

**HSTAA 301: Early American History
Autumn Quarter, 2005**

Section AA, 10:30 – 11:20 in Sav 151/Section AB, 11:30 – 12:20 in Sav 131

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Purpose of Discussion Section: Discussion sections provide you with the opportunity to enrich your understanding of both the weekly readings and the broader course themes through active engagement with the readings and with your colleagues. In contrast to lectures, where you are a passive learner, in section you will be expected to be an active participant. Although the majority of our time in section will be spent discussing the assigned readings for the week, we will also review strategies for writing good history papers and for thinking critically about the events and themes in the history of colonial North America.

Grading: I will be grading all of your exams, papers, and your section participation. Discussion section is worth 15% of your final grade and will be determined by the extent of your thoughtful participation in discussions. Attendance is obviously a prerequisite for participation, and repeated absences will negatively affect your section grade. Your three short papers - worth a total of 45% of your final grade (15% each) - will be based on the weekly readings for this course. In addition, material from the course readings will be fair game on the mid-term, worth 15% of your grade, and the final, worth 25%. As you can see, a thorough familiarity with the course readings is essential to success in this course.

Written Work: Due dates for written work – hard copies handed in to me at the start of class - are as follows:

First Short Essay:

- Topic Due **Fri. Oct. 7**
- Essay Due **Fri. Oct. 21**
- Optional Rewrite Due **Thurs. Nov 10**

Second Short Essay:

- Topic Due **Fri. Oct. 28**
- Essay Due **Thurs. Nov. 10**

Third Short Essay:

- Topic Due **Fri. Nov. 18**
- Essay Due **Fri. Dec. 2**

I recommend that you visit the History Department's Writing Center for help at any stage of the writing process, particularly if you are new to the discipline of history. I am also available to comment on rough drafts, provided that you supply me with a hard copy **no later than** four days prior to the paper's due date.

To Ensure Success: You are expected to *complete all assigned readings* for the week. As you read, consider the questions posed by Professor Johnson in the introduction to each weekly readings unit and compose written answers to them. Make reference in your answers to page numbers and paragraphs that support your conclusions. Make note of any questions which arise during your reading and be prepared to pose them to the class for further discussion.

Learn to *think critically* about the readings for this course, many of which are primary sources. Thinking critically involves more than a regurgitation of the facts. As you read think about who authored the piece. Were they male or female? What was their social class? What was their ethnic background, and how might these factors influence what they wrote? Why did they write this, and who was their intended audience? History is, in part, a discipline of interpretation based on primary sources. Thinking critically about the primary sources will also help you to place them in historical context.

Please *come to class on time and ready to share*. Your thoughts and opinions are valuable and will contribute to the overall relevance of discussion sections. Do not be afraid to ask questions or to share your viewpoint. I also expect each of you to listen attentively to your colleagues and to respond to each other's arguments. As a courtesy to your fellow students, come to class on time – late arrivals are a distraction and may cause you to miss valuable information.

Don't forget to *bring your text and notes to class*.

Late Work: In the event that you find you are unable to turn your paper in on time, contact me as soon as possible. We will then agree on a due date for your paper. **Be aware, however, that late papers will automatically be penalized 0.1 points per day late.** Work handed in after the start of class on the due date is considered one day late.

Finally: As your TA, I am responsible for facilitating discussions and for helping you achieve success in this class, but ultimately, you are the person most responsible for both your grade and your intellectual development. I therefore encourage you to visit me during office hours with any questions or concerns regarding course material or assignments that you may have. I also encourage you to turn to your colleagues for help. Exchange email addresses with at least one other person in this class. Form study groups for the midterm and the final.

If you have a disability requiring special accommodations, please notify me immediately. All University of Washington policies regarding plagiarism are in effect for this course. Good luck.

"A mind once stretched by a new idea never returns to its original shape."

-Oliver Wendell Holmes

Information in this syllabus supplements Professor Johnson's main course syllabus and is subject to change at any time