

American History



A Journey into the Past for the Sake of the Future

“Behold, this is a choice land, and whatsoever nation shall possess it shall be free from bondage, and from captivity, and from all other nations under heaven, if they will but serve the God of the land, who is Jesus Christ.” ~ Ether 2:12

Course Description

This course is a scholarly, LDS-oriented, and character-focused exploration of the history of America: “a land of promise, a land which is choice above all other lands; a land which the Lord God hath covenanted” (2 Nephi 1:5). It is a primary-source-based, 4R (research, reason, relate, and record)-driven survey of sixty-two topics from eight major themes in American history: restored-gospel foundations, American religious history, American political history, American military history, American cultural history, Native American history, African American history, and American women’s history. Each topic is tied to a principle from the Foundation for American Christian Education’s Seven Principles of America’s Christian History, Government, and Education—as well as to “anchor scriptures” from the Standard Works of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Seeking truth—“knowledge of things as they are, and as they were, and as they are to come (Doctrine and Covenants 93:24)—through the Spirit, and coming unto Christ to “be perfected in him” (Moroni 10:32), encompass every objective of the course.

The order of themes and topics in the course is as follows:

Theme 1: Restored-Gospel Foundations

1. Our Heritage of American Christian Education: Part I
2. Our Heritage of American Christian Education: Part II
3. The Lord’s Hand in Preparing for the Restoration
4. America as a Promised Land

5. The Blessings and Responsibilities of Americans
6. Warnings to Americans

Theme 2: American Religious History

1. The Pilgrims and William Bradford
2. The Puritans and John Winthrop
3. The First Great Awakening and Jonathan Edwards
4. The Founders and Religion: John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, and George Washington
5. The Second Great Awakening and Joseph Smith
6. Antebellum Reform Movements and Charles P. McIlvaine
7. Conservative Religions, Twentieth-Century Liberalism, and Abortion
8. Conservative Religions, Gay Liberation, and Dallin H. Oaks

Theme 3: American Political History

1. Virginia and the House of Burgesses
2. New England's Covenant Communities and the Mayflower Compact
3. The Patriot Press and Thomas Jefferson's "A Summary View"
4. The U. S. Constitution and Thomas Jefferson's 1787 Letter to James Madison
5. Jacksonian America and Alexis de Tocqueville
6. The Civil War Era and the Lincoln-Douglas Debates
7. The New Deal and Franklin D. Roosevelt
8. The New Right and Ronald Reagan

Theme 4: American Military History

1. King Philip's War and John Easton

2. The Pueblo Revolt of 1680 and Three Indian Witnesses
3. The French and Indian War and Two Indian Accounts
4. The War of American Independence and George Washington's 1780 Circular Letter
5. The Mexican-American War and James K. Polk's 1846 Request to Congress
6. The American Civil War and Warren Lee Goss on Savage's Station
7. World War I and Poems from the American Field Service's Ambulance Drivers
8. World War II and Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1944 Fireside Chat

Theme 5: American Cultural History

1. The Puritan Family and Three Poems by Anne Bradstreet
2. The Society of Friends and Robert Barclay's Explanation of the "Inner Light"
3. The Spirit of '76
4. American Language and Noah Webster
5. The American Literary Revolution
6. Manifest Destiny, Frederick Jackson Turner's "Frontier", and the American Dream
7. Immigrant Nation
8. The City, Mass Consumption, and Leisure

Theme 6: Native American History

1. Varieties of Native American Life from Moroni to Columbus (c. 500- c. 1500)
2. Cultures Collide
3. Eighteenth-Century Alliances
4. Native Americans and the U. S. Constitution
5. Assimilation and Removal

6. Reservations and Indian Wars
7. Citizenship (1924) and Reorganization (1934)
8. The Red Power Movement

Theme 7: African American History

1. The Middle Passage
2. Varieties of Slave Life
3. Slavery and the U. S. Constitution
4. Debating Slavery in Antebellum America
5. The Effects of the Civil War
6. Reconstruction and Jim Crow
7. The Harlem Renaissance: Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Duke Ellington
8. The Classic Phase of the Civil Rights Movement

Theme 8: American Women's History

1. Goodwives: Colonial Women and the Family
2. Colonial Women and Religion: Anne Hutchinson
3. Women and the U. S. Constitution
4. Republican Motherhood
5. Women's Rights and Feminism: Seneca Falls
6. The Suffrage Movement
7. The Roaring '20s and the Flapper
8. Women's Liberation and *The Feminine Mystique*

Course Objectives

Students are expected to gain a greater understanding of the mission of American Heritage School.

Students are expected to gain a greater understanding of The Seven Principles of America's Christian History, Government, and Education.

Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the following foundational topics: our heritage of American Christian education, the Lord's hand in preparing for the Restoration, America as a promised land, the blessings and responsibilities of Americans, and warnings to Americans.

Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the course's eight themes and sixty-two topics of American history.

Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the course's anchor scriptures from the LDS Standard Works.

Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the 4R-ing of primary sources from America's past.

Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of historiographical narration, reporting, and analysis.

Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the geography of American history.

Students are expected to demonstrate mastery of the timeline of American history.

Course Texts

Students will 4R approximately one-and-a-half pages of primary sources for each topic in each theme of American history. Narratives, written by the instructor, of approximately the same length will accompany each source to provide background information for the topic in the context of its theme. Students will also be expected to read anchor scriptures from the LDS Standard Works for each topic.

Course Assignments

The course has three classes of assignments: "Monday-Thursday" assignments, "Friday" assignments, and "enrichment" assignments.

Background Narratives (Monday-Thursday)

Students research two each week.

Primary Sources (Monday-Thursday)

Students research two each week.

Notebook Questions (Monday-Thursday)

In their notebooks, students complete three "reason and record" and two "relate and record" questions for each topic.

Reading Comprehension Questions (Monday-Thursday)

Students complete three multiple choice reading comprehension questions for each topic.

4R-ing PowerPoint Presentations and In-Class Notes in Your Notebook (Monday-Thursaday)

After students complete the preparatory 4R-ing work above for each topic, a PowerPoint presentation will lead students through further reasoning, relating, and recording in class. The PowerPoint will guide activities that help students to master the background and source for each topic in each theme and will also provide helpful maps, charts, photographs and paintings, and quotes from the LDS Standard Works and latter-day prophets and apostles to 4R. Students are expected to make a record of all of these things—all of their homework and class work—in their notebooks.

Pre-Tests and Post-Tests (Friday)

Students take one pre-test and one post-test for each theme.

Journal Entries (Friday)

On selected Fridays, students write journal entries to practice the skill of historiographical narration.

Newspaper Articles (Friday)

On selected Fridays, students write newspaper articles to practice the skill of historiographical reporting.

DBQ Essays (Friday)

On selected Fridays, students write document-based-question essays to practice the skill of historiographical analysis.

Choice Projects (Friday)

On selected Fridays, each student may work in a group to demonstrate mastery of a topic of his/her choice through a method of his/her choice. Methods include creating a PowerPoint presentation, making a movie, creating a portfolio of songs, writing and illustrating a children's picture book, writing a short story, writing a magazine article based on an interview with a grandparent, creating a poetry portfolio, creating a test and answer key, and creating a piece of art.

Timeline Assignments (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students create a timeline that synthesizes FACE links, thematic topics, and primary sources for the class.

Mapping Assignments (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students complete mapping assignments of the thematic topics to learn the geography of American history.

Word Studies (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students complete word studies related to the themes and topics of American history.

Biographies (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students research brief biographies of important persons from the themes and topics of American history. Then they complete "reason and record" and "relate and record" questions.

Memorizations (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students memorize the anchor scriptures of the course.

Art and Music Assignments (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students research key pieces of art and music for each theme of American history. Then they complete "reason and record" and "relate and record" questions.

Case Studies (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students research case studies for each theme of American history. Then they complete "reason and record" and "relate and record" questions.

Historiography Assignments (Enrichment)

During enrichment days, students research key works of historiography for each theme of American history. Then they complete "reason and record" and "relate and record" questions.

Grading: Breakdown of Points

"Monday-Thursday" Assignments = 50 percent of the term grade

"Friday" Assignments = 30 percent of the term grade

"Enrichment" Assignments = 20 percent of the term grade

Grading: Scale

A = 100% - 94% C = 76% - 74%

A- = 93% - 90% C- = 73% - 70%

B+ = 89% - 87% D+ = 69% - 67%

B = 86% - 84% D = 66% - 64%

B- = 83% - 80% D- = 63% - 60%

C+ = 79% - 77% F = 59% - 0%

* = With Special Accommodation

Strategies for Success

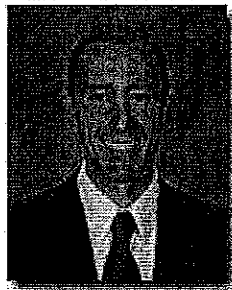
- a) *Manage your time wisely.* For example, you will have three days to complete the initial research, reasoning, relating, and recording for each topic, so please do yourself a favor and divide the work over three days—instead of cramming on the morning of class. Your life will be in greater balance—and you will be less distressed—if you do. You will also be able to gain more insights by spending the time it takes to do the work well. Make the work of discovery a pleasure—not a chore!

- b) *Be actively engaged in classes.* Make a record in your notebook throughout every class. Try to make at least two comments every class. Try to ask at least two questions every class. Look for ways to reason and relate everything we research. Make your reasoning and relating personal and fresh. Open your mind and heart to the whisperings of the Holy Ghost. Become a good student by living Elder Richard G. Scott's counsel: "We *become* what we want to *be* by consistently *being* what we want to *become* each day" (General Conference, October 2010). When you are actively engaged in the learning process, you will not have time to detract from the spirit of the class by holding side conversations, doodling or writing messages to other students in your notebooks, doing homework for other classes, or surfing the Internet.
- c) *Ask me (Mr. Gentile) for help.* I am here for you. Do not suffer in silence! If in-class explanations still leave you confused, please talk with me (a) during lunch, (b) before school, and/or (c) after school. Send me an e-mail two or three days before an assignment is due. Don't expect help for an assignment that is due tomorrow when you write to me at 10:16 tonight. In my decade of teaching, I have never seen a student who came for extra, one-on-one help *not* benefit from it. Students who come for extra help usually earn several more points on papers and tests simply because they gain a deeper understanding of my expectations.
- d) *As guided by the Spirit, set goals for yourself.* Review them regularly (with yourself, your parents, your friends, and your teachers) to track your progress. Adjust them as needed. And treat yourself to an ice cream with your friends when you meet them (your goals—not your friends)! ☺
- e) *Remember Christ's invitation in 3 Nephi 18:25:* "I have commanded that none of you should go away, but rather have commanded that ye should come unto me, that ye might feel and see."

Instructor Contact Information

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Instructor Bio



Mr. Gentile (pronounced "Jen-teel") has absolutely loved helping his students discover history from a Restoration perspective at American Heritage School, where he has received the Rosalie J. Slater Award for instructional excellence. Prior to accepting a job to teach History and English at American Heritage, he taught History and English at The Fenn School in Concord, Massachusetts, where his publication *Puzzle Pieces: An*

Introductory Primary Source Reader for Ancient China was adopted for course use. Prior to teaching in independent schools, Mr. Gentile earned a 4.00 GPA and a Master of Arts (MA) degree in American History at Brandeis University, where he was a Crown Fellow in the doctoral program and was mentored by the Pulitzer-Prize-winning author of *Washington's Crossing*, Dr. David Hackett Fischer. He earned a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in History from Brigham Young University, where he graduated *summa cum laude* as the valedictorian of the History Department, the recipient of the Outstanding Undergraduate in History award, and an Edwin S. Hinckley Scholar. He has taught classes about history and historiography at the college level at both Brandeis and BYU. He has also published several articles in scholarly journals, including one in the May 2010 issue of *We Proceeded On: The Official Publication of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation*. He served a mission in South Korea, where he taught the gospel in both Korean and Korean Sign Language. He has also taught Korean at the Missionary Training Center in Provo and early morning seminary in Massachusetts. He and his wife Christina were sealed in the Provo Temple and currently have two daughters and a son. They live in Eagle Mountain, where they enjoy playing as a family, serving in their ward, reading books, hiking and camping, playing and watching soccer, and trying to grow a garden.