

University of Florida  
Department of History  
Spring 2017

## **IDH2930: Alexander Hamilton**

Professor Sean Adams  
Wednesdays, Period 8 (3:00-3:50)  
Hume Hall 119

### **Course Introduction and Objectives**

This course focuses on the unforgettable career of Alexander Hamilton, a rags to riches story set in the context of Revolutionary America. Born in 1755 in the British West Indies, and growing up poor in New York City might be setback to most, but Hamilton was able to secure an education and during the American Revolution he rose to serve as General George Washington's aide de camp. After the war, he moved to New York City and became a successful lawyer and a strong advocate of the new Constitution. In 1789, his old boss, George Washington, appointed Hamilton to be the nation's first secretary of the treasury and he held this position until 1796. Hamilton was mortally wounded in a duel with the sitting Vice President of the United States, Aaron Burr, in 1804.

Hamilton's service in the Continental Army, his prominent place among the Founding Generation, and his role in the creation of the early American economic system marks him as an important historical figure; his enduring impact on American political economy and, most recently, in Broadway fame, makes him a legend. This class will use the 2005 award-winning biography of Hamilton, written by Ron Chernow, as its central text, but will also use clips from stage, film, and the web in order to understand how Alexander Hamilton's legacy still lives in American popular culture. Students will discuss the Hamilton phenomenon weekly and write a capstone essay of approximately 1,000 words that links his historical image to contemporary life.

### **Required Reading**

There is one (1) required text in this course:

Ron Chernow, *Alexander Hamilton* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005). ISBN 0143034758

### **Grading, Attendance, and Accommodations Policies**

Students will be evaluated on three major components of this class. Most important will be the weekly discussion of the book. Students will also complete brief (500-750 word) reaction papers that link the events in Hamilton to current issues (although not

necessarily in song and dance) spread out across the seminar and a 1,000 word final paper, which will be due on the last seminar session, on 19 April 2017.

Regular attendance in this course is not optional, but mandatory. Each student begins with a Participation grade of 100 points; any more than two (2) unexcused absences will result in a reduction of the attendance grade by ten (10) points for each additional absence. More than seven (7) absences will result in a failing grade for the course. Please be respectful to your fellow students by turning off all cell phones and tablets, arriving on time, and please avoid making excessive noise. You may use a computer to take notes, but any distracting web surfing, game playing, texting or other behavior will not be tolerated. Students who do not abide by these simple rules of courtesy will be asked to leave and/or will not have their attendance count for that period.

The breakdown of the final grades in this course is as follows:

Grade Calculation	Grading Scale	Grade Value
Participation 50%	100-93=A	A=4.0
Short Papers: 20%	92-90=A-	A-=3.67
Final Paper 30%	89-87=B+	B+=3.33
	86-82=B	B=3.00
	82-80=B-	B-=2.67
	79-76=C+	C+=2.33
	75-72=C	C=2.00
	71-69=C-	C-=1.67
	68-66=D+	D+=1.33
	65-62=D	D=1.00
	61-60=D-	D-=0.67
	59-0=E	E=0.00

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, [www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/](http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/)) by providing appropriate documentation. Once

registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class, as it constitutes intellectual theft and academic dishonesty. If you turn in the work of others and try to pass it off as your own, you will fail that assignment and risk expulsion from the University of Florida. I will give you the guidelines, expectations, and other information regarding the written work in this course, so you really have no reason to cheat. I take these matters very seriously and will prosecute vigorously if provoked. Any possible rewards derived from plagiarism simply don't justify the risk! All students must conform to UF's Honesty Code regarding cheating, plagiarism, and the use of copyrighted materials, which you can find at:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Your written assignments will be monitored with the Turnitin Anti-Plagiarism Service, so please keep in mind that cheating on the assignments in this course will be much more difficult than actually doing the work.

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <http://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

### **Seminar Schedule (Subject to Revision by Instructor)**

January 4	Introductions and Discussion of Course Expectations
January 11	West Indian <b>Reading:</b> Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 1-61
January 18	Patriot <b>Reading:</b> Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 62-106
January 25	Hero <b>Reading:</b> Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 107-166
February 1	New Yorker <b>Reading:</b> Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 167-218
February 8	Constitutionalist <b>Reading:</b> Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 219-290

February 15     Treasurer  
**Reading:** Chernow, *Hamilton*, pp. 291-361

February 22     Rival  
**Reading:** Chernow, *Hamilton*, pp. 362-418

March 1          Federalist  
**Reading:** Chernow, *Hamilton*, pp. 419-481

**March 8          Spring Break—Have a Good and Safe Holiday**

March 15          Retirement?  
**Reading:** Chernow, *Hamilton*, pp. 482-545

March 22          Partisan  
**Reading:** Chernow, *Hamilton*, pp. 546-602

March 29          Counter-Revolutionary  
**Reading:** Chernow, *Hamilton*, pp. 603-656

April 5            Duelist  
**Reading:** Chernow, *Hamilton*, pp. 657-731

April 12          Peer Discussions

April 19          Peer Discussions  
 Final Paper Due

**Contact Information**

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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 9-11 am; Thursdays, 10-11 am; and by appointment