

## Syllabus

### *American Promises: Teaching American History*

Course title – Teaching American History, American Promises ETAH Year Two (2008-2009)  
Instructor – Dr. Barbara Mathews, Academic Director  
Deerfield Teachers' Center  
Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association and Memorial Hall Museum

#### Course description –

This course is offered by the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association in collaboration with the Erving School Union #28 Consortium and the Westfield State College History Department. It supports Westfield's institutional commitment to meeting the needs of educational practitioners pursuing further study at the graduate level. The course is designed to deepen and augment teachers' knowledge of American history through advanced study and collegial interaction, and to enable them to strengthen their students' knowledge in this field. A long range goal is that students will become better informed and more involved citizens. The course will use local history as a window into larger themes of American History. It emphasizes the use of primary documents, artifacts, and first person perspectives in the classroom. The course will include eight full-day seminars with nationally recognized scholars of American history, after-school workshops, living history presentations, and meetings with individual teachers. The course integrates technology into curriculum development and addresses the Massachusetts standards in history and social studies.

#### **Course Rationale**

1. Teachers need to increase their content knowledge of American History. This content must align with current Massachusetts history and social studies curriculum Frameworks, to prepare students for MCAS testing.
2. Teachers need content-rich technology training.
3. Students at all levels (K-12) need excellent and engaging history instruction.
4. Effective and systemic change in teaching history depends on professional collaboration and a sustained study of history.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

##### Knowledge:

1. Participants will become more knowledgeable about American History.
2. Participants will be able to connect local history to national history.
3. Participants will become aware of and learn how to access regionally available American History resources.
4. Participants will be able to subject historical problems to systematic analysis by synthesizing and integrating relevant secondary sources that inform and support that analysis.

## Assessment

1. Teachers will submit three short (5-7 pages) papers. (45 %)

Each paper should be based upon content and themes covered in one of the eight seminar days; teachers may choose which of the eight seminars upon which their papers will focus. Each paper should concern itself roughly one half with your *historical understanding* of the era, topic, or theme chosen, and roughly one half with your reflections on an appropriate pedagogical approach to the topic for children at the grade level you teach, including the *idea* for a unit (but not the unit itself): what students should know (“*Students will understand that...*”) and be able to do (skills). In addition to the assigned readings, please use the following 4 reference works:

1. Lessons From History: Essential Understandings and Historical Perspectives Students Should Acquire (Gary Nash et al., NCHS). You can find copies in the Teachers’ Center.
2. History of US by Joy Hakim. The Teachers’ Center has all 11 volumes of this series.
3. Current Massachusetts State Frameworks: History and Social Science and ELA.
4. *American Centuries* website

**Papers will be due:**

<b>Paper #1</b>	<b>Friday, September 26, 2008</b>
<b>Paper #2</b>	<b>Friday, January 16, 2009</b>
<b>Paper #3</b>	<b>Friday, May 15, 2009</b>

2. Teachers will design and implement a classroom lesson using primary sources (documents and objects) that meet the needs of academically diverse learners and which integrates the American Centuries web site ([www.americancenturies.mass.edu](http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu)). This lesson must be posted on the American Centuries website in the Classroom Activities section. (30 %)

**Final edits of activity will be due Friday, May 15, 2009.**

3. Teachers will observe an in-class History Lab with pre- and post-components, in consultation with museum educators, and will write a brief (1-2 paragraph) reflection on the program’s history content, techniques and relevance to Massachusetts History Frameworks. (25 %)

**Written Reflection of History Lab will be due Friday, May 15, 2009.**

4. Teachers will submit documentation of assessments 2 and 3.

Skills: Participating teachers will learn and practice effective, engaging, instructional strategies for American History.

1. Teachers will learn to use high quality, on-line resources, including the *American Centuries* web site ([www.americancenturies.mass.edu](http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu)).
2. Teachers will learn to teach using primary sources.
3. Teachers will learn instructional strategies to meet the needs of academically diverse learners.

**Please note that all course materials will be due no later than Friday, May 15, 2009.**

## Course requirements

1. Attend eight seminars\* –4 in summer, 4 in winter/spring. The seminars have morning presentations by visiting scholars followed by small group sessions in the afternoon. These afternoon sessions will include working with museum staff on artifacts and documents that can be used to teach the content covered in the morning, small group discussion with professors, and strategies for classroom integration.

\* See attached list of the eight seminars. Participants will be responsible for readings assigned by the visiting scholars. Readings will relate to the topics and themes covered by a particular professor. **Please note:** The expectation is that full participants will attend all eight seminars. In extenuating circumstances, participants may choose to make up the hours for one seminar with three after-school workshops (3 two-hour workshops equals 1 full-day seminar).

2. Attend a minimum of six (maximum of ten) after-school Teachers' Center Workshops, one of which must be an American Centuries online classroom activity instruction workshop or an online activity review clinic.
3. Submit three short papers (5-7 pages each) addressing a historical topic or theme based upon content and themes covered in one of the eight seminar days. NOTE: These papers are in addition to the reflective writing piece required of all full participants in the Teaching American History program.
4. Develop a plan of 8 - 10 hours of professional development from the following choices:
  - ◆ Consult with PVMA Historians on American history themes and related content of your choice.
  - ◆ Attend content-specific workshops at the Deerfield Teachers' Center (above the minimum number for your level of program participation).
  - ◆ Work with Teachers' Center (PVMA) library researcher to find historic documents from PVMA and other local historical societies to support your teaching (either new or existing units).
  - ◆ Work with Teachers' Center staff to receive content-related technology training on use of Web sites, especially the American Centuries Web site ([www.americancenturies.mass.edu](http://www.americancenturies.mass.edu)).
  - ◆ Study at the Deerfield Teachers' Center (located at 10 Memorial Street, PVMA).
5. Observe a History Lab in your classroom led by a PVMA museum educator. \*Non-classroom teachers may share a History Lab with a teacher in their school.
6. Written documentation of learning (classroom lesson) which you will share, by 1) submitting the lesson to the activity forum of the PVMA American Centuries website, as well as 2) other sharing opportunities as appropriate.
7. Be available as a resource to your colleagues to access Teaching American History Resources; inform and promote use of Teaching American History resources in your school.

## ***ERVING SCHOOL UNION #28 TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY***

### **Seminar Schedule July 2008 – June 2009**

One week of seminars (Tuesday, August 5 – Friday, August 8, 2008) will kick off this year's program. *All participants must attend at least one of the first six seminars.* Seminars run from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted. Seminars are held at the White Church Community Center or at the Deerfield Teachers' Center of the Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association in Old Deerfield, as noted.

- Seminar #1:** **Tuesday, August 5, 2008 – White Church Community Center**  
*The Scratch of a Pen: 1763 and the Transformation of North America*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Colin Calloway**  
**Dartmouth College**
- Seminar #2:** **Wednesday, August 6, 2008 – White Church Community Center**  
*New England Slavery in a Transatlantic Context*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Joanne Pope Melish**  
**University of Kentucky**
- Seminar #3:** **Thursday, August 7, 2008 – White Church Community Center**  
*Shays' Rebellion: The American Revolution's Final Battle*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Leonard Richards**  
**University of Massachusetts, Amherst**
- Seminar #4:** **Friday, August 8, 2008 – The Deerfield Teachers' Center of the**  
**Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Assn. (Blue and White Room)**  
*Nineteenth Century Immigration and the Professionalization of*  
*Urban Police and Fire Departments*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Amy Greenberg**  
**Penn State University**
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- Seminar #5:** **Friday, October 3, 2008 – White Church Community Center**  
*Anti-Slavery and Antebellum Social Movements*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Susan Tracy**  
**Hampshire College**
- Seminar #6:** **Friday, December 5, 2008 – White Church Community Center**  
**SNOW DATE: Thursday, December 18, 2008**  
*Building America: Immigration, Architecture, and Urbanism*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Max Page**  
**University of Massachusetts, Amherst**
- Seminar #7:** **Saturday, March 7, 2009 – White Church Community Center**  
**SNOW DATE: Saturday, March 14, 2009**  
*The Paradox of the American Promise: Racial Justice at the Turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Gretchen Long**  
**Williams College**
- Seminar #8:** **May 8, 2009 – White Church Community Center**  
*Vietnam Remembered*  
**Presenting Scholar: Professor Christian Appy**  
**University of Massachusetts, Amherst**