HIS 113
America in the Atlantic World

Satisfies: GLO, SBS, USA [DEC: F & 4]

Instructor: D. David O’Donoghue

Asynchronous Online

Since the Age of Exploration, the Atlantic Ocean has been a conduit for the movement and exchange of people, goods, and ideas among the four continents that share its waters. The colonial economy that grew around the Atlantic basin profoundly shaped indigenous, African, and European societies, for better or worse. This course examines American history from the pre-contact era to the Revolutionary War within the context of this greater “Atlantic World.” We’ll explore cross-cultural encounters and conflicts; settler-colonialism and the dispossession of Native peoples; the rise of plantation agriculture; changing labor systems (including slavery); ecological transformations; the development of capitalism; major cultural and religious currents; changing historical constructions of race, ethnicity, class, and gender; and political ideologies, including the roots of revolution and democracy. Importantly, we will analyze primary sources and consider how historians interpret American history. Students will finish the course with sharper text analysis skills, critical thinking skills, and writing skills. They will also become familiar with the growth and impact of transatlantic economies and networks as well as the outline of early American history in an Atlantic context.