

History 470

## **U.S. Constitutional and Legal History**

Fall 2006: 11:00-12:15

Prof. Waldrep

Bus 116

### **Office Hours:**

Science 225: 2-4 on Thursdays and by appointment. E-mail [cwaldrep@sfsu.edu](mailto:cwaldrep@sfsu.edu) or phone 338-2982. [Http://bss.sfsu.edu/waldrep](http://bss.sfsu.edu/waldrep)

**Texts:** Urofsky and Finkelman, *A March of Liberty*; Waldrep and Curry, *The Constitution and the Nation: Establishing the Nation* and Waldrep and Curry, *The Constitution and the Nation: The Civil War and American Constitutionalism*.

History 470 uses the lecture and discussion format to develop students' ability to assess and think critically about historical issues and how to interpret those issues. Students should gain a basic factual knowledge of American constitutionalism. This means being prepared to discuss cases and key documents. Students will develop skills in analyzing historical data and reaching informed conclusions about those data. This class covers half of American history. The second half will be covered in history 471, offered in the spring. I recommend that you take both halves, both 470 and 471.

### **To pass the course, students must:**

1. Attend class. Attendance is of the utmost importance.
2. Study the readings for each week *before* we talk about them in class.
3. Take the examinations. You must know the names of cases and documents and be prepared to summarize their significance on tests. If you do not have the time for the preparation necessary to do this work, you should drop this class immediately.
4. Complete essay assignments.

### **Exams**

We will have three essay exams. These exams will all be document-based. Our goal is to learn how to construct historical arguments using primary source documents. You have to use the documents we study in class to make an argument about what you have learned in class. Use only documents discussed in class and taken from our book or the handouts. Each test will consist of ten paragraphs covering eight documents of your choosing. These are timed tests. You must be selective in choosing information for the exams: remember that you will have only 75 minutes to write your first two essays. You will not have time to tell all you know about the documents. Choose the most important facts. In a court case, this means summarizing the judges' arguments, not getting bogged down in detailed background information. Figure out how to summarize the constitutional argument in each document in just three to four sentences. Remember, history is never about telling all you know about the past, it's about choosing the most important information. In this class, the most important information is about our

evolving federal system, how the locus of power shifts. Keep your eye on where the power is at particular historical moments.

**Final grade:**

Tests: 70% [three exams]

Essays: 20% [two papers]

Discussion: 10%

Class participation is an important part of your grade. Obviously, you must come to class and to participate knowledgeably, you must read the assignments *before* discussions.

All dates and deadlines are tentative. Be alert to in-class announcements.

**Schedule of Classes**

**August 29:** Introduction to the course: principle themes and terms.

**August 31:** Old World

Readings: Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 1; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 1.

**September 5:** New World

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 2; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 2.

**September 12:** Revolution

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 3; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 3.

**September 19:** Confederation

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 4; Waldrep and Curry, pages 65-84.

**Exam: September 21**

**September 26:** Writing the Constitution

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapters 5 & 6; Waldrep and Curry, page 84-129.

**October 3:** Early American Republic

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 7; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 5.

**October 10:** The Marshall Court

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 8 & 10; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 6.

**October 17:** Jacksonian Constitutionalism

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 15; Waldrep and Curry, vol. 2, chapter 1.

**October 24:** Slavery

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 17; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 2.

***First paper due October 26.***

**October 31:** The Impending Crisis

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 18; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 3.

**November 7:** Introduction to the Civil War

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapters 19 & 20; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 4.

**Exam: November 9**

**November 14:** The Civil War continued.

***Second paper due November 16. No class November 16.***

***Thanksgiving Break: Week of November 20.***

**November 28:** Reconstructing Citizenship

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 21; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 5.

**December 5:** State Action and Civil Rights

Urofsky and Finkelman, chapter 22; Waldrep and Curry, chapter 6.

**December 12:** Civil Rights continued.

Final exam will be during final exam week.

11:00 TTH	Thursday December 21	10:45-1:15
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