

## INTRODUCTION TO U.S. HISTORY

Bevezetés az Amerikai Egyesült Államok történelmébe  
Course Code: BBNAN02600

**Instructor:** Balogh Beatrix [balogh.beatrix@btk.ppke.hu](mailto:balogh.beatrix@btk.ppke.hu)

**Time and Place:** Monday 16.15-17.45 D005

**Availability:** Office Hours: Wednesday 16.00-17.00 Rm 102

**Purpose:** to acquaint students with the major turning points of US history and to uncover the changes and processes that have shaped the United States of America. We will survey the social, political and cultural history of the United States from the colonial times to the present but conventional chronological method of presenting history is occasionally replaced by thematic approaches. The required readings should invest students with the elementary terminology of history and with the skills of critically analyzing primary source texts.

**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>); Compulsory historical Documents listed at the end of the syllabus.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.** Attending the lectures is required and reading/studying in ongoing fashion is strongly recommended. It is also strongly recommended to consult at least one reference volume (Eg Magyarics-Frank, see recommended literature) for the precise definition and interpretation of the compulsory concepts as well as the role and relevance of historical figures. Individual consultations can be arranged in office hours.

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

### LECTURE TOPICS

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- 1 Introduction, goal orientation, study tips 1B First Encounters—the tale of two maps
- 2 The Early Colonies and the founding myths: *City Upon a Hill*, and the *American Dream*.
- 3 Revolution and the “making” of the United States, the early Republic
- 4 Growth and Reforms in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- 5 Westward Movement: territorial expansion, shaping the frontier, and fight over slavery
- 6 Civil War and Reconstruction
- 7-8 The Gilded Age, Progressive Era, and the Roaring Twenties: Industrial America and Modernism
- 9 The nation in crises: Great Depression, New Deal, and World War Two
- 10 The US in the Cold War
- 11/12 From the “Crisis of Confidence” to Post 9/11 US: (re)Negotiating identity and international role

### Evaluation:

1. Credits for the course can be earned by regularly attending the course and successfully completing a **written test** in the exam period.
2. The exam questions will be based partly on the compulsory texts, partly on the material covered by the lectures.
3. **The floor for passing grade is 55% but** the test is composed of two main sections: **a screening test and a comprehensive test**. The screening test on the top of the exam sheet will feature a few basic questions focusing on what/who/when, in other words, some fundamental concepts and events. You must earn 60% on this part for your comprehensive test to be reviewed and evaluated. You must earn 55% of the scores available in the comprehensive test to pass the course. Further grade brackets are generally drawn at 66, 75, 86 pts/% of scores available.
4. Multiple-choice questions in the comprehensive section will be designed in various formats to **test your knowledge of the most basic US history concepts, the causes/relevance/impact of events**, 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.

Some questions may inquire about the information/insights you gained from the **assigned essays** from *Historians on America*. (see compulsory readings above)

“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 the set historical documents or glean information from the “original texts” or excerpts provided at the exam. Compulsory historical documents are 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/>,
1. Declaration of Independence (July 4, 1776)
2. The Bill of Rights of the U.S. Constitution (1791)
3. The Emancipation Proclamation (1862)
4. Abraham Lincoln: Gettysburg Address (1863)
5. *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896)
6. Woodrow Wilson: Fourteen Points Speech (January 1918)
7. Franklin D. Roosevelt: First Inaugural Address (1933)
8. *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954)
9. John F. Kennedy: Inaugural Address (1961)
10. Martin Luther King Jr: I Have a Dream (1963)
11. Ronald Reagan: Farewell Address (1989). Reagan Library, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FjECSv8KFN4>

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)