



Course Syllabus: Survey of U.S. History since 1865

College of Liberal Arts
HIST 1233 Section 252
PY103
Spring Semester 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Michael Olds

Office: OD 219

Office hours: Monday, Wednesday: 2:00pm-3:00pm. Friday: 2pm-5pm

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Instructor Response Policy

Email is the best way to reach me outside of office hours and I will try to respond within 24 hours of your email. However, I do not check my email as regularly on the weekends.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Joseph Locke and Ben Wright, et al. *American Yawp*: Access the book by going to the website: <http://www.americanyawp.com/index.html>

Something to take notes with, either a tablet, pc, or pen and paper.

Course Description

General survey of American History from 1865 to the present. Required of all baccalaureate students.

Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes/Course Competencies

During this course, students will learn how to:

1. identify key events, peoples, individuals, terms, periods, and chronology of the history of the United States; distinguish between historical fact and historical interpretation; and connect historical events in chronological chain(s) of cause and effect
 - a. You will learn what happened and how different historians interpret those events.

2. develop critical thinking skills by discussing the living nature of history, using historical evidence to critique competing interpretations of the same historical events, explaining the nature of historical controversies
 - a. We will go into detail about why historic controversies exist and how to evaluate their merits against each other
3. synthesize diverse historical information and evidence related to broad themes of U.S. history and present this information in coherent, well-articulated, and well-substantiated analytical discussions and other written assignments
 - a. I will ask you to think critically about people, events, and ideas both in class as well as through assignments
4. develop the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision making by examining the motivations and actions of key figures in U.S. history
 - a. By the end of the class you should be able to start doing history yourself
5. learn how to sift through a large amount of information and categorize in order to determine its importance and aid in its retention
 - a. You will learn a way to take notes.

Student Handbook

Refer to: [Student Handbook-2021-22](#)

THECB Required Course Objectives: This course fulfills a Texas core requirement for Critical Thinking, Communication, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. As such, the course will assess the following learning objectives:

* All four criteria are measured through a critical writing assignment, which may include one or more of the following: Substantial essay exam question; a critical and analytical book review; a research paper or project; a reading response paper; or other appropriate assignment as determined by the course professor.

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. [Office of Student Conduct](#)

Grading/Assessment

Assessment: Your final grade is out of 1000 potential points that can be earned from three potential sources

- The Assignment (600 points)
 - You know what's overrated... (100 points)
 - Profile of a Historic Figure (100 points)
 - Annotated Bibliography (100 points)
 - Critique of Historic Figure (150 points)
 - Defense of Historic Figure (150 points)
- A Midterm Exam (200 points)
- A Final Exam (200 points)

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
You know what's underrated...	100
Profile of a Historic Figure	100
Annotated Bibliography	100
Critique of a Historic Figure	150
Defense of a Historic Figure	150
Midterm Exam	200
Final Exam	200
Total Points	1000

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	900
B	800 to 899
C	700 to 799
D	600 to 699
F	Less than 600

Homework

Homework for this class is mostly limited to readings from the assigned textbook and should be completed on the day listed. Please keep up with your reading as it is extremely important.

Projects Required

There is one project for this course that is split into three separate essays where I ask you to analyze a historical figure of your choice and both their positive and negative effects on history. I will hand out information about each essay when we get closer to the due date.

Mid-Term Exam

Mid-Term exams will have two components: An identification section where you are asked to identify key terms discussed in class and an essay section where you write about the broader theme of the class or multiple choice. The exam should not take more than fifty minutes to complete and is worth 200 points or 20 percent of your grade. The mid-term will take place in class.

Final Exam

The Final Exam will be exactly like the mid-term exam in format with two sections, an identification section and an essay section or multiple choice. The essay will be cumulative, and I will ask you a question about the larger scope of the class. The exam should not take you more than fifty minutes and is worth 200 points or 20 percent of your grade. The final exam will take place 5-8-2026 on our last day of in person class.

Extra Credit

I do not grant individual extra credit, but may offer extra credit for attending a guest lecture or something of that nature (but do not have anything planned at this time)

Late Work

Late work will not be accepted unless student arranges an extension before the due date, or extenuating circumstances keep the student from asking for an extension.

Important Dates

Deadline to file for graduation: February 16

Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" April 29th

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

Students are expected to attend all meetings of the classes in which they are enrolled. The primary reason for this is because much of the material the student will be tested on will be covered in class sessions. I do not plan on taking

attendance as I understand that circumstances may arise where the student is not able to attend class. However, you are still responsible for the material covered in the class you missed, and I encourage you to look over the notes from one of your classmates.

Online Computer Requirements

All the writing assignments will need to be turned into D2L prior to the due date listed in the syllabus. As such you will need access to a computer that is connected to the internet. 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!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world which is connected to the internet. For help, log into [D2L](#).

Instructor Class Policies

This course is designed to help you develop your own historical thinking, writing, and analytical skills. For that reason, the use of generative artificial intelligence tools to write or substantially compose assignments is not permitted. Work submitted for this course should reflect your own ideas, analysis, and voice.

If an assignment is identified as having been generated with AI, it will receive a grade of zero. In such cases, you will be provided with both the flagged assignment and the evaluation so that the decision is transparent and clearly explained.

That said, artificial intelligence tools do have appropriate uses in academic settings. If you are ever unsure whether a particular use of AI is acceptable, I encourage you to ask before submitting your work. My goal is to support your learning and help you succeed while ensuring that all submitted work represents your own academic growth.

Formatting of assignments: Each assignment should be turned in in either a PDF or Word Document (.Docx). Do not turn in assignments in Apple Pages or Google Docs or send in a link to those documents as I will not be able to access them. Each assignment should meet the following criteria:

- 12-point Times New Roman font (yes it does kind of matter)
- Double Spaced
- One inch margins
- Each new paragraph needs to be indented.
- Left justified
- Citations will be in the Chicago Manual of Style (CMOS) with footnotes.

- No personal pronouns unless otherwise instructed.
- No contractions (Don't, Can't, Won't)

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) exist 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](#).

College Policies

Campus Carry Rules/Policies

Refer to: [Campus Carry Rules and Policies](#)

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.

Course Schedule:

Below is the complete course schedule along with readings for each class period and due dates for the assignment. Please note that the schedule may change due to unforeseen circumstances, but I will notify you of the changes and update the dates in the syllabus.

Course Schedule

Week or Module	Reading	Assignment Due
Week 1 (1/19-1/23)	Chapter 15 " Reconstruction "	No assignment due
Week 2 (1/26-1/30)	Chapter 17 " The West "	You know What's Overrated due Friday
Week 3 (2/02-2/06)	Chapter 16 " Capital and Labor "	Historic Figure Selection Friday
Week 4 (2/9-2/13)	Chapter 20 " The Progressive Era "	No assignment due
Week 5 (2/16-2/20)	Chapter 21 " World War I And Its Aftermath "	Annotated Bibliography due Friday
Week 6 (2/23-2/27)	Chapter 22 " The New Era "	Midterm Exam Friday the 27 th .
Week 7 (3/02-3/06)	Chapter 23 " The Great Depression "	Midterm Exam Friday the 3/6.
Week 8 (3/09-3/13)	Spring Break!!	No assignment due
Week 9 (3/16-3/20)	Chapter 24 " World War II "	Critique Opening Argument Friday (Not graded)
Week 10 (3/23-3/27)	Chapter 26 " The Affluent Society "	No assignment due
Week 11 (3/30-4/03)	Chapter 25 " The Cold War "	Critique Friday
Week 12 (4/06-4/10)	Chapter 19 " American Empire " Sections II-IV; Chapter 27 " The Sixties " Sections II, V; Chapter 28 " The Unraveling " Section II	Defense Opening Arguments Friday (Not graded)
Week 13 (4/13-4/17)	Chapter 27 " The Sixties " Sections III-IV; VI-VIII	No assignment due

Week or Module	Reading	Assignment Due
Week 14 (4/20-4/24)	Chapter 28 " The Unraveling " Sections III-VIII	Defense of a Historic Figure
Week 15 (4/27-5/01)	Chapter 29 " The Triumph of the Right "	No assignment due
Week 16 (5/04-5/08)	Chapter 30 " The Recent Past "	Final exam date 5-08