

HIST 1233-105 | *Survey of United States History, 1877—Present*

Fall Semester

Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday 3:30 – 4:50

Meeting Room: PY 103

Office: OD 228

Contact Information: Isabella.black@msutexas.edu

Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 12:30p – 3:00p

All assignments, topics, and exam schedules are subject to change

Overview:

The year is 1877—Reconstruction has ended, western exploration and settlement has come to an end, indigenous populations are drastically reduced, contention between U.S labor and capital is at an all-time high, and Americans from all over the country are anxiously awaiting the twentieth century. Clearly, there's some baggage to unpack. Welcome to HIST 1233! Throughout this course we will explore U.S history like you have, perhaps, never studied it before. We will be surveying the dominant ideologies that guided Americans throughout the late nineteenth-and-twentieth centuries, the political landscape, U.S. foreign policy and, of course, take stock of the social realities here at home.

Objectives:

The point of this class is not to barrage you all with a linear, “coverage-model” approach to history. In other words, we are not studying history just to pass the midterm or the final exam. History is intrinsic to our lives, and it is imperative that we value that. This class will emphasize a collaborative effort between myself and you all so that we can explore and learn contemporary U.S. history together. My goal is to help you gain a sense of value for history, an awareness of your place in the world, and to hone your intellectual agility—U.S. history just happens to be our medium.

Throughout the course students will learn:

1. How history has shaped society, culture and the world we currently live in;
2. How to read and analyze primary source documents;
3. How to use historical imagination;
4. How to write analytically, and;
5. How to apply critical thinking skills to historical and contemporary ideas and issues.

Required Texts:

THERE IS NOT A REQUIRED TEXTBOOK FOR THIS CLASS. ALL READINGS WILL BE PROVIDED VIA D2L. Students may choose to supplement course readings with the online version of the American Yawp: Volume II (After 1877). When applicable, I will tell students which chapters to look at. Students can access the link here: [The American Yawp](#).

Assignments:

Breakdown & Criteria

Midterm and Final Exam: **25% each (total 50%)**

- Exams will be given midway and at the end of the semester.
- All exams are online, take-home and open note.
- Be sure to focus on your analysis! Limited responses will receive limited points.
- Short answer questions will pull from both the lectures and primary sources, so be sure you are attending regularly and keeping up with the readings.

Primary Source Analysis I & II: **15% each (total 30%)**

- 2–3-page analysis of a primary source of your choice. PSA I should come from weeks 1-4; PSA II should come from weeks 5-9 and, if you opt to do PSA III **instead of** the Creative Project, your source should come from weeks 10-15.
- Be sure to ANALYZE, not summarize. The best PSA's will situate the source within the context of the time.
- See the separate template on D2L for more instruction.

Primary Source Analysis III or Creative Project: **15%**

- Alongside the final, students will either turn in PSA III **OR** complete the Creative Project (see below). If the student chooses PSA III, the format will be the same as the first two and will cover a primary source from weeks 10-15.

Creative Project: **“Creating A President’s Twitter: A Thread”**

- This semester, we will discuss every president that has been in office since 1877 in one capacity or another. The presidents of our generation have made extensive use of the social media platform Twitter (now X, but let’s pretend Elon Musk hasn’t changed it for the purposes of this assignment)—but what if the Herbert Hoover or Franklin Delano Roosevelt administrations had one? How would Lyndon B. Johnson tweet about Martin Luther King Jr.’s death in 1968 or the Viet Nam War? How would Dwight D. Eisenhower respond to Senator Joseph McCarthy and his infamous “list” of Communists? With the research and writing skills developed over this semester, you get to decide!
- You will choose two presidents, from Rutherford B. Hayes to George Bush, Jr., and create a twitter thread consisting of five (5) or more tweets for each (so ten (10) tweets minimum for the total amount). You may **not** choose Barack Obama, Donald Trump or Joe Biden.
- After choosing your presidents, you will research one major event that each administration dealt with and create a twitter thread in response to it. The more creative the better! If you want to create a conversation between your choice of president and an unruly senator or political organization, go for it! If your president had a scandal while in office, how would they defend themselves? With the knowledge gained throughout the semester, you will be equipped with the resources

necessary to answer these burning questions. You can either create a twitter account for your presidents or use a thread simulator online.

- Along with the twitter threads, the student will attach a works cited page of primary and secondary sources they used to inform their thread-making. You need a minimum of two (2) primary sources and two (2) secondary sources per president (four (4) total for each president; eight (8) sources cumulative).
- Let's keep it classy, folks. If you have questions about historical language, see me.
- Be creative, but accurate! This is meant to be a fun exercise in historical imagination but keep it realistic. For instance, Harry Truman would not tweet "sorry besties" after dropping the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.
- Please don't give your computer a virus: if a website you have chosen to simulate your twitter thread seems suspect, don't use it. Instructions on how to turn in this assignment will be provided closer to the due date in class and via email.

Attendance and Participation: 5%

- Students receive three (3) unexcused absences without penalty. Each subsequent absence will be a point off your participation grade. After five (5) unexcused, the grade will sit at zero (0). Participation may bring it up, but if you're not in class chances are that you're not participating, either.
- That being said, if you are sick, please take care of yourself. Shoot me an email ahead of time!
- Your participation grade will come from in-class discussions, mini-participation assignments, and overall engagement. If you struggle with speaking in class, that's okay! There are ample opportunities for all my extroverts and introverts to engage with this class.

Extra Credit:

- Because I'm nice, yes, I offer extra credit.
- You will get three (3) opportunities throughout the semester. When you turn in your PSA's or, for the third assignment, either your PSA III or Creative Project, you may also watch an episode of Puppet History from the selected links below. These are pretty comical, but I do have a purpose behind it. History can be shared in a myriad of ways, and comedy is one of them!
- Watch the video and write me a page on what you learned. Depending on your thoroughness, I will score it between 1-3 points and add those scores to your final exam. A total of nine (9) extra credit points are possible to add to the final—that is almost an entire letter grade! Use these tools wisely.
- **Only the links I include will count!** If you find an episode of Puppet History that covers the second half of American history I did not include, clear it with me first.

Links to the Extra Credit Videos:

1. “How America’s First Female Detective Saved Abe Lincoln,” 31:46:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4vdACLx-hQ&list=PL8rSRNukjnn6R_uKzQZ5LQIwOjvBoyN3I&index=5
2. “José Rizal: The Philippines’ Reluctant Revolutionary,” 38:13:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ilrMO0kjzg&list=PL8rSRNukjnn6R_uKzQZ5LQIwOjvBoyN3I&index=25
3. “How Hippo Meat Almost Saved America,” 45:31:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UeH426gwVRc&list=PL8rSRNukjnn6R_uKzQZ5LQIwOjvBoyN3I&index=31
4. “The Great Molasses Flood,” 33:08:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HAZIPuL3Qhw&list=PL8rSRNukjnn6R_uKzQZ5LQIwOjvBoyN3I&index=20
5. “America’s First Black Aviatrix,” 41:52:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okIP5oMxT0I&list=PL8rSRNukjnn6R_uKzQZ5LQIwOjvBoyN3I&index=34

Other Policies:

- All primary sources will be provided digitally through D2L. They will be organized by week and day, so you will know what to have read for class.
- When turning in assignments, **DO NOT turn in a PDF file.** I will take off points. The process for converting PDFs into a .doc or .docx is tedious and, if I didn’t already have adobe software, costly. Good rule of thumb for all your classes, **turn in your assignments using Microsoft Word or Google Docs.** All assignments will be turned in via Dropbox to D2L unless paper accommodation is necessary.
- **Label your assignments in THIS EXACT ORDER: Last Name, First Name, Title of Assignment.** It makes grading much easier, which means you all get your assignments back sooner. I will take off points if you do not follow this.
- The operating policy of late assignments is this: no late assignments. However, life happens. If you think an assignment will be late, talk to me first.
- If an assignment is late without prior permission for it to be so, points will be taken off.
 - 1 day late: 5 points
 - 2 days late: 10 points
 - 3 days late: 15 points
 - 4 days late: 20 points
 - 5 days late: will not be accepted

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.

MSU Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. Although in general students are graded on intellectual effort and performance rather than attendance, absences may lower the student's grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. In those classes where attendance is considered as part of the grade, the instructor should inform students of the specifics in writing at the beginning of the semester in a syllabus or separate attendance policy statement. An instructor who has an attendance policy must keep records daily. The instructor must give the student a verbal or written warning prior to being dropped from the class. Instructor's records will stand as evidence of absences. A student with excessive absences may be dropped from a course by the instructor. Any individual faculty member or college has the authority to establish an attendance policy, providing the policy is in accordance with the General University Policies.

Academic Dishonesty

The following constitutes plagiarism: "the use, deliberate or not, of any outside source without proper acknowledgment. While the work of others often constitutes a necessary resource for academic research, such work must be properly used and credited to the original author. This principle applies to professional scholars as well as to students. All work that students submit or present as part of course assignments or requirements must be their own original work. When students use the specific thoughts, ideas, writings, or expressions of others, they must accompany each instance of use with some form of attribution to the source. Direct quotes from any source (including the Internet) must be placed in quotation marks...and be accompanied by an appropriate citation." THIS INCLUDES THE USE OF AI TO WRITE PAPERS OR ANY OTHER ASSIGNMENT YOU ARE TURNING IN FOR A GRADE. Plagiarism will result in the offender receiving a zero in the course. Instances of plagiarism will look like this:

- The first time a student plagiarizes will result in a warning and a zero on the assignment.
- The second time a student plagiarizes will result in a zero on the assignment, which will automatically result in failing the class.

The following constitute items you may NOT run through ChatGPT or any other AI software:

- class prompts
- primary source analyses
- test questions
- or any other form of assignment

Not only is using AI software plagiarism in this course, but it can also provide you with incorrect information. Moreover, it cannot create analytical answers for you (e.g., compare and contrasting statements). Most of the questions that come from this course are meant to be answered with material from this course, so just don't risk it.

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).

Accommodation

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 <http://www.mwsu.edu/student-life/disability>.

Smoking/Tobacco Policy

College policy strictly prohibits the use of tobacco products in any building owned or operated by MSU TEXAS Adult students may smoke only in the outside designated-smoking areas at each location.

Alcohol and Drug Policy

To comply with the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and subsequent amendments, students and employees of Midwestern State are informed that strictly enforced policies are in place which prohibits the unlawful possession, use or distribution of any illicit drugs, including alcohol, on university property or as part of any university-sponsored activity. Students and employees are also subject to all applicable legal sanctions under local, state and federal law for any offenses involving illicit drugs on university property or at University-sponsored activities.

Campus Carry

Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes has prohibited. The new Constitutional Carry law does not change this process. Concealed carry still requires a License to Carry permit, and openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit [Campus Carry](#).

Active Shooter

The safety and security of our campus is the responsibility of everyone in our community. Each of us has an obligation to be prepared to appropriately respond to threats to our campus, such as an active aggressor. Please review the information provided by MSU Police Department regarding the options and strategies we can all use to stay safe during difficult situations. For more information, visit [MSUReady – Active Shooter](#). Students are encouraged to watch the video entitled “*Run. Hide. Fight.*” which may be electronically accessed via the University police department’s webpage: “*Run. Hide. Fight.*”

Grade Appeal Process

Update as needed. 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.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook 2017-18](#)

Grading Scale:

92-100%=A

90-91%=A-

87-89%=B+

82-86%=B

79-81%=B-

77-78%=C+

72-76%=C

69-71%=C-

67-68%=D+

62-66%=D

59-61%=D-

0-58%=F

The Course Layout by Week:

Week	Content/Roadmap	Assignments
Week 1: August 29 and 31	Day 1: Course Overview, Syllabus, First Day Activities Day 2: The Ideas Guiding U.S. History/Reconstruction Review	Nothing Due
Week 2: September 5 and 7	Day 3: The Gilded Age Day 4: The Gilded Age	Nothing Due
Week 3: September 12 and 14	Day 5: The Progressive Era Day 6: The Progressive Era	Nothing Due—start thinking about PSA I
Week 4: September 19 and 21	Day 7: WWI Day 8: Interwar America	Nothing Due—really start thinking about PSA I
Week 5: September 26 and 28	Day 9: The Great Depression and the New Deal Day 10: The New Deal and WWII	PSA I due September 29 at 11:59p <i>Extra Credit due</i>
Week 6: October 3 and 5	Day 11: The Postwar World Day 12: Postwar Politics and Ideology	Breathe—Nothing Due
Week 7: October 10 and 12	Day 13: Fighting Communism—Korean War, Indochina, the Global South Day 14: Fighting Communism—Korean War, Indochina, the Global South	MIDTERM due by October 13 at 11:59p Start thinking about PSA II
Week 8: October 17 and 19	Day 15: The Late-Cold War Context Day 16: The Late-Cold War Context	Nothing Due—really start thinking about PSA II
Week 9: October 24 and 26	Day 17: The Social Stuff: 1960s Day 18: The Social Stuff: 1970s	Nothing Due—really start thinking about PSA II
Week 10: October 31 and November 2	Day 19: The Seventies Presidents: Nixon, Ford, Carter and the New Right Day 20: The Social Stuff—1980s	Breathe—Happy Halloween! BE SAFE. PSA II due by November 3 at 11:59p <i>Extra credit due</i>

Week 11: November 7 and 9	Day 21: The Reagan Era Day 22: The Reagan Era	Indicate IN CLASS if you will be choosing PSA III or the Creative Project Nothing Due
Week 12: November 14 and 16	Day 23: The Social Stuff—1990s Day 24: George Bush, Sr., and the Middle East	Nothing Due
Week 13: November 21 and 23	THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS THIS WEEK	Nothing Due
Week 14: November 28 and 30	Day 25: The 2000s Day 26: The 2010's	Nothing Due—you <i>better</i> be working on PSA III or your Creative Project
Week 15: December 5 and 7	Day 27: Review/Additional Lecture Day Day 28: Review/Additional Lecture Day	PSA III or Creative Project due December 1 at 11:59p <i>Extra Credit due</i>
FINAL EXAM	FINAL EXAM	TBD—The university sets this, I do not.