

Course Information – Fall 2009 – 101FDAMF American Foundations

Professor: Robert L. Marrott

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Office hours: 9:00-10:30 A.M. Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays; or other times may be set by appointment, or drop by on the off-chance.

<i>Section</i>	<i>First Day</i>	<i>Last Day</i>	<i>Days</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Room</i>
1	Sept 11 (Friday)	Dec 16 (Wednesday)	M W F	7:45 AM – 8:45 AM	RKS 147
9	Sept 11 (Friday)	Dec 16 (Wednesday)	M W F	11:30 AM – 12:30 PM	RKS 147
12	Sept 11 (Friday)	Dec 16 (Wednesday)	M W F	2:00 PM – 3:00 PM	RKS 147
13	Sept 11 (Friday)	Dec 16 (Wednesday)	M W F	3:15 PM – 4:15 PM	RKS 147

Students are responsible to learn and understand this Course Information.

Your first assignment: Get the names, phone numbers and/or email addresses of at least 3 members of the class so that you can communicate with them about assignments and class discussions. You will be divided into assigned working groups of about 5 to 7 students per group.

Course Description: American Foundations is a course designed to encourage students to explore major historical, political, economic, and cultural themes in American life coupled with the insights of the restored gospel and the teachings of the living prophets.

To ensure a common experience for all students across campus and to encourage student discussions of the themes, the American Foundations committee has developed a common teaching schedule and a list of twelve themes with outcomes to be covered in all sections of the class. Based on the assumptions of the BYU-Idaho Learning Model (Prepare; Teach One Another; Ponder/Prove), the expectation is that students will prepare for each class by reading background information, considering case studies, or watching videos, and come to class prepared to teach each other what they have learned. The students then should be able to prove their learning experience by applying what they have learned to other events and circumstances in the American experience or to situations they face in their own life.

This course offers you, the student, an important opportunity that may never again be repeated in your life. You are encouraged to use the opportunity wisely. It is hoped that this course will help you better appreciate (both in understanding and gratitude) America's beginning and the singular nature of its political system. You should also come to better understand the strengths of the American economic system and the natural way it has unlocked individual initiative and created prosperity and abundance. The themes presented here will help add depth and meaning to your understanding of American heritage and culture. **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN LEARNING.**

In order for this course to work for you and for the other students in the class, you must come to class prepared, you must be involved in teaching one another, and you must ponder and prove the knowledge you receive.

Required materials & skills (be sure to write your name & other identifying information on your materials):

- You should have internet access and know how to use a computer word processor and email. **Do NOT use Microsoft Works!**
- Access documents placed on the Internet. There is no assigned text for this course, but there will be a significant reading and preparation requirement. The reading material for this will be provided on-line. Print out your own copy of the reading material and bring it to class.

You should plan to access the HOME PAGE as early as possible and become familiar with the Home Page, Course Information, the Syllabus, and Instructions. It is important that you read, study, and understand the material provided for the course. Much of the material is thought-provoking if read with the intent to understand. The material has been carefully selected so that it presents ideas important to your study. If you prepare the assigned materials before you come to class, you will be better prepared to participate in class discussions.

- Stapler, with staples.
- Packet of lined 3x5 cards (you'll need about 30 of them) for the quizzes.
- Optional, but highly recommended: **Laptop computer** (Apple Macintosh or Windows).
- Writing Skills. You are expected to have college-level reading and writing skills. Your written assignments should be free from grammatical and mechanical (e.g., spelling) errors. Grades on papers will be based upon content (both quantity and quality), more than upon grammar and mechanics. However, if the paper is difficult to read, unclear,

disorganized, or is grammatically or mechanically distracting, the instructor will return the paper. See the Learning Assistance Lab in the McKay Library for help.

Syllabus (aka schedule) is hyperlinked on the Internet course Home Page. The Syllabus is a tentative schedule for the semester.

Attendance, Attitude, & Participation: Attendance will be taken by means of a roll. If you are absent seven times or more, you will automatically receive an “F” grade and no credit. The first 3 absences will have no effect on your grade. Each subsequent absence will lower your grade one step: e.g., 4 absences, from a B+ to a B; 5 absences, B+ to B-; 6 absences, from a B+ to a C+.

It is important that students take responsibility for their own education. This means that they come to class **prepared to ask questions**, contribute insights, and discuss the material assigned for the class period.

President Kim B. Clark: *“A Zion people would never come late to a class.” “A Zion people would never be unprepared.”* Participation can be outward (questions, comments, etc.) and inward (thinking, pondering, proving, etc.). “... students should learn that they **must be on time for class and not disrupt class by leaving. They must also come prepared and take responsibility for what is going on there. And that certainly means they shouldn’t answer their cell phones in class or text message in class.**” (President Kim B. Clark, “Highlights from June 14, 2007, President’s Council Q&A,” *BYU-Idaho News and Notes*, July 5, 2007, 2.)

Do not leave the class before it is over, unless you are ill. It is a height of rudeness to walk out on a class. If you know in advance that you will have to leave during the class, inform your instructor before the class starts. If you become ill during class, it is OK to leave without notice -- just go! But please follow-up with your instructor the next time you attend class and inform him about your leaving class.

Joseph Smith: “It is an insult to a meeting for persons to leave just before its close.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 287.) “As president of this house, I forbid any man leaving just as we are going to close the meeting... I forbid it.” (*Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith*, 297.)

Not only are you expected to attend, you are expected to be a positive influence on the learning environment through your **preparation and participation** in discussions and through the attitude you exhibit in class. *I reserve the right to remove a significant number of points for ill displays of attitude that either affects me as a teacher or other students in the class.*

You are responsible for all material discussed in class, whether you are present or not. If you miss a class period, you should contact a class member for notes and assignments.

Quizzes: Students should plan on about 25 quizzes for the course. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. They will consist of 5 or 10 questions (multiple choice, true or false, short answer; 5 points possible for each quiz). If you take the quiz and then leave the class, you will receive no grade for the quiz and be counted absent, unless arrangements have been made in advance. Advanced organizers (hints) will be given on the Current Assignments Page to help you prepare for the quiz questions. The lowest quiz score will be dropped.

GRADING: The following components make up your grade:

(1) “Answers” to questions in the Topics; (2) Critiques (reviews) of “Answers”; (3) Quizzes; (4) group work; (5) Final Essay; (6) attendance; attitude, participation, preparation, (at the discretion of the instructor).

Students should track their own points and grades and keep **all** returned papers.

A general *approximation* of grade point components:

- 27% -- Answers (110 points)
- 16% -- Critiques (66 points)
- 30% -- Quizzes (125 points)
- 15% -- Group work (about 30 points)
- 7% -- Final Essay (30 points)
- 5% -- Attendance, attitude, participation, preparation (instructor’s discretion) (20 points)

Grades are earned based on the following percentages from the items above (and modified downward by absences):

	C+ = 77% to 79%
A = 94% to 100%	C = 73% to 76%
A- = 90% to 93%	C- = 70% to 72%
B+ = 87% to 89%	D+ = 67% to 69%
B = 83% to 86%	D = 63% to 66%
B- = 80% to 82%	D- = 60% to 62%
	F = 0% to 59%

Grading “Answers”: Each assignment will be graded “on the curve” in the sense that the papers with the most (quantity) and the best (quality) information will earn the top grade. However, it is possible for every member of the class to earn the top mark, so in that sense it is not grading “on the curve.” The lowest “Answer” will be dropped. Generally, the quantity aspect of the grade will be as follows:

10 points (100% = A) 1700 words or more	6 points (60% = D-) 1000 to 1400 words
8 points (80% = B-) 1400 to 1700 words	0 points (0% = F) less than 1000 words

Grading Critiques to the Answers: Grading the work of the reviewer will be as follows: 3 points possible if done correctly for each of the two Critiques (6 points total). Points will be taken off (1 to 3) for poor quality reviewing, less than 500 words in length, or 0 points given for not doing a Critique. The lowest set of Critiques will be dropped.

Students will grade each others’ Answers and Critiques.

Late Work. Not accepted. There may be some rare exceptions to this rule (e.g., hospitalization). Papers are late if they are not on the instructor’s desk in the classroom. Computer problems, faulty alarm clocks, roommates, parking problems, etc. are not excuses for late papers. Be sure to give yourself plenty of time before class to allow for any mishaps that need extra attention.

Extra Credit: No extra credit.

Computers use in class. President Kim B. Clark: “We also should have a policy that laptops are down in class unless the faculty asks them to be up. If we don’t yet, we will.... I think there’s another problem, which is that we may prefer form over substance [re: research on the Internet]. And information moves faster and faster with a tendency toward superficiality and also to inaccuracy. There’s a phenomena today where somebody says something in a blog that is picked up by somebody else and all of a sudden we have thousands of people reading it, and the source gets lost and people just accept it as fact when it’s completely false. We need to be more discriminating and much more cautious about just accepting anything that shows up in digital form.” (President Kim B. Clark, “Highlights from June 14, 2007, President’s Council Q&A,” *BYU-Idaho News and Notes*, July 5, 2007, 2.) Problems with computers in the classroom: (1) Too often students in the past were doing homework for other classes, playing games, shopping on eBay, or otherwise doing things not related to what was going on in the classroom. (2) Distracting to other students in the classroom. Computers are allowed only for note taking and doing in-class assignments.

Back up everything you do **on at least TWO (2)** media (thumb drives, CDs, etc.). Every semester some students lose files because of not having at least two backups. Check regularly for computer viruses.

Study Skills Center: Go to <http://www.byui.edu/AcademicLearning>, or come to the McKay Library 272 for information about how the writing, reading, math, and study skills centers can help you increase success in all of your classes. To schedule a tutor for a specific class, log on to Tutor Request under Student Services and follow the instructions.

Plagiarism: Any work copied from another student or from someone else’s work, including scripture, which is passed off as one’s own, is a form of plagiarism. An “F” grade or expulsion from BYU-Idaho may be the result for plagiarism. Do your own work. Do not copy other students’ work and do not let your work be copied by others. Do not cut and paste answers from the text for your “Answer” questions. Do not cut and paste in doing your Critiques; type each Critique from scratch; the Answer writers deserve that. Do not turn in quizzes for people who are absent. Studying and working together is recommended, but when you turn in an assignment be sure that the written work you turn in is not similar to those with whom you have studied. Use your own words. If you quote from an author’s work (which is discouraged), use citation (formal citation is not required). Work that appears to be plagiarized may be turned in to the Honor Code Office. In case you missed it, plagiarism is naughty and illegal.

Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. Those caught cheating will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and could ultimately flunk the course and be turned over to Student Life for Honor Code violations. Those caught in the past

would tell you *it is not worth it!* See “Cheating” in BYU-I catalog under *Academic Policies*.

Time commitment: Plan on at least 2 hours of homework out of class per every hour in class.

Prayer: Classes will begin with prayer. Prayers will be voluntary or the instructor may call on someone to pray. Do not volunteer too often so that more students can have the opportunity to exercise their free will and agency to pray in class. The person who offers the prayer should come to the front of the classroom. If you prefer not to be called on to pray, inform your instructor (no penalty).

Recording or taping lectures: Please do not record class lectures. Recording lectures violates copyright law.

Children: Children are not allowed in classes at BYU-Idaho.

Cell phones & electronic devices: President Kim B. Clark: “The larger issue this question raises [cell phones in class] is really about student responsibility in class.... {Students} **must also come prepared and take responsibility for what is going on there. And that certainly means they shouldn’t answer their cell phones in class or text message in class.**” (President Kim B. Clark, “Highlights from June 14, 2007, President’s Council Q&A,” *BYU-Idaho News and Notes*, July 5, 2007, 2.) Cell phones and other electronic devices are not allowed in class. Cell phones should be turned off. If electronic devices disturb other students, they should not be used in class.

Disability Statement: In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, all qualified students enrolled in this course are entitled to “reasonable accommodation.” It is the student’s responsibility to disclose to the teacher any special need she/he may have before the end of the first week of class. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Disability Service Center, McKay Library 158, 496-1158.

Preventing Sexual Harassment: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds, including Federal loans and grants. Title IX also covers student-to-student sexual harassment. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please contact the Personnel Office at 496-1130.

FERPA (Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act). If you wish to invoke your right not to have your grades posted, even anonymously, and not to have your graded work returned to you in a common folder in the classroom, please so inform your professor. Otherwise your grades will be posted 3 or more times during the semester so that you can (1) see how you are doing and (2) see if your points have been correctly recorded; and your graded papers will be returned to you in a public folder passed around the room: an advantage to this is that you can see how other students are doing their work which may help you. In all the years FERPA has been in force only 1 student (Summer 2008) wanted his FERPA rights invoked. The number of students revoking their FERPA rights is so great that a previously used sign-up sheet to revoke the right has been discontinued.

Note: The information on these pages, the Syllabus, and the other information and web pages are subject to change upon notification. The syllabus may be altered at the professor’s discretion.