

**The American Revolution, 1763-1815**  
**HIST 238, Fall 2020**

**Please note this syllabus was made under COVID conditions for a not-in-person class.**

Staff

Professor Kathleen DuVal, [duval@unc.edu](mailto:duval@unc.edu), Zoom Office Hours W 2:30-4:30 & by appointment  
plus look for announcements of occasional in-person outdoors office hours  
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Purpose of the Course

In this course, we will study the causes of the American Revolution, the violent separation of thirteen British colonies from their empire, and the construction of a new nation. Along the way, we will consider the creation and evolution of American identity. What would the residents of North America in 1765 have called themselves? How did some of them come together to declare their independence from England and their unity as Americans? How did they go about defining themselves differently from their enemy and defeating a great world power? Why did some residents of North America fight for the British, leave the colony entirely, fight against the British but not become U.S. citizens, or remain untouched by revolution? Once the rebels won the war, who became citizens, and who was left out? What did it mean to be an American in 1776? 1783? 1803? 2016?

About Your Professor

Kathleen DuVal is a professor in the UNC History Department and a historian of early America, specializing in the history of interactions among Native Americans, Europeans, and Africans. Professor DuVal is the author of many books and articles, including *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (2015) and *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (2006). She is also a book reviewer for the *Wall Street Journal*.

Course Goals and Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, students completing this course should be able to:

- demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the era
- display a basic knowledge of events, developments, and trends in the era
- evaluate primary source evidence to formulate arguments about this era
- assess core methodologies and historical debates about this era
- think critically about ways that this era affirms and/or challenges perceptions of the more recent United States

As part of the IDEAs in Action General Education curriculum, History 238 can fulfill the following capacities:

Engaging the Human Past: Students acquire knowledge through primary source evidence about human experience in the era of the American Revolution. Students learn to evaluate, synthesize, and communicate that evidence through written and oral assignments, applying it to their lives in the present by analyzing how structures created during the creating of the United States built the political, social, and economic world they inhabit today.

Power, Difference, and Inequality: Students engage with the histories, perspectives, politics, and intellectual traditions of diverse peoples of Europe and West Africa and their descendants and

multiple Native American nations as they interacted in North America. Students learn about the Revolution from various perspectives, including revolutionaries and loyalists from various economic and social classes, colonial women, Native nations, and people held in bondage in the colonies.

#### University Guidelines to help reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19

To promote the values of public health and mutual respect among campus community members, the University requires all students to acknowledge that they will abide by the public health guidelines and the University's COVID-19 Community Standards and University Guidelines as a condition of enrollment for the Fall 2020 semester. All students, regardless of the mode of instruction, must complete the acknowledgement as a condition of enrollment.

You can fulfill this requirement by [logging into ConnectCarolina](#) and proceeding through the [COVID 19 Notice and Student Acknowledgement](#). To complete the requirement, you must read the University guidelines on face masks, physical distancing and health monitoring included on the page.

All students, staff, faculty, and visitors are expected to maintain a physical distance of at least six feet from others while inside a University building in addition to wearing an appropriate face covering or mask. These regulations include all in-person classroom settings.

Honor Code: Students are expected to be familiar with and observe the Honor Code:

<http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/>

Accessibility Resources: UNC-Chapel Hill facilitates the implementation of accommodations for students with learning disabilities, physical disabilities, mental health struggles, chronic medical conditions, temporary disability, or pregnancy complications, all of which can impair student success. See the ARS website for contact and registration information: <https://ars.unc.edu/about-ars/contact-us> Please contact Professor DuVal with any accessibility needs within HIST 127.

Counseling and Psychological Services: CAPS is strongly committed to addressing the mental health needs of a diverse student body through timely access to consultation and connection to clinically appropriate services, whether for short or long-term needs. Please visit their website <https://caps.unc.edu/> for help.

This syllabus is subject to change at the professor's discretion.

#### Required Books

All books are available through Student Stores and various online booksellers.

They should also be available in Course Reserves.

Serena Zabin, *The Boston Massacre: A Family History* (2020)

Alex Myers, *Revolutionary* (2014)

Erica Armstrong Dunbar, *Never Caught: The Washingtons' Relentless Pursuit of Their Runaway Slave, Ona Judge* (2017)

Elizabeth A. Fenn, *Pox Americana: The Great Smallpox Epidemic of 1775-82* (2001)

The Weekly schedule lists reading assignments for each week.

## Assignments

Please see week by week instructions and deadlines further down the syllabus.

*In-class Participation:* Students will either participate in remote (Zoom) discussions on Sakai (on most Fridays 12-12:50) or complete asynchronous writing assignments on the readings. You may choose either option any week. Your participation grade will count for 15% of your final grade.

I apologize that, while originally this class was supposed to have an in-person component, the Registrar was unable to find us a classroom for our small-group discussions. As a result, the class will be held entirely remotely.

*Paragraphs:* Some weeks include a Paragraph Question and guidelines on whose turn it is to write. When it is your turn, answer the question in 150 to 200 words (approx. 1/2 page). Type and double-space your answer. Include examples from the readings, explain how they support your answer, and cite any sources with footnotes. We will grade these paragraphs for writing (structure, grammar, and usage), so take time to draft and edit them. Submit your paragraph on Sakai under Assignments by that Friday at noon (before the discussion). We will not accept late or inordinately short or long paragraphs. There will be a rewrite assignment. The paragraph and rewrite will count for 15% of your final grade.

*Quizzes:* Periodically throughout the semester, I will give quizzes on Sakai on the lectures or readings. These will be basic, factual questions. I will drop your two lowest quiz grades. There will be no make-up quizzes. The quizzes will count for 15% of your final grade.

*Thought Pieces:* These periodic writing assignments will ask you to respond to a prompt based on the lectures or readings. Unlike the Paragraphs, they will not be graded for writing. It is fine for these to be more free form writing. Your grade will reflect your engagement with the course material and thoughtful answers to the prompt. The Thought Pieces will count for 15% of your final grade.

*Final Exam:* This open-book and open-note exam will have three parts. Part One will be factual questions much like the quizzes. In Part Two, you will answer questions on one of the documents we have read for class. In Part Three, I will provide a new document for you to interpret within the themes of the class. The final exam will count for 20% of your final grade.

*Final Project:* Details to come. The final project will count for 20% of your final grade.

## **Weekly Schedule**

### **Week 1—Introduction to the American Revolution**

Mon., Aug. 10            Recorded Lecture: Introduction

Wed., Aug. 12           Recorded Lecture: Colonial America, A Tour, part 1

Fri., Aug. 14            Zoom Discussion 12-12:50: Historiography of the American Revolution  
Reading Assignment (complete for the Discussion):  
Jane Kamensky and Edward G. Gray, introduction to *The Oxford Handbook of The American Revolution* (New York, 2013), pp. 1-9 (E-book available through UNC Library)  
Edward Countryman, “Indians, the Colonial Order, and the Social Significance of the American Revolution,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 53 (April 1996) (JSTOR)  
Rosemarie Zagari, “The American Revolution and a New National Politics,” *Oxford Handbook of The American Revolution* (E-book available through UNC Library)  
Washington Irving, “Rip Van Winkle,” 1819 (primary source on Sakai)

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday’s Zoom Discussion: Answer these questions in 1-3 pages: What central questions do the three essays (not “Rip Van Winkle”) pose about the American Revolution? How does each author answer these questions? What does the story “Rip Van Winkle,” written in 1819, add to our understanding of the American Revolution? (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

## **Week 2—North America in 1765**

Mon., Aug. 17            Recorded Lecture: Colonial America, A Tour, part 2

Wed., Aug. 19            Recorded Lecture: Sources of Instability

Fri., Sept. 9            Zoom Discussion 12-12:50  
Reading Assignment (primary sources on Sakai):  
Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin*, excerpt  
Venture Smith, *A Narrative of the Life and Adventures of Venture, a Native of Africa: But Resident above Sixty Years in the United States of America, Related by Himself*, excerpt  
Diary of Elizabeth Sandwith, excerpt  
Diary of John Adams, excerpt  
Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday’s Zoom Discussion: Fill out the Primary Documents Worksheet for each of the four readings. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

Paragraph Question Due by Friday at noon (groups TBA) (submit under Assignments on Sakai):  
Choose one of the four primary accounts. What can you tell about what is important to the writer? Do not try to cover everything—just pick one important finding on which you can base a topic sentence and paragraph. Explain your point with examples from the accounts, cited with footnotes. Summarize the main point in the final sentence.

Take the Sakai Quiz by Friday at 11:59 p.m.

## **Week 3—Imperial Crisis**

Mon., Aug. 24            Recorded Lecture: The Seven Years’ War Stirs Things Up  
Reading Assignment:

Albany Plan of Union, 1754 (primary source on Sakai)

Wed., Aug. 26 Recorded Lecture: American Responses

Reading Assignment:

Resolutions of the Congress, Oct. 19, 1765 (primary source on Sakai)

Fri., Aug 28 Zoom Discussion

Reading Assignment: *The Boston Massacre: A Family History*, Prologue and Chapters 1-5

Thought Piece (write about one double-spaced page in answer to the prompt): What do you think Serena Zabin's main purpose was in writing *The Boston Massacre*? (upload to Sakai

Assignments by Friday at 11:59 pm)

#### **Week 4—The Colonists Are Revolting**

Mon., Aug. 31 Recorded Lecture: A Tea Party

Paragraph Rewrite due (groups TBA)

Wed., Sept. 2 Recorded Lecture: How People Made Up Their Minds

Fri., Sept. 4 Zoom Discussion

Reading Assignment: *The Boston Massacre: A Family History*, Chapters 6-9 and Epilogue

Paragraph Question Due by Friday at noon (groups TBA) (submit under Assignments on Sakai):

Choose and explain a main argument of Serena Zabin's *The Boston Massacre: A Family History*.

Do not try to cover everything—just pick one important point on which you can base a topic sentence and paragraph. Explain your point with examples from the book, cited with footnotes.

Summarize the main point of your paragraph in the final sentence.

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday's Zoom Discussion: Complete the Outline Worksheet for *The Boston Massacre*. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

Take the Sakai Quiz by Friday at 11:59 p.m.

#### **Week 5—Protests Become War**

Mon., Sept. 7 No class—Labor Day

Mon., Sept. 9 Recorded Lecture: The War Begins

Fri., Sept. 30 Zoom Discussion

Reading Assignment: *Revolutionary*, chapters 1-9

Paragraph Question Due by Friday at noon (groups TBA) (submit under Assignments on Sakai):

Choose one character from the book *Revolutionary*: explain one way in which gender affects what this character does. Do not try to cover everything—just pick one important point on which you can base a topic sentence and paragraph. Explain your point with examples from the book, cited with footnotes. Summarize the main point of your paragraph in the final sentence.

Thought Piece (write about one double-spaced page in answer to the prompt): Would you suggest the novel *Revolutionary* to people interested in the American Revolution? (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 11:59 pm)

### **Week 6—Kingless?**

Mon., Sept. 14            Recorded Lecture: Waging a War  
Paragraph Rewrite due (groups TBA)

Mon., Sept. 16            Recorded Lecture: From Monarchism to Republicanism

Fri., Sept. 18            Zoom Discussion  
Reading Assignment:  
*Revolutionary*, chapter 10-epilogue  
The Declaration of Independence, 1776 (primary source on Sakai)

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday's Zoom Discussion: Complete the Outline Worksheet for *Revolutionary*. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

Thought Piece (write about one double-spaced page in answer to the prompt): From the Declaration of Independence, choose and explain one of the charges against King George III in the context of what you have learned about the Revolution thus far. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 11:59 pm)

### **Week 7—The Revolutionary War**

Mon., Sept. 21            Recorded Lecture: Who's Fighting?  
Reading Assignment:  
Woody Holton, " 'Rebel against Rebel': Enslaved Virginians and the Coming of the American Revolution," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 105 (1997), 157-192 (JSTOR)  
Paragraph Rewrite due (groups TBA)

Wed., Sept. 23            Recorded Lecture: Not a Short War

Fri., Sept. 25            Zoom Discussion  
Reading Assignment (primary sources on Sakai):  
Speech of Oneidas to New England Officials, 1775  
Speech of Congress to a Visiting Iroquois Delegation, June 11, 1776  
Upper Creek Headman Emistisiguo to British Superintendent of Indian Affairs John Stuart, November 19, 1776  
British Superintendent of Indian Affairs John Stuart to Chickasaws and Choctaws, May 14, 1777

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday's Zoom Discussion: Complete Primary Documents Worksheets for each of the primary sources. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

Take the Sakai Quiz by Friday at 11:59 p.m.

### **Week 8—Who Will Win?**

Mon., Sept. 28            Recorded Lecture: The War Continues

Wed., Sept. 30            Final Project Meetings

Fri., Oct. 2                Zoom Discussion

Before class, please watch *The Crossing* (Robert Harmon, 2000 access through Course Reserves on our Sakai site)

Take the Sakai Quiz by Friday at 11:59 p.m.

### **Week 9—Winning the War**

Mon., Oct. 5                Recorded Lecture: War in the West  
Paragraph Rewrite due (groups TBA)

Mon., Oct. 7                Recorded Lecture: Winning the War

Fri., Oct. 9                Zoom Discussion

Reading Assignment: *Pox Americana*, Foreword, Introduction, and Chapters 1-4

Thought Piece (write about one double-spaced page in answer to the prompt): What do you think Elizabeth Fenn's main purpose was in writing *Pox Americana*? (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 11:59 pm)

### **Week 10—Winning the Peace**

Mon., Oct. 12                University Day—No Class

Wed., Oct. 14                Recorded Lecture: Peace & War

Fri., Oct. 16                Discussion

Reading Assignment: *Pox Americana*, Chapters 5-8 and Epilogue

Paragraph Question Due by Friday at noon (groups TBA) (submit under Assignments on Sakai): Choose and explain a main argument of Elizabeth Fenn's *Pox Americana*. Do not try to cover everything—just pick one important point on which you can base a topic sentence and paragraph. Explain your point with examples from the book, cited with footnotes. Summarize the main point of your paragraph in the final sentence.

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday's Zoom Discussion: Complete the Outline Worksheet for *Pox Americana*. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

Take the Sakai Quiz by Friday at 11:59 p.m.

### **Week 11—A New Nation?**

Mon., Oct. 19            Recorded Lecture: A New Nation or Thirteen Victorious Colonies?  
Reading: Constitution of North Carolina, Dec. 18, 1776

Wed., Oct. 21            Final Project Meetings

Fri., Oct. 23            Zoom Discussion  
Reading Assignment (primary sources on Sakai):  
The Articles of Confederation and Perpetual Union, 1781  
The Constitution of the United States of America, 1787  
James Madison, Federalist Paper #10, 1787  
Mercy Otis Warren, *Observations on the New Constitution* (excerpt), 1788  
The First Ten Amendments (“The Bill of Rights”), 1791

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday’s Zoom Discussion: [] (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

Take the Sakai Quiz by Friday at 11:59 p.m.

### **Week 12—A New Nation!**

Mon., Oct. 26            Recorded Lecture: A New Nation, Second Try  
Final Project due by 5 p.m.

Wed., Oct. 28            Recorded Lecture: Women in the Early Republic  
Paragraph Rewrite due (groups TBA)

Fri., Oct. 30            Zoom Discussion  
Reading Assignment: *Never Caught*, Foreword and Chapters 1-7

Thought Piece (write about one double-spaced page in answer to the prompt): What do you think Erica Dunbar’s main purpose was in writing *Never Caught*? (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 11:59 pm)

### **Week 13—Revolutionaries in Power**

Mon., Nov. 2            Recorded Lecture: Slavery in a Land of Liberty  
Reading Assignment: Anti-Slavery Petition to the Massachusetts State Assembly, Jan. 13, 1777

Wed., Nov. 4            Recorded Lecture: Revolutions at Home and Abroad  
Reading Assignment: “Thomas Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton on the Economy, 1785-1816”  
(primary sources on Sakai)



Fri., Oct. 30                      Zoom Discussion

Reading Assignment: *Never Caught*, Chapters 8-13 and Epilogue

Paragraph Question Due by Friday at noon (groups TBA) (submit under Assignments on Sakai):  
Choose and explain a main argument of Erica Dunbar's *Never Caught*. Do not try to cover everything—just pick one important point on which you can base a topic sentence and paragraph. Explain your point with examples from the book, cited with footnotes. Summarize the main point of your paragraph in the final sentence.

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday's Zoom Discussion: Complete the Outline Worksheet for *Never Caught*. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

### **Week 14—America and Americans**

Mon., Nov. 9                      Recorded Lecture: An Empire of Their Own

Wed., Nov. 11                    Recorded Lecture: An America for the Nineteenth Century

Fri., Nov. 13                      Discussion: American Revolution Musicals

Before class, please watch either *1776* (Peter H. Hunt, 1972, access on Course Reserves on our Sakai site) or *Hamilton* (Lin-Manuel Miranda, 2015, unfortunately available only on Disney+)

Alternative Asynchronous Assignment in place of Friday's Zoom Discussion: Choose one song or lyric from the musical you watched and discuss in terms of what you have learned in this class. (upload to Sakai Assignments by Friday at 1 p.m.)

### **Week 15—Are They Going To Keep on Replacing Whoever's in Charge?**

Mon., Nov. 16                      Recorded Lecture: Legacies

Reading Assignment:

Washington's Farewell Address, September 1796 (primary source on Sakai)

Review the essays you read for Aug. 26

Paragraph Rewrite due (groups TBA)

**Final Exam time TBA**