



Course Syllabus: American History to 1865
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Fall 2026

Contact Information

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Office hours: Mon., Wed., Fri., — 2 to 3 pm, or by appointment

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Course Description

This course examines the history of colonial America and the United States to the end of the Civil War. It seeks to understand how a small group from a distant European empire became an independent nation founded on representative democracy, slavery, and capitalism. Nothing about this story is inevitable. We will start by looking at the continent before the arrival of Europeans and conclude with the end of slavery and civil warfare. Along the way, we will situate the peoples of the North American continent within a collection of international players, examine the American Revolution as part of the Age of Revolutions, and study the development of the American republic as a product of nation-building.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Locke, Joseph L., and Ben Wright. *The American Yawp: A massively collaborative open U.S. history textbook. vol. 1. to 1887*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2023.

Link to Online textbook: [American Yawp](#)

**This class will not be covering and will not be assessed on the entirety of the textbook*

Reading Quizzes

Throughout the semester, you will be expected to take 10 quizzes that will cover information from the book. The dates of these quizzes can be found on the course schedule. These quizzes will consist of 5 multiple choice questions at 1 point each. ***Your two lowest quiz scores will be dropped at the end of the semester.**

Exams

You will take **two exams** during the semester. Each exam will consist of 2 essays. Before each exam you will receive a series of possible questions that you should spend time researching/preparing. You will be required to answer the essay questions in at least five paragraphs. We will go over this more as we get closer to the midterm and the final exam.

Primary Source Analysis

You will be expected to write three Primary Source analyses this semester over sources from the [American Yawp Reader](#). Each Primary source should be one page long. An example of how these should look will be provided.

Academic Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

The use of AI (including ChatGPT) will not be tolerated.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading

Assignments	Points
Quizzes (8 at 5 pts each)	40
Primary Source Analysis (3 at 20 pts each)	60
Attendance	40
Midterm Exam	60
Final Exam	100
Total Points	300

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	300 to 270
B	269 to 240
C	239 to 210
D	209 to 180
F	179 and below

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 and Class Policies

You are expected to attend all class meetings. If you are travelling on the day of class to an athletic or university event, please let me know in advance and provide proper documentation. I will periodically

take attendance in class. Be attentive and engaged. This means taking notes, asking questions, and remaining alert during class time.

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	Activities/Assignments/Exams	Due Date
Week 1 08/24 to 08/28	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch.1: “American Origins”	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 2 08/31 to 09/04	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 2: “Making an Atlantic World,” Reading Quiz	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 3 09/07 to 09/11	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 3: “Colliding Cultures,”	Primary Source Analysis due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 4 09/14 to 09/18	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 4: “British North America”	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 5 09/21 to 09/25	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 5: “Colonial Society”	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 6 09/28 to 10/02	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 6: “The American Revolution”	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 7 10/05 to 10/09	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 7: “A New Nation,” Midterm Exam on Friday	Exam on Friday during class
Week 8 10/12 to 10/16	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 8: “The Early Republic”	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 9 10/19 to 10/23	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 9: “Getting Forward”	Primary Source Analysis due Saturday by 11:59pm
Week 10 10/26 to 10/30	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 10: “American Democracy”	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 11 11/02 to 11/06	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 11: “Growth and Conflict”	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 12 11/09 to 11/13	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 12: “The National Crisis	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 13 11/16 to 11/20	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 13: “The Civil War	Reading Quiz due Saturday by 11:59 pm
Week 14	THANKSGIVING BREAK	
Week 15 11/30 to 12/04	Read <i>American Yawp</i> , Ch. 14: “Reconstruction”	Primary Source Analysis due Saturday by 11:59pm