Catalog Description:

HIS 7 - U.S. History Through Reconstruction  3.00 units
A survey of United States history from its pre-colonial, indigenous origins through the end of Reconstruction. Emphasis on (1) distinctively American patterns of political, economic, social, intellectual and geographic developments, (2) the interaction amongst and the experiences of diverse racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups in American history, and (3) the evolution of American institutions and ideals including the U.S. Constitution, representative democratic government, the framework of California state and local government, and the relationships between state/local government and the federal government.

Grading Option: Letter Grade

Prerequisite Skills:

None

Measurable Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:
1. assess the social, political and economic conditions in Europe, Africa and the Americas in the centuries preceding the exploration, invasion and conquest of the Americas;
2. identify and analyze the interactions amongst diverse social/ethnic groups from the pre-colonial period through Reconstruction;
3. trace the origins of the Spanish, English and French colonies in America; explain the unique character and distinct political, social, and economic development of the North American colonies; describe and evaluate the multi-ethnic nature of European immigration to the Americas and how this shaped the nature of American colonial societies;
4. explain the roots and evolution of the international African slave trade and the development of slavery in North America;
5. identify and interpret the causes and consequences of the American Revolution;
6. define the concept of federalism and explain its influence on emerging U.S. political institutions;
7. describe and analyze the key components of the U.S. Constitution (the roles of the three branches of government, separation of powers, the evolution of the concept of “rights” of citizens, judicial review, etc.) and how it shaped the national debate through Reconstruction; define and interpret the varied and changing meanings of republicanism, freedom, representative democracy; trace the development of political parties and assess their effect on democratic government;
8. describe the development and evolution of early United States political, cultural and social institutions through the Civil War and Reconstruction; identify and analyze the growing cultural and economic differences between the northern and southern states;
9. identify the reasons for the post-revolutionary expansion of slavery in the American South; describe the various slave systems in the United States and compare to other slave systems in the Americas; evaluate the economic, political and social impact of slavery on the United States; describe the emergence of and characteristics of a unique African American culture in the United States;
10. identify and explain the significance of the geographical expansion of the United States from post-Revolution through the Civil War;
11. analyze the major causes of the Civil War and evaluate its consequences;
12. analyze both the successes and failures of the Reconstruction period and its long-term consequences for U.S. society and politics; discuss the expansion of suffrage; analyze the long-term debate over competing definitions of concepts such as “freedom” and “civil rights” in the historical context of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution;
13. discuss the experiences of and interactions amongst major social, ethnic, racial and gender groups (African American, Native American, Chicano/Latino American, Asian American, and European American) in the context of U.S. historical development from the federalist era through Reconstruction;
14. analyze both the successes and failures of the Reconstruction period and its long-term consequences for U.S. society and politics; discuss the expansion of suffrage; analyze the long-term debate over competing definitions of concepts such as “freedom” and “civil rights” in the historical context of the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution;
15. describe the relationships among federal, state and local governments; identify the distinct features of the California Constitution, and of state & local governments and their relationship to the U.S. Constitution and the federal government.

Course Content:
1. Indigenous America in the centuries prior to colonization; the cultures, societies, politics and economies of the American peoples to the eve of conquest;
2. Europe and Africa on the eve of conquest and colonization; the roots of European colonialism;
3. Comparative analysis of Spanish, French and English conquest and colonization of the Americas and their varying interactions and relations with Native Americans; the impact of European colonization on Native American societies, cultural practices and economies; forms of Native American resistance and accommodation to encroachment on their lands and threats to their cultures;
4. The political, economic and social development of the North American colonies; with particular focus on the British colonies on the Atlantic coast; the multi-ethnic/cultural nature of European immigration to the British colonies.
5. The international African Slave Trade and the development of chattel slavery in British North America; comparison of Old World and New World slavery; comparative analysis of slave systems throughout the Western Hemisphere.

6. The causes of the American Revolution: political, economic, social, and cultural changes in the British colonies intersects with crisis between England and her colonies.

7. Political constructs of the new nation: analyses of concepts of republicanism, federalism, democracy, the components of the U.S. Constitution (including the branches of government, separation of powers and judicial review), and conflicts over the meanings of freedom, rights and liberty.

8. The early republic, from the Federalist era through the rise of political parties, to the rise of the Jeffersonian Republicans, through the geographical and economic expansion of the United States.

9. Territorial expansion and the market revolution; their corresponding effects on Native Americans, African American slaves, and Mexicans; the impact of these changes on gender roles and American family life.

10. Two societies on a collision course: growing cultural and economic differences between the northern and southern states; the expansion of cotton and slavery in the South; Native American removal.

11. Comparative analysis of antebellum German and Irish immigration to the United States in terms of work, culture, religion and politics.

12. Roots of conflict between newly-independent Mexico and the United States; the cultures of Northern Mexico; Manifest Destiny, war with Mexico; acquisition of western territories; California statehood (including a focus on the California Constitution and its three branches of government; the Compromise of 1850; the California Gold Rush and its impact on Native Americans and Mexicans; the Chinese immigrant experience.

13. A nation divided: the intersection of territorial expansion and slavery; antebellum America: reform, economic expansion, religious fervor; the roots of and escalation of sectional conflict; the path toward southern secession.

14. Civil Wars: (a) the war between the northern and southern states: the experiences of and impact upon slaves, free blacks, and competing white political and economic groups; (b) Indian wars and conflicts between diverse ethnic groups in the West.

15. The consequences of the Civil War viewed as a "second American Revolution".

16. The short-term successes and long-term failures and consequences of Reconstruction, including the evolving debate over the meanings of concepts such as freedom and civil rights; the expansion of the federal government and its evolving relationship to state and local governments.

Methods of Presentation

1. Lecture/Discussion
2. Appropriate multimedia material (various audio-visual, internet sites, film, etc.)
3. Written assignments
4. Online Assignments

Assignments and Methods of Evaluating Student Progress

1. Typical Assignments
   A. As part of a small group, gather information about (1) how the California Constitution defines the function of the three branches of state government; (2) what important powers are reserved solely for the state government vis-à-vis the 10th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; and (3) why a particular component of California’s founding constitution helped create a renewed national debate over the issue of slavery. Organize your findings and prepare both oral and written presentations.
   B. Over the course of the semester, keep a written journal which describes and analyzes the evolution of European-Americans’, and later the U.S. government’s, policies regarding Native Americans.
   C. Conduct research for the purpose of writing a 10-15 page paper which compares & contrasts the experiences of Irish, German, and Chinese immigrants to the United States in the mid- to late 1800s.
   D. Visit the website (URL provided) which presents the first large collection of visual resources for the Transatlantic Slave Trade. For this research assignment, view the visual images for each of the 18 categories within the site. Write a paper in which you discuss your observations of and conclusions about the subject matter of each category such as “Middle Passage” or “Slave Sales on the Coast”, etc.
   E. Read a broad spectrum of the various slave narratives which were compiled during the 1930s. How did former slaves assess their new-found freedom? What did they identify as necessary for them to live free, independent lives? Prepare to discuss these issues in class.
   F. Write an essay which analyzes the social and political impact of the American Revolution and the U.S. Constitution on the following groups of Americans. For each group, evaluate the meaning of their respective “rights” in the context of the Constitution: (1) European American women, (2) Native Americans, (3) African Americans, and (4) European American men.

2. Methods of Evaluating Student Progress
   A. Class Participation
   B. Papers
   C. Exams/Tests
   D. Oral Presentation
   E. Journals
   F. Research Projects
   G. Final Examination

3. Student Learning Outcomes
   Upon the completion of this course, the student should be able to:
   A. Synthesize factual information and historical evidence from a variety of sources and identify the connections between them.
   B. The students will demonstrate a body of knowledge about and critical understanding of historical eras, their key events and ideas, and the process of change over time.
   C. Analyze the causes and consequences of political, economic and social change.

Textbooks (Typical):

Special Student Materials
1. As determined by faculty.

Abbreviated Class Schedule Description:
NONE: