

**Instructor:**

Eric G. Swedin, PhD      <http://www.swedin.org/>      [eswedin@weber.edu](mailto:eswedin@weber.edu)  
Offices: LH274 (Ogden) and D2-137L (Davis)  
Office hours: No formal office hours; office meetings are available by  
appointment via email.

**Text:** David Reynolds, *America, Empire of Liberty: A New History of the United States* (2021) Revised and updated!  
ISBN: 154167569X

**Objectives:** Utah State Code 53B-16-103(b) requires that “A student shall demonstrate a reasonable understanding of the history, principles, form of government, and economic system of the United States prior to receiving a bachelor’s degree or teaching credential.” Successful completion of this course will satisfy this “American Institutions” requirement.

This American Institutions (AI) course meets the following objectives. Upon completing an AI course a student shall demonstrate a reasonable understanding of:

1. The significant political, economic, and social changes in American history.
2. The major principles of American civilization, including the concepts of popular sovereignty, liberty, and equality.
3. The institutions and practices of the government provided for in the United States Constitution.
4. The basic workings and evolution of a market economy in the United States.
5. The diversity of American life and experience.

**Class Description:** An analysis of American civilization that traces social, cultural, economic, and political developments in the United States. May be taken to complete the American Institutions requirement (grade of C or better required).

Participation in the class and class discussions are expected.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in Room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary.

**Quizzes:** There will a quiz every day at the beginning of class. Each quiz will be based on the readings that you were given for that day, or will be given on the content of the previous class’s discussions.

**Grading Policies:** Grades will be determined on the following basis:

Quizzes	40%
Map Assignment	10%
Timeline Assignment	20%
Term Paper	20%
Class Participation	10%

Grades: A: 90 - 100% B: 80 - 89% C: 70 - 79% D: 60 - 69% E: 0 - 59%  
(Grades at the high or low ends of these ranges will earn plus and minus grades.)

**Cheating Policy:** Cheating and deceit are not accepted at Weber State University. *Cheating on an quiz or assignment, or turning in someone else's work as your own, will result in an E for the class.* You may work together on your assignments and papers, but you must turn in your own work. If you quote from a book, article, or web site, you must properly quote and cite your work. **Avoid even the appearance of cheating or plagiarism.**

**Cell Phones, Texting, and Laptops:** Put your cell phones on vibrate. Try to avoid leaving class to take a call, but an occasional emergency is understandable. There will be NO texting in this class. Laptops or other personal digital tools may be used to take notes or look up material relevant to class discussions. No other uses of laptops will be tolerated.

**Recording Classes:** Video or audio recording of any portion of lectures is only permitted in this class upon my authorization. If you would like to request authorization to record, please contact me. Unauthorized recording is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, for which a student may be subjected to disciplinary action under PPM 6-22, Student Code. Students who seek to record for purposes of accommodating a disability should contact the Disability Services Office at (801) 626-6413 or [dsc@weber.edu](mailto:dsc@weber.edu). See more info at <https://www.weber.edu/disabilityservices>.

**Campus Closure:** In the event of an extended campus closure, please look at your Weber State email to find instructions on how we will continue the class via your student email address and the Canvas online course system.

**Term Paper:** Write a 5-7 page paper on your personal family history, relating it to the American history that you have learned in this class. You may turn in an early draft for me to critique, and I will return the critiqued draft one week later. The final draft is due on the final day of class. If you have no sources for a personal family history, you may write a 5-7 page paper on any topic in American history. If you choose the second option, you must cite at least four scholarly sources (Chicago or Turabian style), by which I mean scholarly articles or scholarly books. Encyclopedias don't count.

**Timeline Assignment:** Objective: Review of events of American history; gain an increased understanding of historical perspective.

Pick thirty events in American history around a shared theme. Themes could be something like Women's Rights in American History, Music in American History, Technology in American History, American Wars, American Constitutional History, or so on; or even more narrow topics, such as Heavy Metal in American History, LGBT+ Rights in American History, the History of Utah, or Leisure in American History.

Make a chronological timeline of the thirty events in American history around your shared theme. Use an American history textbook or an encyclopedia or the Internet to find your information. For each entry, include the date and a 2-3 sentence justification for your choice. Timeline **MUST** be printed out and handed to me, or emailed to me.

A sample entry:

December 7, 1941, Pearl Harbor.

Japanese launch a surprise attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbor. This leads to the entry of the United States into World War II and because the attack was a surprise, angry Americans were not willing to accept any peace agreement with Japan short of total victory.

Grading will be based on three criteria: 1) Dating all events correctly; 2) Neatness and presentation; and 3) Grammatical or mechanical errors.

**Map Assignment:** Objective: Refresh your geographical knowledge from an historical perspective.

Attached to this syllabus are blank maps of the continental United States and the World. You might want to make copies for practice. Place or draw the following locations on the maps.

On the US map:

Mississippi River	Missouri River	Columbia River	Ohio River
Washington, D.C.	New York City	Chicago	San Francisco
Los Angeles	Salt Lake City	Santa Fe	Plymouth, Massachusetts
Philadelphia	Richmond	Great Lakes	Jamestown, Virginia
Great Plains	Rocky Mountains	New Orleans	Appalachian Mountains
St. Augustine	Houston	Seattle	Grand Canyon

On the World map:

Pacific Ocean	Atlantic Ocean	Gulf of Mexico	Japan
Russia	Germany	England	Canada
Mexico	Philippines	Vietnam	China
Cuba	Pearl Harbor	Iceland	Australia
Panama Canal	Ireland	Africa	Vinland (Newfoundland)

Grading will be based on three criteria: 1) Placing all locations correctly; 2) Neatness and presentation; and 3) Grammatical or mechanical errors.

**Schedule:**

Date	Readings
May 10	Class introduction
May 17	Before the United States. Read Reynolds, the Introduction and chapter 1
May 24	Founding the United States. Read Reynolds, chapter 2, and read the Declaration of Independence
May 31	Creating a Nation. Read Reynolds, chapters 3-4 <b>Map Assignment is due</b>
June 7	Constitution. Read the Constitution. A copy of the Constitution is found on the Internet at <a href="https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/full-text">https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/full-text</a>
June 14	America Grows Read Reynolds, chapters 5-6
June 21	The Civil War Read Reynolds, chapters 7-8
June 28	Read Reynolds, chapters 9-10
July 5	Read Reynolds, chapters 11-12 <b>Timeline Assignment is due</b>
July 12	Read Reynolds, chapters 13-14
July 19	Read Reynolds, chapters 15-16
July 26	Read Reynolds, chapters 17-18
August 2	Read Reynolds, chapter 19 and Conclusion <b>Term Paper is due</b>
August 9	Spare day
August 16	No class, no final exam