

# **THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA: FROM COLONY TO EMPIRE**

**Degree:** International Relations

**Plan:** 2009

**Academic Course:** 2025-2026

Lecturer: **Nigel Townson.**

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## **Tutorials:**

Any doubts or questions regarding the subject can be resolved either in class or by means of a tutorial, which can be requested via email: [ntownson@cps.ucm.es](mailto:ntownson@cps.ucm.es)

Tutorial session: Tuesdays 17.30.-18.30.

## **Student Card:**

All students should hand in their student cards for this subject by 30 January 2026.

## **Campus Virtual:**

All the materials for the course will be made available via Moodle. You will need an UCM email to access the *Campus Virtual*.

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## **THEMES:**

- 1) THE NATIVE AMERICANS: PAST AND PRESENT
- 2) COLONISATION: THE CLASH OF CULTURES
- 3) THE CONSTITUTION: YESTERDAY AND TODAY
- 4) 'MANIFEST DESTINY' AND THE CIVIL WAR: THE LEGACY OF RACISM
- 5) THE SECOND INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND THE EMERGENCE OF A WORLD POWER
- 6) THE FIRST WORLD WAR, THE 'RED SCARE' AND RACISM
- 7) THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND THE NEW DEAL
- 8) THE SECOND WORLD WAR, THE END OF ISOLATION AND THE COLD WAR
- 9) THE STRUGGLE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS, THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT AND THE VIETNAM WAR
- 10) NEO-LIBERALISM AND AMERICA TODAY: THE TRUMP REVOLUTION, THE #METOO MOVEMENT, THE 'ROBBED' ELECTION OF 2020 AND AMERICA TODAY

## **SUBJECT ASSESSMENT:**

1. **Attendance and Participation:** 30%.
2. **Seminars:** 30%. This will be assessed by means of a brief essay (1,500 words maximum) on one of the seminar questions.
3. **Final Test:** 40% of the final mark. The pass mark is 5 out of 10. The final test will consist of answers to questions on the units which make up the programme.

Students who fail the subject will have the opportunity to resubmit their work in June. Their marks for attendance/participation and the seminars will be retained, if any. The criteria by which a piece of work will be judged are the following:

<b>Assessment Criteria</b>
Organisation & coherence of answer
Balance & coverage of the different parts of the question
Grasp of relevant ideas/concepts
Breadth of relevant reading
Analysis: evidence of critical ability
Effective use of examples to illustrate and justify the thesis
Referencing and bibliography

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

### **GENERAL WORKS:**

Brogan, Hugh, *The Longman History of the United States of America*, London, Longman, 1999.

Jenkins, Philip, *A History of the United States*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 1997.

Jones, Maldwyn A., *The Limits of Liberty: American History 1607-1980*, Oxford, OUP, 1983.

Reynolds, David, *America: Empire of Liberty*, London, Penguin, 2009.

## COMPLEMENTARY WORKS:

Adams, John Quincy, *Diaries, 1779-1821 and Diaries, 1821-1848*, Library of Congress, 2019, ed. David Waldstreicher.

Ambrose, Stephen E. and Brinkley, Douglas G., *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy since 1938*, London, Penguin, 1997.

Brown, Dee, *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*, London, Pan, 1972.

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Cronon, William, *Changes in the Land: Indian, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*, New York, Hill & Wang, 2003.

Dallek, Robert, *Franklin D. Roosevelt; A Political Life*, London, Penguin, 2017.

Darman, Jonathan, *Becoming FDR: The Personal Crisis that Made a President*, London, Random House, 2022.

Eig, Jonathan, *The Life of Martin Luther King*, London, Simon & Schuster, 2023.

Foner, Eric, *The Story of American Freedom*, New York, Papermac, 2000.

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Franklin, John Hope; y Moss Jr., Alfred A., *From Slavery to Freedom. A History of African Americans*, Nueva York, McGraw-Hill Education, 2000.

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Goodwin, Doris Kearns, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 2005.

Hahn, Steven, *A Nation Without Borders: The United States and Its World in an Age of Civil Wars, 1830-1910*, New York, Viking, 2016.

Herring, George C., *From Colony to Superpower: US Foreign Relations since 1776*, New York, OUP, 2008.

Holton, Woody, *Unruly Americans and the Origins of the Constitution*, New York, Hill & Wang, 2007.

- Howe, Daniel Walker, *What Hath God Wrought: The Transformation of America, 1815-1848*, New York, OUP, 2007.
- Hofstadter, Richard, *The American Political Tradition: And the Men Who Made It*, New York, Vintage Books, 1989.
- Jackson, Robert Scoop, *The Game is Not a Game: The Power, Protest, and Politics of American Sports*, Haymarket, 2020.
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- Kolchin, Peter, *American Slavery*, London, Penguin, 1993.
- Lepore, Jill, *These Truths: A History of the United States*, New York, WW Norton, 2018.
- Lockwood, Matthew, *To Begin the World Over Again. How the American Revolution Devastated the Globe*, Yale University Press, 2020.
- Maddox, Rachel, *Presequel: An American Fight against Fascism*, New York, Torva, 2024.
- McPherson, James M., *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era*, New York, OUP, 1988.
- Middlekauf, Robert, *The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1798*, New York, OUP, 2005.
- Morgan, Iwan, *Transforming the Presidency and Renewing America*, London, Bloomsbury, 2022.
- Nobles, Gregory H., *American Frontiers: Cultural Encounters and Continental Conquest*, London, Penguin, 1998.
- O'Shaughnessy, Andrew, *An Empire Divided: The American Revolution and the British Caribbean*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.
- O'Shaughnessy, Andrew, *The Men Who Lost America: British Command during the Revolutionary War and the Preservation of the Empire*, London, Oneworld, 2013.
- Ostler, Jeffrey, *Surviving Genocide: Native Nations and the United States from the American Revolution to Bleeding Kansas*, Yale University Press, 2020.

Patterson, James T., *Great Expectations: The United States, 1945-1974*, New York, OUP, 1996.

Patterson, James T., *Restless Giant: The United States from Watergate to Bush vs. Gore*, New York, OUP, 1996.

Peterson, Mark, *The City-State of Boston: The Rise and Fall of an Atlantic Power, 1630-1865*, Princeton University Press, 2020.

Plokhly, Serhii, *Nuclear Folly: A New History of the Cuban Missile Crisis* (Allen Lane, Londres, 2021).

Taylor, Alan, *American Colonies: The Settlement of North America to 1800*, Allen Lane, London, 2002.

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Townson, Nigel, "Estados Unidos, 1917-1945", in Javier Paredes (ed.), *Historia universal contemporánea, II, De la Primera Guerra Mundial a nuestros días*, pp. 152-168, Madrid, Ariel, 1999.

Townson, Nigel, "Racismo, Red Scare and Sindicalismo en los Estados Unidos", in Fernando del Rey and Manuel Álvarez Tardío (eds.), *Políticas del odio: Violencia y crisis en las democracias de entreguerras*, pp. 335-386, Madrid, Tecnos, 2017.

Wood, Gordon S., *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815*, Oxford, New York, 2009.

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Wood, Gordon S., *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, New York, Vintage Books, 1993.

Zaeske, Susan, *Signatures of Citizenship*, University of North Carolina, 2003.

Zoellner, Tom, *Island on Fire: The Revolt that Ended Slavery in the British Empire* (Harvard University Press, 2020).