

Debating this coming Spring Semester 2004 will be a web version of the History Department's popular "American History 102" course. This version builds on the previous broadcast version (Wisconsin Public Television) of the course as well as on the award-winning web site (<http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/>) that accompanied both the television version and the traditional classroom version.

Students enrolled in the course on campus here will attend one discussion section per week, just as in a traditional classroom course. There will be a textbook in the University Bookstore. All other course materials will be available online. Specifically, that means all the lectures will be available in an audio version that either can be streamed (that is, a student will sit and listen to the entire 1-hour lecture at one sitting), or can be played in segments of about 10 minutes each, then paused, and started up again when the student wishes to continue. Intercut within each audio lecture will be graphics (photos, maps, videos, screens of "the three most important points here are . . .") and some other text based materials. Also available will be the "Web Notes" (shortened text versions of the major points made in the lecture) now available on the "American History 102" web site <http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/>. All required readings, other than the required textbook, will be available online. Links to other sources of information on the subject at hand also will be present.

In brief, the course will be as close to sitting in a real classroom as possible, with the added advantage of our ability to present additional materials that are difficult to present in the traditional classroom. Another obvious benefit is that a student can work through the course materials at her or his own pace and timetable for getting things done.

Any computer equipped with a web browser (Internet Explorer or Netscape), an Adobe Acrobat Reader (free download from a link on our site as well as from Adobe), a Flash media player (again a free download), and a Quicktime Player (yet again a free download) will be able to take full advantage of our new course. Nearly every computer in use today at home or certainly all those on campus, already have all this software installed. This will be a 4 credits course.