Course Syllabus

Colonial America
HIST 3720-001 (CRN #44670)
  MWF 8:30-9:20 a.m., Old Main 119

Instructor: Dr. Kyle T. Bulthuis
  e-mail: kyle.bulthuis@usu.edu
  phone: 797-1213
  office: Old Main 323F
  office hours: MW 9:20-10:20 a.m.

Course Description
Colonial North America was a world of competing empires, moving peoples, and intense conflict and competition. It was a land of many overlapping geographic regions and ecosystems, with porous political boundaries that stretched across the Atlantic. This class will examine that lost world before the United States, and discover that what is foreign about it is also somewhat familiar, as our contemporary world contains surprisingly similar themes.

We will begin with the Native American world before contact, continue with the process of colony building among Spanish, French, English, and Dutch emigrants, and conclude with a close examination of the growth and development of the British colonies. Topics explored include Native American culture and European-Native American contacts, economic developments, social relationships, the role of women and families, the growth and development of slavery, and church-state relations as well as the place of religion in colonial life.

The primary means of examining the materials of this course will be through a close reading of two major histories of the colonial world: Alan Taylor’s *American Colonies* and Daniel Richter’s *Before the Revolution*. By examining both historians’ interpretations of this field, we will achieve a fuller understanding of the range of issues surrounding what it means to be colonial. More generally we will also acquire an understanding of how historians study and interpret the past. We will help evaluate our analysis by including regular readings in a primary source book, *Converging Worlds*, which will allow us to see how historians put together the raw materials of documents into a larger narrative of how historical causes work.

Course Objectives:
History classes help you acquire historical knowledge, develop historical thinking, and hone historical skills, all of which are applicable in areas beyond the classroom. The following are guidelines that help lay out our goals for this course.

**Historical Knowledge**
Students will become familiar with key individuals, events, movements, and issues in colonial North American history before 1763. This includes developing awareness of Indian and white historical encounters, multiple national-colonial enterprises, the development of Trans-Atlantic slavery, and social and cultural changes in colonial British society before the Revolution.

**Historical Thinking**
Students should recognize the past-ness of the past. This will allow them to consider colonial America as a world apart, foreign in time and place, but also in worldviews, political allegiances, relationships within society and with other societies and environment.

Students will also understand the complex nature of the past, particularly by apprehending the problematic nature of the historical record. They will read and evaluate a number of historical primary sources that provide first-hand accounts of colonial experiences, and secondary accounts that interpret such original information differently. This will expose them to multiple viewpoints, and evaluate difficult and ambiguous evidence.

**Historical Skills**
In this course students will develop skills of critical thinking and critical reading. They may weigh historians’ conflicting claims by employing reason and rules of evidence to establish the general reliability of any claim or statement. They will also gain an ability to read sources both critically and empathetically, and to place them in a context that makes them more understandable from an historical perspective.

Students will also improve their writing skills, constructing arguments that are structured, relevant, and concise in clear, lucid, and coherent prose.

**Books:**


**Canvas**
Canvas is the Learning Management System that we will use for our course; it allows electronic posting of necessary handouts and announcements. You can login to Canvas at https://learn-usu.uen.org/login. Your username is your A#, and your password is your global password (the same one you use for Banner or Aggiemail). Once you are logged in, you should make sure this course appears in your “My Courses” tab at the top; if not, you may not be properly registered. The “Support” tab includes tutorials that can help you better navigate the Canvas program.

**Grading/Assignments**
Your grade will be determined by your performance on the following:
- Attendance and Classroom Participation: 20%
- Weekly written reviews and peer reviews: 20%
- Section Papers: 20%
- Final Take-home Essay/Exam: 40%

This is an upper-division course in American history. It requires regular attendance and close and regular reading of ALL assigned materials. If you know ahead of time that you will miss
significant class time, or that you cannot or will not read all assignments, you should not enroll in this class. Students who miss more than three classes will receive a failing participation grade and may have further penalties assessed.

Further, we will rely upon classroom discussions to help fully develop our understanding of the readings. Throughout the semester, you will be assigned to a small group intended to lead discussion on the topic for the day or week in question. At the end of the semester, every individual will submit a three-to-four page paper evaluating the challenges and successes of leading discussions. Students who fail to regularly and constructively participate in classroom discussions may also receive a lower participation grade.

Every week, in addition to the required readings from Taylor and Richter, you should choose at least one document from the collection *Converging Worlds*. It is important that you bring that book to class every day, as I will ask you to be prepared to examine the documents you have chosen and discuss what they say and how they fit into the larger framework of colonial American history.

Every week you will write a one-page response to the readings for the week, due the Monday of the following week. In addition to using the assigned readings, you will include the relevant primary source from the Breen reader to help illuminate how original sources help connect or deepen the issues that historians face in constructing their interpretations. We will evaluate these papers IN CLASS every Monday, using a peer review system to check each others’ work. I will collect these completed, peer-reviewed papers on Monday.

In addition to these short papers, you will write two larger, four-page papers that compare and develop the readings (and at least two primary sources you have chosen from Breen) from any two sections. (The Six Sections are shown in the course schedule/calendar that follows at the end of the syllabus). Each section paper is due the Friday after the latter section reviewed in the paper is completed. Students must have completed at least one of these section papers by October 23 (analyzing and comparing up through section three).

The final exam will be assigned in a take-home, essay format, a paper of ten to twelve pages in length. The final essay will address what colonial history is, using the arguments of Taylor and Richter, and the evidence provided in Breen, as the material used to prove your case. Regular and steady work throughout the class will aid you in the successful completion of this final project.

**University Policies**

*Honor Pledge.* Students will be held accountable to the Honor Pledge, which they have agreed to: “I pledge, on my honor, to conduct myself with the foremost level of academic integrity.”

*Academic Dishonesty.* I will take appropriate actions in response to Academic Dishonesty, as defined in the University’s Student Code. Acts of academic dishonesty include but are not limited to:

1. Cheating: (1) using or attempting to use or providing others with any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, examinations, or in any other academic exercise or activity, including working in a group when the instructor has designated that the quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity be done “individually”; (2) depending on the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; (3) substituting for another student, or permitting another student to substitute for oneself, in taking an examination or preparing academic work; (4) acquiring tests or other academic
material belonging to a faculty member, staff member, or another student without express permission; (5) continuing to write after time has been called on a quiz, test, examination, or any other academic exercise or activity; (6) submitting substantially the same work for credit in more than one class, except with prior approval of the instructor; or (7) engaging in any form of research fraud.

2. Falsification: altering or fabricating any information or citation in an academic exercise or activity.

3. Plagiarism: representing, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one's own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgment. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.


**Special Needs.** Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory, emotional or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Disability Resource Center (DRC) in Room 101 of the University Inn, (435)797-2444 voice, (435)797-0740 TTY, (435)797-2444 VP, or toll free at 1-800-259-2966. Please contact the DRC as early in the semester as possible. Alternate format materials (Braille, large print or digital) are available with advance notice.

**Class Schedule**

**Section I (Weeks 1-2)**

**Week 1 Encountering Colonial History**
- Aug 31 Introductions
- Sep 2 Thinking about sources and how we create colonial history
  - Taylor, Introduction, x-xviii
  - Richter, Prologue: Layered Pasts, 3-10
- Sep 4 The Indians’ Old World
  - Taylor, Natives, 3-22

**Week 2 Before Contact**
- Sep 7 NO CLASS, Labor Day
- Sep 9 Old Worlds in Europe and America
  - Richter, Progenitors, 11-66
- Sep 11 Contacts
  - Taylor, Colonizers 23-49

**Section II (Weeks 3-5)**

**Week 3 Explorers**
- Sep 14 Southern Empire
  - Taylor, New Spain and Spanish Frontier, 50-90
- Sep 16 Conquerors
  - Richter, Crusades of the Christ Bearers, 67-87
- Sep 18 Understanding the Black Legend

**Week 4 Traders**
- Sep 21 Comparing Conquerors
Richter, Protestant Crusaders 88-117
Sep 23 In the North
Taylor, Canada and Iroquoia, 91-116
Sep 25 Understanding early colonial comparisons
Richter, Native Americans and the Power of Trade, 121-42

Week 5 English shoots, massive changes
Sep 28 English in the South
Taylor, Virginia and Chesapeake 117-57
Sep 30 Merchants
Richter, Epidemics, War, and the Remapping of a Continent, 143-68
Oct 2 Traders and Traitors

Section III (Weeks 6-7)
Week 6 Putting down roots
Oct 5 English in the North
Taylor, New England, 158-86
Oct 7 Complications and Battles
Richter, Searching for order 171-86
Oct 9 Planters Triumphant?
Richter, Planting Patriarchy 187-211

Week 7 War and Slavery
Oct 12 Indian conflicts
Taylor, Puritans and Indians 187-203
Oct 14 Center of the New World
Taylor, West Indies, 207-21
Oct 15—THURSDAY—Meet on Friday Class Schedule
Taylor, Carolina, 222-44
Oct 16 (Friday)—NO CLASS Fall Break

Section IV (Weeks 8-9)
Week 8 Transitions
Oct 19 Pluralist Havens
Taylor, Middle Colonies 245-74
Oct 21 Non-English options
Richter, Counterpoints, 212-240
Oct 23 Taylor, Revolutions, 275-300

Week 9 Revolutions
Oct 26 Restoration
Richter, Monarchical Power Reborn and Planters Besieged, 241-94
Oct 28 Glorious Revolution
Richter, Revolution and War, 295-326
Oct 30 From Europe to the Colonies

Section V (Weeks 10-11)
Week 10 The Atlantic World
Nov 2 Transatlantic Boundaries
Section VI (Weeks 12-14)

Week 12 A Broader Scope
Nov 16 What happened in New France
   Taylor, French America 363-95
Nov 18 What happened out West
   Taylor, Great Plains 396-419
Nov 20 Where do we draw the lines?

Week 13 Turkeys!
Nov 23 Planning for the Final Paper
Nov 25, 27—NO CLASS, Thanksgiving

Week 14 Battle For the Hemisphere
Nov 30 The French and Indian War
   Taylor, Imperial Wars and Crisis, 420-43
Dec 2 The Seven Years’ War
   Richter, Contending for a Continent, 369-87
Dec 4 Understanding Colonial Rivalries
   Breen, Chapter 17 (349-70)

Conclusions

Week 15 Wrapping up, or opening up, narratives
Dec 7 The Unending Colonial Frontiers
   Taylor, The Pacific, 444-78
Dec 9 No Invisible Hands
   Richter, Gloomy and Dark Days, 388-416
Dec 11 The Usefulness of the Past
   Richter, Epilogue: Present Pasts 417-424

Final Exam:
Monday, Dec. 7, 7:30-9:20 a.m.