

## INTRODUCTION TO U.S. HISTORY

Bevezetés az Amerikai Egyesült Államok történelmébe

Course Code: BBLAN12600

**Instructor:** Balogh Beatrix

**Time and place:** April 13, Saturday 13.15-17.15 and April 26, Friday 14.30-18.45  
BTK D 518

**Availability:** via email: [balogh.beatrix@btk.ppke.hu](mailto:balogh.beatrix@btk.ppke.hu)

**Purpose:** To provide a comprehensive survey of the social, political and cultural history of the United States from the colonial times to the present. **Compulsory Texts:** Coursebook: *Outline of U.S. History*, U.S. Department of State, 2005 (available from the Institute's homepage [https://btk.ppke.hu/uploads/articles/463213/file/Outline\\_of\\_US\\_History.pdf](https://btk.ppke.hu/uploads/articles/463213/file/Outline_of_US_History.pdf)); Essays from the volume *Historians on America* (ed. George Clack), U.S. Department of State (available from the Institute's homepage <https://btk.ppke.hu/uploads/articles/463213/file/historians-on-america.pdf>); Historical Documents listed at the end of the syllabus.

**Material for the Examination: The content of the coursebook/compulsory texts and the complete material of the lectures.** There are two longer **on-site lecture sessions** in your timetable (April 13 and 26). Some additional course material (eg Conceptualizing Native Americans, Task sheet for westward expansion, excerpt from Pro-Slavery argument) will be posted to Teams. It is also strongly recommended that you consult at least a reference volume for the precise definition and interpretation of the compulsory concepts as well as the role and relevance of historical figures.

**Requirements:** kollokvium (see *at attendance and evaluation*)

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### LECTURE TOPICS

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- Introduction, study goals, summary
- First Encounters and Colonial America
- War of Independence and the "making" of the United States; The Early Republic
- Growth and Reforms in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- Westward Movement: territorial expansion, shaping the frontier, and fight over slavery
- Civil War and Reconstruction

Reading: Chapters 1-8 of textbook (pp4-187 or 1-92 of pdf format);

The US Constitution; start with the annotated Hungarian translation available on the website; 1-5 of the Historical documents listed below. Text available at

[https://btk.ppke.hu/uploads/articles/463213/file/UShistory\\_sourcetexts\\_2018.pdf](https://btk.ppke.hu/uploads/articles/463213/file/UShistory_sourcetexts_2018.pdf)

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- Assuming an international role: from the Spanish American War to Wilson's Fourteen Points
- Gilded Age, Progressivism, and the Roaring 20s
- The Nation in Crises: Great Depression, New Deal, and World War II
- The US in the Cold War; 1950s and 1960s: escalating interventions and changing society
- From Identity Crisis of the 70s to the Reagan Revolution
- Post 9/11 US: (re)Negotiating identity and international role

Reading: Chapters 9-15 of textbook (pp188-337); 6-11 of the assigned historical documents.

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### Evaluation:

1. The exam questions will be based partly on the compulsory texts, partly on the material covered by the lectures.
2. Credits for the course can be earned by successfully completing a written test (55% of maximum scores) in the exam period.

**Form and Content of the Exam/Written Test:** Multiple-choice questions will be designed in various formats to **test your knowledge of the most basic US history concepts**, your ability to judge the validity of more nuanced statements, and your familiarity with the entire span of US history. The test will also feature open questions: gapped sentences, short-answer, concept-matching and explanation tasks, and a short essay question.

**Short answer and essay questions.** One will require students to answer a specific question about a historical event, whilst the essay type will ask you to briefly discuss the milestones and historical relevance of a given event/period. Eg: Briefly describe the a, Westward Movement, b, New Deal, c, Civil Rights Movement. Writing should be succinct concentrating on the key features and events. There will be space and sentence limitation.

Some questions may inquire about the information/insights you gained from the assigned essays from *Historians on America*:

“The Colonial Convention”, 9-15.

“The Sherman Anti-Trust Act”, 30-38.

“The GI Bill of Rights”, 46-53.

“The Marshall Plan”, 54-61.

“Brown v Board of Education”, 62-69.

“The Immigration Act of 1965”, 76-83.

Students will also have to answer questions about one of the set historical documents or glean information from the “original texts” or excerpts provided at the exam. Compulsory historical documents downloadable from [http://btk.ppke.hu/uploads/articles/463213/file/USHistory\\_sourcetexts\\_2018.pdf](http://btk.ppke.hu/uploads/articles/463213/file/USHistory_sourcetexts_2018.pdf), unless specified differently here):

1. John Winthrop Dreams of a City on a Hill (1630)  
<http://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colliding-cultures/john-winthrop-dreams-of-a-city-on-a-hill-1630/>,
2. Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776)
3. The Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution (1791)
4. The Emancipation Proclamation (1862)
5. Abraham Lincoln: Gettysburg Address (1863)
6. Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)
7. Woodrow Wilson: Fourteen Points Speech (January 1918)
8. Franklin D. Roosevelt: First Inaugural Address (1933)
9. *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)
10. John F. Kennedy: Inaugural Address (1961)
11. Martin Luther King Jr: I Have a Dream (1963)
12. Ronald Reagan: Farewell Address (1989). Reagan Library, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjEC5v8KFN4>

Recommended Readings: Essentially any book on American history including the following:

- Philip Jenkins: *A History of the United States* (Palgrave/Macmillan)
- Sellers-May-McMillen: *Az Egyesült Államok története* (Maecenas)
- Magyarics-Frank: *Handouts for U.S. History* (Panem)
- Magyarics Tamás: *Az Amerikai Egyesült Államok története* (1918–2001) (Kossuth)
- Hahner Péter: *Az Egyesült Államok elnökei* (Maecenas)