Instructor: Dr. Tom Cox
Classroom and Class Time: AB4 303, 6:00-8:50 p.m., M, 6:00-8:50 p.m.
Office and Office Hours: AB4 473, 2:30-4:00 p.m., M/W or by appointment
Contact Info: Phone: 936-294-4804, FAX: 936-294-3938, thc001@shsu.edu

Course Description: This course examines American history from the 1780s to the Civil War. 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. This era witnessed the creation of America’s system of state and federal governments (embodied in the U.S. Constitution), several wars including the U.S.-Mexican War and Civil War, the rise of many of our national heroes (and villains), and saw the creation of a distinctly “American” culture with its own beliefs and values. Students will study major topics for the course including the creation of the U.S. Constitution, the political struggles of the 1790s, gender roles in the Early Republic, settler-Indian conflicts, the U.S.-Mexican War, slavery and the Old South, and the Civil War.

Learning Objectives: Throughout this semester, our course goals are to:
- Increase your knowledge of early American history from the 1780s to the Civil War.
- Continue to sharpen you critical thinking, writing, and speaking skills.
- Investigate the theoretical concepts and intellectual techniques used by professional historians

Readings: The readings for this course include nine mandatory books. One of these books will be a choice between James Oakes’s *The Ruling Race* and Deborah Gray White’s *Ar’n’t I a Woman?* Another will be a book of the student’s choice from the list of books at the end of this syllabus. The professor will also post suggested short, weekly articles on Blackboard designed to improve your understand of the course readings which can in turn improve your class participation grade. The following books are required reading for the course. Copies 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. You may use any editions of the works listed below.

Mandatory books:
Catherine Allgor, *Parlor Politics: In Which the Ladies of Washington Help Build a City and a Government*
John S. Eisenhower, *So Far From God: The US War With Mexico, 1846-1848*
John Ehle, *Trail of Tears: The Rise and Fall of the Cherokee Nation*
Joseph Ellis, *American Sphinx: The Character of Thomas Jefferson*
Joanne B. Freeman, *Affairs of Honor: National Politics in the New Republic*
Forrest McDonald, *Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution*

Choose one of the following mandatory books to read:
Deborah Gray White, *Ar’n’t I a Woman?: Female Slaves in the Plantation South*

Attendance: As we only meet once a week, it is vital that both students and professor attend class on time and stay for the entire class. Attendance will be taken at each class. Please notify me as soon as possible if you are unable to attend class.
Assignments: You will have to complete three writing assignments for this class as listed below:

1. **Review of Professional Book Reviews**: Students will read three book reviews of one of the books from the assigned reading list. Excellent book review can be found in periodicals such as *Reviews in American History*, *William and Mary Quarterly*, and the *New York Review of Books*. Students will then write a 3-5 page review that critiques the three book reviews you have chosen. In general, what does each scholar think about the book they are reviewing? What methods do they use to critique and analyze the book? Do you agree with their interpretation of the book under consideration? How would you rate the book in question?

2. **Book Review and Book Report**: Students will read a book of their choice from the recommended reading list below and provide a brief book report for that week’s class. You will also have to submit a short 3-5 page book review of the book in question by the following class.

3. **Historiographical or brief research paper**: Students will write an 8-10 paper that examines either an in-depth examination of a particular historical event (ie. slave revolts in Virginia, settler-native relations or Andrew Jackson’s leadership style) or a historiographical trend (such as how historians over the course of the 20th century have interpreted the U.S.-Mexican War). Be certain to select a clear, concise topic that ideally both interests you and that is manageable given your current time constraints.

Grading: The final grade for this course will be based on the review of professional book reviews (20%), book review and book report (10% each), historiographical or brief research paper (30%), and class attendance and participation (30%). 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. As this is a graduate level course you must earn an A or B to receive passing course credit. 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](http://www.shsu.edu/administrative/faculty/sectionb.html#dishonesty) for more information.

Keeping On Top of Assignments: Before each Tuesday’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
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 toward the end of the semester.

Required Supplies: Students are required to bring pens or pencils and notebooks to class for note taking. Students are also required to buy the textbook stated above for the class and to secure copies of the additional, on-line readings for the course specified on Blackboard.

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 AND ASSIGNMENTS:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Discussion Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>Week 2: Mon. Jan. 21</td>
<td>MLK Day: No Class</td>
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<td>Week 3: Mon. Jan. 28</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Course Syllabus and Assignment Guidelines</td>
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<td>Week 4: Mon. Feb. 4</td>
<td>Enshrining Liberty</td>
<td>McDonald, <em>Novus Ordo Seclorum</em></td>
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<td>Week 5: Mon. Feb. 11</td>
<td>Founding Playerhaters</td>
<td>Freeman, <em>Affairs of Honor</em></td>
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<td>Week 6: Mon., Feb. 18</td>
<td>Jeffersonian America</td>
<td>Ellis, <em>American Sphinx</em></td>
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<td>Week 7: Mon. Feb. 25</td>
<td>Women in Early America</td>
<td>Allgor, <em>Parlor Politics</em></td>
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<td>Week 8: Mon. Mar. 3</td>
<td>Research Day: No Class</td>
<td>(Work on class assignments)</td>
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<td>Week 9: Mon. Mar. 10</td>
<td>Spring Break: No Class</td>
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<td>Week 10: Mon. Mar. 17</td>
<td>Keeping the Faith</td>
<td>Abzug, <em>Cosmos Crumbling</em></td>
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<td>Week 12: Mon. Mar. 31</td>
<td>Jackson and the Indians II</td>
<td>Ehle, <em>Trail of Tears</em> (second half)</td>
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<td>Week 13: Mon. Apr. 7</td>
<td>Halls of Montezuma I</td>
<td>Eisenhower, <em>So Far From God</em> (second half)</td>
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<td>Week 14: Mon. Apr. 14</td>
<td>Halls of Montezuma II</td>
<td>Eisenhower, <em>So Far From God</em> (first half)</td>
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Week 15: Mon. Apr. 21  Surviving Slavery  Oakes, The Ruling Race or White, *Ar'n't I a Woman?*

Week 16: Mon. Apr. 28  Research Day: No Class (Work on remaining class assignments)

Week 17: Mon. May 5  Coming of the Civil War  Movie Night (Movie to be announced)

**RECOMMENDED READINGS FOR BOOK REPORTS AND BOOK REVIEWS:**

**Enshrinining Liberty**
Cornell, Saul. The *Other Founders: Anti-Federalism and the Dissenting Tradition in America, 1788-1828* (1999)

**Founding Playerhaters**

**Jeffersonian America**

**Women in Early America**

**Keeping the Faith**

**Jackson and the Indians**
Hoxie, Frederick E., Ronald Hoffman, and Peter J. Albert, eds. *Native Americans and the Early Republic*
Remini, Robert. *Andrew Jackson and His Indian Wars* (2001)

**Surviving Slavery**

**Halls of Montezuma**
Frazier, Donald S. *The U.S. and Mexico at War* (1998)
Pletcher, David M. *The Diplomacy of Annexation: Texas, Oregon, and the Mexican War* (1973)
Schroeder, John H. *Mr. Polk's War: American Opposition and Dissent, 1846-1848* (1973)

**Coming of the Civil War**
David M. Potter. *The Impending Crisis, 1848-1861* (1976)
Thomas, Emory M. *The Confederate Nation, 1861-1865* (1979)