

To: History 220 Students

From: Thomas Hafer

Date: January 5, 2026

Re: Welcome Letter

Welcome to History 220, New York: The Empire State for the Spring 2026 online session 1! This course begins on January 21st, 2026 and ends on March 13th, 2026.

This semester we will explore the history of New York State from the period before European colonization all the way into the 21st Century. Both a vast geography and amount of time, I will provide you with a broad overview and we will spend time learning about different events, areas, and transformations that have shaped the history of New York in each period, through articles, primary sources, podcasts, and books.

This course is only about 8 weeks long and will therefore move very quickly. It will be important that you keep an eye on the dates when all the discussions and assignments are due. Your first assignment is to post an introductory message so we can get to know one another. During the first week, you will have some readings that will be provided on Brightspace and it is important to order the Daniel Richter book right away (also available as an ebook on Amazon) as that book review is due by 2/2/2026!

Once you enter the course, you should read the announcements, visit the forum, and check out the readings and lessons available. Start by reviewing the course syllabus carefully. You will find your reading assignments, textbook requirements, class expectations, grading system, and general information about the course. Your first “lecture” is in the Lessons section and your first discussion reading is in the Resources folder.

Books are available through Marist College Bookstore and online. The telephone number for the bookstore is 845-575-3620.

Required texts:

- Daniel Richter, *The Ordeal of the Longhouse* (1992) ISBN-13: 978-0807843949
- Carol Sheriff, *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862* (1997) ISBN-13: 978-0809016051
- Thomas Kessner, *Capital City: New York City and the Men Behind America's Rise to Economic Dominance, 1860-1900* (2004) ISBN-13: 978-0743257534

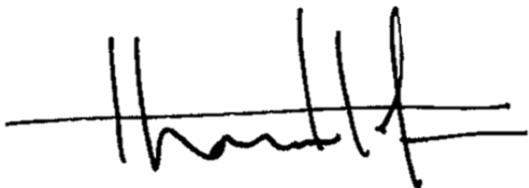
As for me, I have taught this course online for a few years now. I have also taught many different history courses at John Jay College, Brooklyn College, St. Francis and have taught high school history (I know many of you may be education majors). Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions.

I look forward to getting to know you during these challenging times and hopefully continue our journeys in education.

If you need to contact me, you can email me at

Thomas.Hafer@marist.edu

I look forward to “meeting” you January 23rd!



Professor Thomas Hafer
Marist College, History Department