

### **Vast Early America**

Traditional histories of the United States usually begin with the so-called original Thirteen Colonies—the British territories that eventually banded together and formed the early United States. But these colonies comprised only a small sliver of North America, which was (and is) an expansive, dynamic, and diverse place. This course focuses on that larger history and on the complex and sometimes violent meetings of a variety of different cultures, peoples, and environments that happened in North America between 1450 and 1850. Topics will include the histories of Indigenous peoples, enslaved Africans, and women; the meeting of different European empires; the movement of plants, animals, and microbes between continents; the relationship between different North American regions like the Caribbean, Southwest, and Northeast. This course will also explore the relationship between historic events and the national mythology of United States and ask students to reflect on why early American history matters in the present day.