The Development of American Culture (79-240)

This is an introductory survey of American history from the colonial era to recent times. It focuses on cultural issues instead of presidents, wars, and chronological facts. The major theme of the course is how the meanings of “freedom” have changed over 300 years. The learning objectives for this course are for students to be able to:

- Understand major debates about political, economic, and personal freedom over 300 years of American life;
- Interpret primary sources (both documents and books) orally and in writing, using the background information provided in lectures;
- Write formal essays that analyze assigned books, by placing them in the context of what freedom meant at particular times in history; and
- Demonstrate mastery, on midterm exams, of major ideas and relevant facts from Eric Foner’s *The Story of American Freedom*.

Grades are based upon an interpretation exercise (week two, 5 points), a quiz on the Bill of Rights (week five, 5 points), two midterms (20 points each), one short essay (15 points), a final paper (25 points), and attendance/participation (10 points) including pop quizzes in recitations, *should they be necessary*.

Attendance is taken at all lectures and recitations sections.

REQUIRED READINGS:

Young, *The Shoemaker and the Tea Party* (Beacon)
Blight, *A Slave No More* (Harcourt)
Standiford, *Meet You in Hell* (Three Rivers)
Beals, *Warriors Don’t Cry* (Simon Pulse)
O’Brien, *If I Die in a Combat Zone* (Broadway)

COURSE WEBSITE: [http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/](http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/)
Your One and Only Warning: Zero Tolerance of Cheating & Plagiarism

Plagiarism means using words, ideas, or arguments from another person or source without acknowledgment. Cite all sources consulted to any extent (including material from the internet), whether or not assigned and whether or not quoted directly. For quotations, four or more words used in sequence must be set off in quotation marks and the source must be identified by both a citation within the paper and on a separate page identifying all “Sources Consulted” -- not “Works Cited” (notice the distinction?).

Any form of cheating on assignments will immediately earn you an ‘R’ grade for the entire course. By choosing to remain enrolled in my course, you consent to this policy.

In addition, I will seek the harshest official penalties under CMU’s cheating, plagiarism, and unauthorized assistance policies at:

http://www.cmu.edu/academic-integrity/

and

http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/Academic%20Integrity.htm

You are also urged to review the relevant section of your Carnegie Mellon student handbook (“The Word”):

http://www.cmu.edu/student-affairs/theword/acad_standards/integrity.html

Many students are surprised that CMU’s definition of cheating encompasses a wide range of actions that you might not expect to be prohibited. One example is unauthorized collaboration with other people.

If you have never taken time to read these guidelines in the student handbook, it is in your best interest to do so today. Save us both some time and grief, OK?
WEEK ONE: AMERICAN CULTURES


Wed, 2 Sept: Lecture, “How Joe Camel Conquered Virginia”


(To give you time to buy the required books, a PDF of Foner’s Intro & Ch. 1 is available at [http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/](http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/))

Fri, 4 Sept: Discussion

Read before class: Foner, ch. 1

WEEK TWO: CITY UPON A HILL

Mon, 7 Sept: NO CLASS, LABOR DAY

Reading assignment: “What Really Happened at the Boston Massacre?”
[http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/](http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/)

Wed, 9 Sept: Lecture, “How to Stuff a Wild Turkey”

Read again before class: “What Really Happened at the Boston Massacre?”
[http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/](http://www.cmu.edu/blackboard/)

Fri, 11 Sept: Discussion

Read before class: Young, *The Shoemaker...*, pp. vii-57

>> Interpretation Exercise due in sections (5 points): Write a 2-page (typed) story of what you think happened at the Boston Massacre. On a 3rd page, a) list eyewitnesses you did/did not believe; and b) write a paragraph about how you made your judgments. <<

WEEK THREE: HISTORY VERSUS MEMORY

Mon, 14 Sept: Lecture, “How jcrew.com sells the ‘American Paradox’ ”

Read before class: Young, pp. 58-91

Wed, 16 Sept: Lecture, “How to Tame a Wild Revolution”

Read before class: Young, pp. 92-131
Fri, 18 Sept: Discussion
Read before class: Foner, ch. 2

**WEEK FOUR: GOT RIGHTS?**

No reading assignment

>> *Short essay (15 points) due: upload to Blackboard by 11:59 p.m. <<*

Wed, 23 Sept: Lecture, “Why the Constitutional Convention Wasn’t BYOB”
Read before class: *United States Constitution: What it Says, What it Means* (pp. iii-25)

Fri, 25 Sept: Discussion
Read Before Class: *Constitution* (pp. 25-50)

**WEEK FIVE: SPECULATORS AND SPINSTERS**

Read Before Class: Foner, ch. 3

Wed, 30 Sept: Film: “Sins of Our Mothers”
Read before class: Foner, ch. 4

Fri, 2 Oct: Discussion
Read before class: Foner, ch. 5

>> *Bill of Rights Quiz (5 points) <<*

**WEEK SIX: TRUTH (AND TEARS) GO MARCHING ON**

Mon, 5 Oct: Lecture, “Why Cherokees Wore Stovepipe Hats”
Read before class: *Slave No More*, prologue and ch. 1 (pp. 1-54)

Wed, 7 Oct: Lecture, “How They Knew John Brown was Crazy”
Read before class: *Slave No More*, Ch. 2 (pp. 55-89)
Fri, 9 Oct: Discussion

Read before class: *Slave No More*, chs. 3-4 and “Author’s note” (pp. 90-163)

**WEEK SEVEN: “THENCEFORWARD, AND FOREVER FREE” ... AGENTS**

Mon, 12 Oct: Lecture, “Why Abe Lincoln Returned that Stupid Book”

Read before class: *Slave No More*, Journal of Wallace Turnage (pp. 213-258) and skim footnotes (265-299)


Read before class: Foner, ch. 6

Fri, 16 Oct: Discussion

Read before class: *The Constitution*, Amendments 13-15

**WEEK EIGHT: “TESTING WHETHER THAT NATION . . .”**

Mon, 19 Oct: Exam Review Session

No reading assignment

Wed, 21 Oct: First midterm examination (essay format, 20 points)

Fri, 23 Oct: MID-SEMESTER BREAK – NO SECTIONS THIS WEEK

Reading for today: Standiford, *Meet You in Hell*, prelude and chs. 1-2 (pp. 3-28)

**WEEK NINE: OUR ILLUSTRIOUS FOUNDER**

Mon, 26 Oct: Lecture, “How J.D.R. Became S.O.C.”

Read before class: Standiford, chs. 3-9 (pp. 29-105)

Wed, 28 Oct: Film: “Andrew Carnegie”

Read before class: Standiford, chs. 10-16 (pp. 109-179)

Fri, 30 Oct: Discussion

Read before class: Standiford, chs. 17-24 (pp. 180-258)
WEEK TEN: MODERNISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Read before class: Standiford, chs. 25-29 (pp. 259-310)

Wed, 4 Nov: Lecture, “How Toothbrushes Caused the Depression”
Read before class: Foner, pp. 146-151 and ch. 9

Fri, 6 Nov: Discussion
Read before class: Foner, ch. 10; and The Constitution, Amendments 16-22

WEEK ELEVEN: OF THEE THEY SANG

Mon, 9 Nov: Lecture, “Why it’s Hard to Sing the National Anthem”
Read before class: Foner, ch. 11

Wed, 11 Nov: Lecture, “What They Did to Mrs. Till’s Boy”
Read before class: Foner, ch. 12

Fri, 13 Nov: Discussion
Read before class: Beals, Warriors Don’t Cry, chs. 1-4

WEEK TWELVE: UNTAMED REVOLUTIONS

Mon, 16 Nov: Lecture, “When the Ballot Box Became the Boob Tube”
Read before class: Beals, chs. 5-8

Wed, 18 Nov: Midterm Review Session
Read before class: Beals, chs. 9-14

Fri, 20 Nov: Discussion
Read before class: Beals, chs. 15-18 & Epilogue
WEEK THIRTEEN: PROFESSOR SANDAGE IS A JERK

Mon, 23 Nov:   Second midterm examination (essay format, 20 points)

Wed, 25 Nov:   NO LECTURE – THANKSGIVING BREAK

   Read over break: O’Brien, chs. 1-4

Fri, 27 Nov:   NO SECTIONS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

   Read over break: O’Brien, chs. 1-4

WEEK FOURTEEN: WELCOME TO NIXONLAND

Mon, 30 Nov:  Lecture, “Why LBJ Thought We Were in Vietnam”

   Read before Class: O’Brien, chs. 5-10

Wed, 2 Dec:   Lecture, “What’s So Tricky about Dick”

   Read before Class: O’Brien, chs. 11-16

Fri, 4 Dec:   Discussion

   Read before Class: Constitution, Amendments 23-27

WEEK FIFTEEN: ANOTHER TEA PARTY

Mon, 7 Dec:   Lecture, “What Happened Just Before You Did”

   Read before class: O’Brien, chs. 17-23 (end)

Wed, 9 Dec:   Final Lecture

   Read before class: Foner, ch. 13

Fri, 11 Dec:   Final Discussion
STUDENT INFORMATION

Name: ___________________________  Major(s): ___________________________

Email: ___________________________  Phone: ___________________________

Disabilities or special needs: ________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

Class year: _____________________  Hometown: ______________________________

Your hero(es): ________________________________________________________________

Favorite book(s): _____________________________________________________________

Anything else I need to know about you? __________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________

STUDENT GRADE RECORDS

Interpretation exercise   ____ out of 5 points

Bill of Rights quiz   ____ out of 5 points

First midterm:   ____ out of 20 points

Short essay:   ____ out of 15 points

MID-SEM LETTER GRADE: ______

Second midterm:   ____ out of 20 points

Final paper:   ____ out of 25 points

Attendance/participation:   ____ out of 10 points

Pop Quiz Scores: ______________________________________________________________

Comments on Participation: ______________________________________________________

Dates absent: _________________________________________________________________

TOTAL POINTS: _____ (OUT OF 100)  FINAL SEMESTER LETTER GRADE: ______