

HIST 2650 - CL History of American Democracy

Summer 2026 Syllabus, Section 01, CRN 31011,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Daniel Ayana

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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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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.



Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
6/29	Withrop, "A Model of Christian Charity" (1630) Maryland's "Act of Toleration" (1649) from Statues of Virginia (1666-1692) From Haudenosaunee "Great Law of Peace" The Declaration of Independence (1776)	Origins of the United States	Comparative Source Assignment Primary Source Analysis due: July 5, 2026 11:59 pm
7/6	Articles of Confederation (1777) Northwest Ordinance (1787) Constitution of the United States 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; beginnings of American Democracy	Comparative Source Assignment, Primary source Analysis due July 12, 2026. 11:59 pm
7/13	A. Smith, The wealth of Nations (1776) Owen "Discourses" 1825; from de Tocqueville, Democracy in America; Declarations of Rights and Sentiments (1848); Dred v. Scott (1857)	Economic Transformations	Comparative Source Assignment, Primary source analysis due July 19, 2026 11:59pm
7/20	Stephens, "Cornerstone Speech" 1861; Lincoln, The Emancipation Proclamation (1863) The Reconstruction Amendments (1865-1870) Chief Joseph, "An Indian View on Indian Affairs" (1879)	Union and Liberty in Crisis	Comparative Source Analysis Primary source Analysis due July 26, 2026 11: 59 pm
7/27	From Rills, "How the other Half Lives (1890) from Turner, "The Sig of the Frontier" (1839), DuBois. "Returning Soldiers" (1919), Roosevelt, "The Four Freedoms (1941), Nixon, "The Kitchen Debate (1959) audio	Democracy at Home and Abroad	Primary Source Analysis, due August 2, 2026, 11:59 pm
8/3	Hernandez v. Texas (1954), The Port Huron Statement (1962), King, Letter from Birmingham Jail" 1963. from Friedan, "The Feminine Mystique (1963)	Pursuit of American Promise	Comparative Source Assignment, Primary source Analysis, August 9, 2026, 11: 59 pm
8/10	Schafly, "What is 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, Bush, State of the Union (2002) audio/visual	Modern America	Primary source Analysis, due 8/14/2026, 11:59 pm 8/15/2026
	Final Exam		

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.