

University of Florida
Honors Program
Fall 2020

IDH2930: Alexander Hamilton

Professor Sean Adams
Wednesdays, Period 6 (12:50-1:40 pm)
Online via Zoom

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, write brief essays that link his life to contemporary issues, and compare Chernow's biography with another artistic work on the Founding Generation.

Required Reading

There is one (1) required text for purchase, rent, or borrow 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 two (2) 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. Finally, there will be a final project that will compare Chernow's biography to a biography, novel, or film

dealing with the Founding Generation. I will provide a list of those during the semester and you'll have plenty of time to secure copies.

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 from our online sessions will result in a reduction of the attendance grade by ten (10) points for each additional absence. More than four (4) absences will result in a failing grade for the course.

Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded for students in the class to refer back and for enrolled students who are unable to attend live. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Likewise, students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

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

Grade Calculation	Grading Scale	Grade Value
Participation 40%	100-93=A	A=4.0
First Brief Essay 15%	92-90=A-	A-=3.67
Second Brief Essay 20%	89-87=B+	B+=3.33
Final Project 25%	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/) 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)

September 2	Introductions and Discussion of Course Expectations
September 9	West Indian Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 1-61
September 16	Patriot Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 62-106
September 23	Hero Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 107-166

September 30	New Yorker Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 167-218
October 7	Constitutionalist Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 219-290
October 14	Treasurer Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 291-361
October 21	Rival Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 362-418
October 28	Federalist Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 419-481
November 4	Retirement? Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 482-545
November 11	Veteran's Day—No Class
November 18	Partisan Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 546-602
November 25	Thanksgiving Holiday—No Class
December 2	Counter-Revolutionary Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 603-656
December 9	Duelist Reading: Chernow, <i>Hamilton</i> , pp. 657-731

Final Project Due: 16 December 2019 at 9:30 am.

Contact Information

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Office Hours: M 1-2:30 pm, W 9-10 am, & by appointment