



Course Syllabus: Interwar America, 1918-1939
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
HIST 4133/5133 X20
Spring 2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Whitney Snow

Office: OD 223

Office hours: Tuesdays (8:00-10:00 A.M.); Thursdays (8:00-10:00 A.M.);
Fridays (10:00-11:00 A.M.); and by appointment

Office phone: (940) 397-8917

E-mail: whitney.snow@msutexas.edu

Course Description

This course will explore the Interwar Period, specifically American life from the eve of World War I to the dawn of World War II. Spanning from 1918 to 1939, it places emphasis on the Roaring Twenties, the Great Depression, and the New Deal. The primary goal is to provide students with contextualization, primarily as it relates to race, class, and gender. Subjects discussed include but are not limited to segregation, the Harlem Renaissance, flappers, the Equal Rights Amendment, organized labor, and nativism. By semester's end, students will have a firm grasp of the social, economic, political, philosophical, and cultural ramifications of the myriad events, many that continue to impact the present, which transpired between the world wars.

Required Textbooks

- Chapman, Erin D. *Prove It on Me: New Negroes, Sex, and Popular Culture in the 1920s*. Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Davies, Philip John and Iwan Morgan, ed. *Hollywood and the Great Depression: American Film, Politics and Society in the 1930s*. Edinburgh University Press, 2018.
- Ganz, Cheryl R. *The 1933 Chicago World's Fair: A Century of Progress*. University of Illinois Press, 2012.
- Godden, Richard and Martin Crawford, ed. *Reading Southern Poverty between the Wars, 1918-1939*. University of Georgia Press, 2006.
- Goldberg, Ronald. *America in the Twenties*. Syracuse University Press, 2003.
- Gordon, Colin. *Major Problems in American History, 1920-1945*. Cengage Learning, 2010.
- Mappen, Marc. *Prohibition Gangsters: The Rise and Fall of a Bad Generation*. Rutgers University Press, 2013.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, plagiarism, and the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), including Grammarly. While other professors may condone or even encourage the use of AI, it is NOT permitted in this class. Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading

In this course, students will write three book reviews, two film critiques, and a term paper. They will also complete two exams.

Table 1: Grade Breakdown

Assignments	Points
Book Reviews (3)	30%
Film Critiques (2)	20%
Term Paper	20%
Exams (2)	30%
Total Points	100%

Table 2: Letter Grade Scale

Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Exams

There will be two exams, a midterm and a final. Each exam will consist of six identification terms and one essay. Here are the instructions:

1. Log onto D2L.
2. Click on the 9-block square at the top of the page and find our class. Click on it.
3. Once you are on our classroom dashboard, click on "Assessments" near the top of the page.
4. Under the drop-down list, click on "Tests." You should see both exams.
5. Click on the arrow next to either "Midterm" or "Final" and upload your answers in either a word doc or PDF. Each identification term is worth 10 points while the essay is worth 40.
6. You must take each exam on the specified dates on the syllabus schedule. Each window opens at 6:30 A.M. and closes at 11:30 P.M.

Book Reviews

Students will be expected to write three book reviews, one on Ganz and two others they will select from a pre-approved list which can be found on our D2L classroom dashboard under "Content." Here are the instructions:

1. Each book review must be typed, in 12-point font, Times New Roman, and double-spaced.
2. The margins should be 1 inch on the top and bottom and 1.25 inches on the left and right.
3. To submit each book review, once on our D2L classroom dashboard, click on "Assessments" and then "Assignments." You should see "Book Review 1," "Book Review 2," and "Book Review 3."
4. You must submit your book reviews by 11:30 P.M. on the due dates.

Film Critiques

Students are expected to write two 5-6-page film critiques. Students may select any two of the following movies: *Meet John Doe* (1941); *Mr. Deeds Goes to Town* (1939); *O'Brother, Where Art Thou* (2000); *Places in the Heart* (1984); *You Can't Take it With You* (1938); or *Some Like it Hot* (1959). Here are the instructions to submit your film critiques:

1. Once you are on our classroom dashboard, click on "Assessments" near the top of the page.
2. Under the drop-down list, click on "Assignments." You should see two dropboxes called Film Critique 1 and Film Critique 2.
3. On or by the due dates, which are shown on the syllabus schedule, click on the arrow next to the dropbox in question and upload your movie review in either a word doc or PDF.
4. Note, your film critiques must be at least 5 pages and no more than 6 pages. Each critique must be in 12-point font, Times New Roman and double-spaced. The margins should be 1 inch on the top and bottom and 1.25 inches on the left and right.

Term Paper

Undergraduate students will be expected to write a 15-20-page primary-source-based term paper while graduate students will be expected to write a 20-25-page term paper. Students are permitted to select their topic, per professor approval. A short list of expectations can be found below while more in-depth instructions can be found under "Content" on our D2L classroom dashboard.

1. You are expected to submit an abstract, rough draft, and final draft. Refer to the syllabus schedule for due dates.
2. Your term paper should be typed, double-spaced in 12-point font Times New Roman.
3. Your term paper should be based on both primary and secondary sources.
4. Your term paper must include a thesis (argument).
5. Use at least 15 books (preferably those published by university presses).
6. Use at least 4 book chapters or peer-reviewed journal articles.
7. Use the latest version of Chicago Manual of Style which is currently 18th edition.
8. Include a bibliography at the end of your paper. Be sure to separate primary and secondary sources in separate categories.

Extra Credit

Virtual extra credit options, usually Zoom talks by academics, can be found under "Content" on our D2L classroom dashboard. Click on "Extra Credit" to see the options. You may attend one or all. Note, Zoom informs the instructor what time you log into the meeting and what time you leave. To earn the extra credit, you must stay for the duration of the talk.

Make Up Work/Tests

Legitimate excuses are official university absences, illnesses, and/or close family deaths. Students must provide the necessary proof like university paperwork, doctor's excuses, or funeral remembrance cards. The acceptability of any other excuse will be at the discretion of the instructor. Such an excuse will result in a ten-point deduction for every day an assignment is late.

Important Dates

Deadline to file for graduation: February 17

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 30

Refer to: [Drops, Withdrawals & Void](#)

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

Extensive use of the MSU D2L program is a part of this course. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication regarding assignments, examination materials, and general course information. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor.

Attendance

For us to have a successful semester, your full participation is required.

Computer Requirements

Taking this class requires you to have access to a computer (with Internet access) to complete and upload your assignments. It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. ****Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.*** Computers are available on campus in various areas of the buildings as well as the Academic Success Center. ****Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!!***

Instructor Class Policies

- Be civil in any discussion interactions. Debate is healthy but, keep it respectful.
- Avoid all caps.
- Be mindful of deadlines.

Change of Schedule

A student dropping a course (but not withdrawing from the University) within the first 12 class days of a regular semester or the first four class days of a summer semester is eligible for a 100% refund of applicable tuition and fees. Dates are published in the Schedule of Classes each semester.

Refund and Repayment Policy

A student who withdraws or is administratively withdrawn from Midwestern State University (MSU) may be eligible to receive a refund for all or a portion of the tuition, fees and room/board charges that were paid to MSU for the semester. HOWEVER, if the student received financial aid (federal/state/institutional grants, loans and/or scholarships), all or a portion of the refund may be returned to the financial aid programs. As described below, two formulas (federal and state) exists in determining the amount of the refund. (Examples of each refund calculation will be made available upon request).

Services for Students with Disabilities

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to [Disability Support Services](#).

Grade Appeal Process

Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University [MSU Catalog](#)

***Notice:** Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 January 21-24	Goldberg, Chapters 1-4	Term Paper Topic Selection due by January 24
Week 2 January 27-31	Goldberg, Chapters 5-9 Gordon, Chapter 1	Term Paper Abstracts due by January 31
Week 3 February 3-7	Gordon, Chapter 2 Chapman, Introduction	Movie Critique #1 due by February 7

Week or Module	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 4 February 10-14	Chapman, Chapters 1-4 Gordon, Chapter 3	Book Review #1 due by February 14
Week 5 February 17-21	Ganz, Intro and Chapters 1-4 Gordon, Chapter 4	
Week 6 February 24-28	Ganz, Chapters 5-8 Gordon, Chapter 5	Book Review #2 due by February 28
Week 7 March 3-7	Mappen, Chapters 1-6 Gordon, Chapter 6	
Week 8 March 10-14	SPRING BREAK	
Week 9 March 17-21	Mappen, Chapters 7-12 Gordon, Chapter 7	Midterm due by March 21
Week 10 March 24-28	Godden, pages 1-107 Gordon, Chapter 8	Term Paper Rough Draft due by March 28
Week 11 March 31-April 4	Godden, pages 108-178 Gordon, Chapter 9	Book Review #3 due by April 4
Week 12 April 7-11	Godden, pages 179-238 Gordon, Chapter 9	Movie Critique #2 due by April 11
Week 13 April 14-18	Morgan, Intro and Chapters 1-2 Gordon, Chapter 11	Term Paper Final Draft due by April 18
Week 14 April 21-25	Morgan, Chapters 3-6 Gordon, Chapter 12	
Week 15 April 28-May 2	Morgan, Chapters 7-8 Gordon, Chapter 13	
Week 16 May 5-9	Morgan, Chapters 9-13	
Finals Week	Final Exam	May 12