

**SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY**

HIS 163-01  
CID#: 3361  
American History to 1876  
Credit Hours: 3.0  
Spring Semester 2008

**Instructor:** Dr. Tom Cox

**Classroom and Class Time:** AB4 202, M/W/F, 8:00-8:50 a.m.

**Office and Office Hours:** AB4 473, M/W, 2:30-4:00 p.m. or by appointment

**Contact Info:** Phone: 936-294-4804, FAX: 936-294-3938, [thc001@shsu.edu](mailto:thc001@shsu.edu)

**Course Description:** This course is an introduction to American history from the first Native American tribes through the Civil War and Reconstruction. Although America today is the last remaining superpower, for much of its early history it was a small, relatively weak nation struggling to expand, grow, and develop its own identity. For the remainder of the semester we students will examine the ways that diverse groups of individuals interacted to form a common culture. You will study major topics like Native American societies, early European explorers, colonial American life, the War for Independence, establishing a new nation, antebellum society and culture, westward expansion, sectional conflict, the Civil War, and Reconstruction.

**Learning Objectives:** Throughout this semester, our course goals are to:

- Enhance your knowledge of early American political, social, economic, and cultural history
- Sharpen your ability to critically discuss, think, and write about historical issues

**Readings:** Alan Brinkley's *Unfinished Nation, Vol. I* (any edition) is required reading for this course and may be purchased at the Barnes and Noble Campus Bookstore, Bearkat Books, Kampus Korner or on-line through websites such as amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com. Reading assignments should be completed during the week for which they are assigned.

Brinkley, Alan. *The Unfinished Nation, Volume I: A Concise History of the American People* (Paperback) (any edition)

**Attendance:** Just as you expect me to keep my lectures to the point and grade your assignments on time, so to I expect you to attend class regularly and promptly complete assignments. Attendance will be taken during each class. As life can get complicated at times, you may miss up to four (4) classes without penalty. If you feel that you will be absent for longer periods of time then please discuss the matter with me as soon as possible. I will require documentation for long-term absences from class.

**Exams:** You will have three in-class exams for this course. Each exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer/identification terms. Students are required to take exams on assigned days. I will allow makeup exams only for exceptional, documented circumstances. All makeup exams will be given at the same time on Thurs. May 15, the last day of finals week.

**Grading:** The final grade for this course will be based on class attendance (10%), three class exams (25% each), and two reaction papers (7.5% each). If applicable, extra credit will be factored into the final grade on a case-by-case basis. My grading scale is as follows: A+ = 97-100, A=93-96, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79, C=73-76, C- = 70-72, D = 60-69, F = 59 or lower. Pluses and minuses will be dropped on your final grade for the course.

**Academic Honesty:** In accordance with Sam Houston State University's Academic Policy Statement 810213, "all students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials." See <http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty> for more information.

**Keeping On Top of Assignments:** Before each Monday's class, I will post lecture outlines, key terms, study questions, and course updates for the upcoming week in the announcement and assignment sections of Blackboard. It's a good idea to consult Blackboard's announcement and assignment sections periodically for updates and changes to the semester schedule.

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired. SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If the student has a disability that may affect adversely their work in this class, then he or she needs to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how they can best be helped. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center. See <http://www.shsu.edu/~vafwww/aps/811006.html> and <http://www.shsu.edu/~vaf/www/aps/documents/861001.pdf> for more information.

**Religious Holidays:** Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. "Religious holy day" means a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code.

**Visitors in the Classroom:** Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not he/she will be allowed to remain.

**Instructor Evaluations:** Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation form towards the end of the semester.

**Assignments:** Students are required to complete two short reaction papers (2-3 pages each) based on the assigned readings. The professor will periodically post several paper topics on Blackboard students may choose from as well as samples of successful student papers. Students may also write a third reaction

paper for extra credit. The professor will post specific assignment information including the grading system to be used, the types of citation required, etc. on Blackboard throughout the semester.

**Required Supplies:** Students are required to bring pens or pencils and notebooks to class for note taking. In addition, students must bring pencils and scantron forms long enough to accommodate 25 multiple choice questions to each exam. Students are also required to buy the textbook stated above for the class.

**Classroom Conduct:** Classes tend to run more smoothly if students and professors observe a few basic ground rules. Laptops and other internet devices are not permitted in class. Please arrive to class on time and stay for the entire class. I reserve the right to count you absent for repeated tardiness, leaving early, or generally disrupting class by talking, sleeping, listening to music, eating, drinking, text messaging, reading materials for other classes, etc. Particularly difficult students may be advised to drop, find their final grades lowered, or even given failing grades for the course. The Code of Student Conduct and Discipline can be found at <http://www.shsu.edu/students/guide/dean/codeofconduct.html>

**Running Into Problems:** Over the course of the semester, you may run into problems that range from falling behind in the course to medical or family related emergencies. If you find yourself in such a situation, please contact me as soon as possible so that we may address the matter directly. I am also available during office hours or by appointment for help, tutoring, or advice as needed. For more general help, consider visiting the SAM Center, the Reading Center, or the Writing Center if you are having trouble with note taking, completing assignments, or studying for exams.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Lecture Topic</b>	<b>Assignments and Exams</b>
<b>Week 1:</b> Jan. 16, 18	First Americans	Brinkley, Chapter 1: The Meeting of Cultures
<b>Week 2:</b> Jan. 23, 25 (No class for Jan. 21, MLK Day)	When Worlds Collide	Brinkley, Chapter 1: Remainder of Chapter <b><u>Mon. Jan. 21: 1st Paper Topics Posted</u></b>
<b>Week 3:</b> Jan. 28, 30, Feb. 1	Early Colonies	Brinkley, Chapter 2
<b>Week 4:</b> Feb. 4, 6, 8	Provincial Society	Brinkley, Chapter 3
<b>Week 5:</b> Feb. 11, 13, 15	Imperial Tensions	Brinkley, Chapter 4
<b>Week 6:</b> Feb. 18, 20, 22	Revolutionary America	Brinkley, Chapter 5 <b><u>Fri. Feb. 22, 1<sup>st</sup> Exam</u></b>
Week 7: Feb. 25, 27, 29	Forging a Nation	Brinkley, Chapter 6 <b><u>Fri. Feb. 29: 1<sup>st</sup> Papers Due</u></b>
<b>Week 8:</b> Mar. 3, 5, 7	Jeffersonian Era	Brinkley, Chapter 7
<b>Week 9:</b> Mar. 10-15 (No classes)	Spring Break	
<b>Week 10:</b> Mar. 17, 19, 21	Era of Change	Brinkley, Chapter 8 <b><u>Mon. Mar. 17 2nd Paper Topics Posted</u></b>
<b>Week 11:</b> Mar. 24, 26, 28	Jacksonian America	Brinkley, Chapter 9 <b><u>Fri. Mar. 28, 2nd Exam</u></b>
<b>Week 12:</b> Mar. 31 Apr. 2, 4	Bustling North	Brinkley, Chapter 10
<b>Week 13:</b> Apr. 7, 9, 11	Old South	Brinkley, Chapter 11
<b>Week 14:</b> Apr. 14, 16, 18	Fires of Reform	Brinkley, Chapter 12
<b>Week 15:</b> Apr. 21, 23, 25	Road to Disunion	Brinkley, Chapter 13
<b>Week 16:</b> Apr. 28, 30, May 2	Road to Disunion	Brinkley, Chapter 13
<b>Week 17:</b> May 5, 7, 9	Civil War	Brinkley, Chapter 14 <b><u>May 9 2nd Papers and Extra Credit Papers Due</u></b>
<b>Week 18:</b> May 10-15	Final Exams	<b><u>Third Exam</u></b> (Date to Be Announced)