate regularly and to contribute to class so that we can work together to master the material by the time an assessment comes along. Consistent lack of participation will affect your overall grade. At the same time, you must listen to each other and make an effort to encourage your classmates to speak. Again, the goal of nightly homework is to be able to sufficiently engage in and gain from the work of the classroom. On average, a nightly assignment should take 40 to 45 minutes. If you are having difficulty keeping up with your assignments or they are taking too long, you should schedule a meeting with me to discuss study strategies. With the exception of **Nash Textbook**, you must **print out and bring all readings**, to class. Keeping up with assignments is the key to doing well in this class. On occasion, I will collect your homework assignments. If you know an assignment will be collected, you **must type** it.

Texts

- **Gary B. Nash, Julie Roy Jeffrey, et. al.**, *The American People: Creating a Nation and a Society, Vols. 1 & 2* (Concise Seventh Edition) [Hereafter referred to as **Nash**.]
- **Mary Lynn Rampolla**, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History (Seventh Edition)*. [Referred to as **PG**.]

Notebook

I do not require any particular kind of notebook for your note taking and for maintaining your handouts and printouts. But no matter the system you employ, you are required to bring your notes, handouts, homework, quizzes, and documents for a particular unit to class. You should make every effort to include the date, the page numbers and a brief title on your notes and homework assignments. The more organized your notebook, the easier it will be to prepare for tests, quizzes and essays. If I feel the need, I will collect your notebook and assess it based on the above criteria.

Assessments

If I find it necessary, you will have short (5 – 10 minute) quizzes to make sure that you have done the readings. At the end of major units or after a significant number of assignments, you will have an in-class short-answer test or a take-home essay. When you are assigned an essay, it must be typed with no grammatical or spelling errors. Unless otherwise noted, take-home essays are due by **the end of the Ad Hoc** in the basket on my desk on the day that they are due. Make sure that you have **stapled** your paper before handing it in. Late papers will lose **1/3 a letter grade** for each day that they are late. Be aware that each weekend and vacation day constitutes a full day. If you think you will need an extension for a paper, you must ask at least **two days** before the due date though I generally do not give extensions since I give more than a week to write an essay. **I do not accept essays via email**. If you know that you will not be in school on the day an essay is due, you must have someone hand in your essay for you. This is the case even if you are sick on the day that it is due.

Current Events & Political/Economic Literacy

Periodically, we will discuss current events or other issues and content intended to help you develop your political and economic literacy. I am open to suggestions as to topics to cover.

Absences and Lateness

If you are absent from a class, find out what you missed. All information is provided on the website. Do **NOT** wait until class to find out what was due. If you miss a test, **you must email me to set up a time to take a make-up**. If I do not hear from you, I will expect that you take it immediately upon your return to school. Please review the section on attendance in the *Upper School Handbook*. You should make every effort to come to class on time. Repeated lateness will lower your participation grade.

Grades:

Quizzes, collected assignments, unit tests, essays, and class participation will all together determine your grade. There will also be an extended research paper during the second semester. Grades are based on the criteria explained in the *Upper School Handbook*. Note: You **must** receive a **passing grade** on the final paper in order to **pass** the course.

A Word about Plagiarism and Tutoring

You **must do** your own work and you **must not** plagiarize! Familiarize yourself with Trinity's policy on academic integrity and plagiarism in the *Upper School Handbook* as well as the History Department's policy on outside help. If you are confused as to what "doing your own work" or plagiarism means or if you find yourself worried that you are in fact plagiarizing, come see me. Though help from a friend, parent, or tutor can be appropriate, **excessive** help is not. In fact, you must notify me if you have received any help from a tutor and what the nature of that help was. Ignorance or parental approval is no defense. Anyone caught not doing their own work or plagiarizing will receive a zero on the assignment and risk failing the course. If you have received help on an assignment from a tutor, you must acknowledge that you have received such help in writing at the end of your assignment.