

HIST 2650 - CL History of American Democracy

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 09, CRN 43840,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Daniel Ayana

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Public Instructor Information

Professional Qualification:

Ph.D., African Environmental/ Intellectual History University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1995

M.A., History Addis Ababa University, 1984

B.A., History Addis Ababa University, 1980

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Additional Contact Methods:

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Communication Expectations:

I will respond to emails within 24 hours, and grade Module assignments/tests within 24-36 hours of submission

How to Refer to me:

Dr. Ayana

Course Description

2650. CL History of American Democracy. A one semester survey of the American past focusing on history and civic literacy. The emphasis will be on important developments in American political, economic, and social history; particularly on the emergence and evolution of the concepts of democracy and the American economic system. No prerequisite. Meets state "Civic Literacy" requirements. 3 s.h.

Catalog Description

A one semester survey of the American past focusing on history and civic literacy. The emphasis will be on important developments in American political, economic, and social history; particularly on the emergence and evolution of the concepts of democracy and the American economic system. No prerequisite.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required			

Students are required to read and demonstrate mastery over *all* of the following:

1. The Declaration of Independence
2. The Constitution of the United States
3. Five of the Federalist Papers (No. 10, 39, 42, 51, 78)
4. Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*
5. The Emancipation Proclamation
6. The Gettysburg Address
7. Letter from Birmingham Jail

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.



Bi-Weekly Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Withrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (1630) Maryland's "Act of Toleration" (1649) from Statues of Virginia (1667-1692) From Haudenosaunee "Great Law of Peace" The Declaration of Independence (1776)	Origins of the United States	Comparative Source Assignment Primary Source Analysis due: September 5, 2026 11:59 pm
8/31	No Assignments Due This Week		
9/7	Articles of Confederation (1777) Northwest Ordinance (1787) Constitution of the United States	Revolutionary Governments; beginnings of American Democracy	Comparative Source Assignment, Primary source Analysis due September 19, 2026. 11:59 pm
9/14	No Assignments Due This Week		
9/21	The Federalist Papers 1787-1788 No. 10 (faction/partisanship, No. 39 republicanism; No. 42 Powers of Congress/States; No. 51 federalism/checks and balances. No. 78 Independent Judiciary	Revolutionary Governments	Comparative Source Assignment, Primary source analysis due October 3, 2026 11:59pm
9/28	No Assignments Due This Week		
10/5	A. Smith, The Wealth of Nations (1776) Owen, "Discourses" (1825) from De Tocqueville, Democracy in America (1835) "Declaration of Rights & Sentiments" (1848)	Economic Transformations	Comparative Source Analysis Primary source Analysis due October 17, 2026 11:59 pm
10/12	No Assignments Due This Week		
10/19	Dred Scott v. Sandford (1857) Stephens, "Cornerstone Speech" (1861) Lincoln, The Emancipation Proclamation (1863) Lincoln, The Gettysburg Address (1863) The Reconstruction Amendments (1865-1870) Chief Joseph, "An Indian's View on Indian Affairs" (1879)	Union and Liberty in Crisis	Primary Source Analysis, due October 31, 2026, 11:59 pm
10/26	No Assignments Due This Week		
11/2	from Riis, How the Other Half Lives (1890) [images] from Turner, "The Sig. of the Frontier" (1893) DuBois, "Returning Soldiers" (1919) Roosevelt, "The Four Freedoms" (1941) [audio] Nixon, "The Kitchen Debate" (1959) [audio/visual]	Democracy at Home and Abroad	Comparative Source Assignment, Primary source Analysis, November 14, 2026, 11:59 pm
11/9	No Assignments Due This Week		
11/16	Hernandez v. Texas (1954) The Port Huron Statement (1962) King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (1963) from Friedan, The Feminine Mystique (1963) selections of Protest music [audio]	Pursuit of American Promise	Primary source Analysis, due November 21, 2026 11:59 pm
11/23	No Assignments Due This Week		

11/30	Schlaflly, "What's Wrong with 'Equal Rights' for Women" (1972) Carter, "Crisis of Confidence" (1979) [audio/visual] Reagan, First Inaugural Address (1981) [audio/visual] Buchanan, "Address to the RNC" (1992) [audio/visual] Bush, State of the Union (2002) [audio/visual]	Modern America	Primary source Analysis, due December 5, 2026 11:59 pm
12/7	Final Exam	Revising Major topics in the above Modules Passing score 60% or above.	Final Exam Due Monday December 7, 2026, 11:59pm

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.