

Virginia Western Community College

HIS 141

African-American History I

Prerequisites

None

Course Description

Surveys the history of black Americans from their African origins to the present. Part I of II.

This course introduces African-American history from the period of sustained, modern European contact in Africa during the fifteenth century, the acculturation of Africans to living in what becomes the continental United States, and their struggle for freedom and equality through 1865. Topics include the study of African origins, the impact of the slave trade on Africans living during the colonial period through the Early Republic, the legacy of the American Revolution on both free and enslaved African Americans, the Abolition Movement, and the struggle for freedom during the years of the American Civil War. Students will analyze significant political, socioeconomic, and cultural developments in African-American History.

Students will be introduced to useful skills for historical analysis and interpretation through the use of primary sources and historical arguments both orally and in writing. Students will strengthen civic skills and an awareness of the role of race, class, and gender both in African-American culture and society at large.

Students are not required to complete this course prior to taking HIS 142 (African-American History II).

Semester Credits: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Required Materials

1. Textbook
2. Internet access
3. Blackboard

Textbook:

Hine, Darlene C., Hine, William and Stanley Harrold. African Americans: A Concise History, Combined Volume. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson, Prentice Hall, 5th ed., 2013. ISBN: 978-020-596906-7

Other Required Materials:

Compact Disc with Textbook Purchase, including primary resource documents.

Course Outcomes

At the completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Recognize the geography of Africa and the origins of various groups of people living in West Africa in particular.
- Describe the role of slavery in West African communities and compare it to the way it functioned in those cultures as opposed to how it functioned in the various colonies that later formed the United States.
- Trace and analyze the origins and development of American slavery from the colonial period through the American Civil War as a socio-economic-political institution and the role of African Americans within that system.
- Compare and contrast the way slavery developed in the Northern and Southern regions, along with the growing concern with the spread of slavery to the Western Territories and its impact on African Americans, their families, and their culture.
- Evaluate the literature of the American Revolution and the Early Republic with an emphasis on the interpretation of the meaning of freedom and equality.
- Examine the participation of African Americans in the military during the American Revolution, the War of 1812, and the Civil War and the discrimination they faced within the Army and Navy.
- Trace and analyze the growing populations of free people of color living in the North and the South, their communities, and their cultures.
- Describe the impact of cash crop cultivation, especially cotton, on African Americans, the domestic slave trade and its impact on African Americans and their communities, and resistance to slavery by enslaved African Americans.

- Examine the role of religion in developing pro- and anti-slavery rhetoric, the Abolition movement, and the role of African Americans and the church in the struggle for freedom.
- Describe how the expansion of slavery in the western territories led to more conflict in Congressional legislation, elections, and court cases.
- Examine the impact of John Brown's Raid, Abraham Lincoln's election, and the Emancipation Proclamation on African Americans, their views about freedom and equality during the Civil War, and freedom with the Thirteenth Amendment.
- Evaluate the concepts of race, class, and gender as social constructions over time and their impact on African Americans and their communities.
- Describe the struggle for freedom and equality by African Americans from the colonial period through the Civil War with an emphasis on interpretations of the language used and changing definitions over time.
- Evaluate African-American identity from the colonial period through the Civil War and how the themes of continuity and change permeate this identity.

Topical Description

1	Africa and African Culture: A study in diversity for both geography and the people, including a quick synopsis of the birth of humanity and previous kingdoms and empires.
2	The Slave Trade: A study in the practice of slavery in Africa from times of antiquity and its alteration with European contact, the Atlantic slave trade with particular emphasis on coastal factories, the Middle Passage, the seasoning process, and the sale of Africans in the West Indies and eventually directly to the North American continent.
3	Colonial North America: A study of where Africans arrived as slaves and why, a comparison of slavery in the Chesapeake and the Lowcountry as slave societies to the societies with slaves in the northern colonies; an examination of laws, and a brief survey of slavery in the French and Spanish colonies to the south and east of English colonies.
4	African-American Culture: A study in the process of creolization in places that practiced slavery, the idea of the slave community, resistance to slavery, miscegenation, and the influence of a small group of free people of color.
5	Independence, Liberty, and a Clash of Ideals: A study of the influence of the Revolutionary Era and its documents, the Black Enlightenment, war service, the press for emancipation and abolition as a result of new ideals and the Great Awakening, and the decision to end participation in the slave trade.
6	A New Republic: A study in the shift from slavery to freedom in what had been the northern colonies in contrast to limited manumission in the former

	southern colonies, the impact of the Revolution on the growing population of free people of color in both the North and the South; and the influence of African Americans during the War of 1812.
7	The Cotton Kingdom: A study in how the rise of a new cash crop increased a reliance on slavery, the increase of the domestic slave trade and its impact on the black family, examinations of paternalism, runaways, the increase in proslavery arguments, the impact of the Missouri Compromise, and the increasing versatility of slavery.
8	Free People of Color: A study in the growth of the black community, a comparison of northern and southern institutions within the free community, urban and rural issues, limits placed on African Americans despite their freedom, the black church and clergy, and the growing role of the west.
9	The Abolition Movement: A study in the connection to the Revolutionary Era, the role of the church and the Second Great Awakening in converting both people and minds to the cause, the role of men and women within the movement, the influence of Nat Turner's Rebellion on it, racism, a growing anti-slavery movement, Moral Suasion, Frederick Douglass, and abolition groups.
10	The Role of the West: A study in how the expansion of slavery into the western territories increased anti-slavery sentiment, a discussion of free versus slave labor, racism, the place of African Americans regarding western land, these issues in Congress, including the Compromise of 1850, its Fugitive Slave Law (including the impact on runaways), and the Kansas-Nebraska Act; the Lincoln-Douglas debates, and the <i>Dred Scott</i> Decision.
11	The Civil War: A study in the rupture of the country and its impact on African Americans from John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry and Lincoln's election in 1860, their attempt to serve in the military, the Emancipation Proclamation and Lincoln's changing values, black enlistment, Confederate reactions to black soldiers, refugees, contraband, black Confederates, "Forty Acres and a Mule," and the Thirteenth Amendment.

Notes to Instructors

None