



**MIDWESTERN  
STATE UNIVERSITY**

A Member of the Texas Tech University System

**Survey of United States History Since 1865**  
**Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences**  
**HIST 1233 Sections 104**  
**Fall 2024**

**Contact Information**

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**Course Description**

This is an introductory survey of United States history from Reconstruction to the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The class is meant to give the students a basic knowledge and framework of American History, illustrating how the Constitution and America's changing role in the world led to its superpower status and overall prosperity. This course focuses on the political, legal, and economic issues that contributed to competing concepts of American identity and offers explanations for how and why the state developed in the manner it did. Major themes include changes in society, the development of American prominence on the world political and economic stages, and the crises that shaped the state and its people. Furthermore, it challenges some of the preconceived and learned notions about American History and the American people that are often presented as "truths" in school courses, popular (and flawed) books, and in the media. These challenges are meant to stimulate lively and rational debate, in which students with various opinions can exchange points of view respectfully without childish shunning and cancelling or ad hominem attacks. There is NO room for personal and intellectual growth unless your opinions and values are challenged. The discussions, lectures, and readings are meant to develop critical thinking skills in relation to historical themes and particular events. A primary element of the course is the growth of critical thinking among students, concerning the examination of historical themes and paradigms (examples, patterns, models, and standards).

**Student Participation**

Students will be held personally responsible for their own education. I am a harsh taskmaster and do not accept excuses that tend to be pervasive in today's society. You are adults, and with age comes responsibility for your own actions or lack thereof. Active student participation in learning (which includes careful reading of ALL assignments, classroom engagement, attentive note taking, and participation in discussions), the maintenance of a weekly study schedule, the completion of ALL assignments in a timely manner, adequate preparation for exams, and, when necessary, individual post-exam consultation with the instructor, is essential to meeting the learning outcomes of the course. However, if you turn in all assignments, pass your exams, and participate in discussions, you are not guaranteed a "good grade". A is a designation for superior work, and B for good work. If your work

ethic, written work, and test taking efforts are merely satisfactory, you will EARN a C. The bare minimum earns a D.

### **Textbook & Instructional Materials**

We will be using a single textbook selected as a corrective to the current state of college textbooks. It does not have modules or that many visuals. However, it has an easy to read, cohesive narrative of American History, presenting it in a more balanced way than most others I've used in the past. McClay offers what he thinks is most important aspects of American history to the reader. The book is offered fairly cheaply at the university bookstore.

Text: Wilfred McClay, *Land of Hope*, 2019, ISBN: 9781594039379

Online Readings: As assigned

Readings for the week **MUST BE DONE** by the beginning of the first class for that week.

### **Student Handbook**

Refer to: [Student Handbook](#)

### **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 to whom credit is given). Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

**Notice:** Understand the following – it applies to all assignments, including drafts of papers. If you, in any instance, “cut and paste” from any internet source without citing that source (plagiarism) or use unapproved internet sources, you will fail the course, including if you cheat in any way on a **draft**. Plagiarism of any kind will result in the same penalty. Ignorance of this policy and the university’s policy on academic dishonesty is NOT an excuse. Be warned, this includes, but is NOT LIMITED to, use of an **AI program** for any reason; plagiarism of any form; having someone else do any of the work (research or writing), etc. Depending on the severity of the offense, the professor reserves the right to employ any or all university sanctioned disciplinary actions, of which I will pursue prosecution to its furthest extent. I will drop you from the course and report the incident to the Student Affairs and any other office as per the university’s policy.

[Office of Student Conduct](#)

### **Moffett Library**

Moffett Library provides resources and services to support student’s studies and assignments, including books, peer-reviewed journals, databases, and multimedia materials accessible both on campus and remotely. The library offers media equipment checkout, reservable study rooms, and research assistance from librarians to help students effectively find, evaluate, and use information. Get started on this [Moffett Library webpage](#) to explore these resources and learn how to best utilize the library.

### **Grading**

Course Grade - List all graded assignments with their point value and or percentage of total grade. Letter Grade Scale indicates the overall points or % to letter grade scale for example 1270 to 1137 = A.

Table 1: Percentages for each assignment

Assignments	Percentage of Grade
3 exams 20% each	60
Analytical Book Review	20
Active Participation and Attendance – may including pop=quizzes and in-class assignments	20

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Percentage
A	90% and above
B	80% - 89%
C	70% - 79%
D	60% - 69%
F	Less than 60%

### Assignments

The book review and any other non-exam assignment will be turned in to my email in WORD FORMAT ONLY. NO PDF OR GOOGLE DOCS will be accepted. ***\*Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered a 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!!**

### Exams

There will be three essay/short answer exams taken in class. All exams will be in the same format and have an equal percentage (20%). You must have a blue book, available from the MSU bookstore, for each of the exams. NO PHONES OR NOTES ARE ALLOWED DURING THE EXAM. At the beginning of the course, I will provide a list of terms for the semester on D2L to help students study for these exams, giving them what (in my opinion) is most important for well-educated students to understand United States History in the modern period. If I were you, at the beginning of the course, I would immediately start the process of finding the who, what, where, when, how, and why answers on the distributed terms sheet, keeping them in a separate notebook. In this manner, you will come to know the basics of each lecture/discussion, so you can better perform in class, and build your knowledge base for exams, discussions, and pop quizzes.

### Book Review

The book review may be a new exercise to some in the class. This is **NOT a book report**. Reviews are critiques of books in which the reviewer briefly describes the main thesis and the points the author uses to prove the argument. Once this is done, the reviewer critiques the book (is the argument believable, well researched, persuasive, well written). Does the author fulfill his or her stated or implied purpose? Is the argument subtle or ham-fisted? I will provide a “how to” sheet with a barebones description of how to do a short academic review. I suggest you use review essays from an academic journal (such as the *American Historical Review*) to get a feel for what they are meant to do. You might be asking yourself, “why do I have to do this? I don’t intend to be a professional historian [or] I won’t ever take another course in this department.” Every academic field requires such critical

exercises; furthermore you may take a position after college in which the boss wants you to critique something in writing. This review will give you practice doing a formal critique. We will spend class time talking about and practicing analytical writing and the book review itself.

The book you select to review **CANNOT** be a novel or any other work of fiction. It must be an academic book on US history or a substantial memoir with historical significance to the United States that fits the time parameters for the course (1865-2005). It must be approved by the instructor **NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 14**. For every day you are late in requesting book approval, the final grade for the review will be lowered by 5%. I suggest you choose and read the book carefully in the first half of the semester to avoid the end of term flood of assignments. Early work is encouraged. It will be due, without exception, on **November 21** no later than 4pm. No late work will be accepted. Same goes for the exams.

### **Final Exam**

The final exam will be in this room on December 9 at 1pm. It will be the same format as the previous two.

### **Extra Credit**

I do NOT offer extra credit. Don't ask.

### **Late Work**

I do not accept late work. Don't ask.

### **Make-up Work/Tests**

There will be no make-up work or exams. The only exceptions are for school approved functions, such as sporting or academic events, and for EMERGENCY medical situations and doctor's appointments. No other excuse is acceptable.

### **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. Also, I communicate individually only through my email address: [john.ashbrook@msutexas.edu](mailto:john.ashbrook@msutexas.edu). DO NOT contact me via D2L's email system.

### **Attendance**

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 lower the student's grade where class attendance and class participation are deemed essential by the faculty member. This course is structured so that it is to the student's advantage to attend class regularly. From past experience, students who choose not to attend on a regular basis are not successful. I allow three, and only three unexcused absences. After that, each unexcused absence will result in a penalty to your participation grade. If you have a total of nine unexcused absences, you will not pass the course. 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.

## **Instructor Class Policies**

**Conduct:** All students are expected to act as responsible adults. Any disruptions or distractions will be dealt with in an appropriate manner. Below you will find general guidelines covering certain actions and/or behaviors that are to be avoided. As a general rule any behavior that disrupts the administration of this class will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request that the offending student leave the classroom. Furthermore, the professor reserves the right to deduct points from the student's semester total or remove the student from the course. **Arriving late is considered a distraction.** If arriving more than five (5) minutes late – DO NOT enter the classroom.

**Electronic Devices, Texting, and Phones:** The use of tape recorders, iPods, mp3s, or any other recording device in class is **prohibited**. It is imperative that you turn off phones, all other communication devices, and electronic equipment before entering the classroom. The use of a telephone or texting device for any reason is prohibited. *On the first offense the student will be penalized 20 points on her or his participation score for the week. The second offense will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom. The professor reserves the right to administratively withdraw a student from the class upon the third offense.*

**Laptops, Tablets, & etc.:** You must obtain permission from the professor to use laptops, tablets, and phones (or any other device capable of accessing the internet) in the classroom. Recent scholarship suggests that laptops and tablets are **major distractions** to fellow students and in general do not enhance learning and/or the classroom experience. Furthermore, there will be no surfing, texting, emailing, etc. in the classroom, unless I specifically ask the students to do so.

**E-mail:** Note that e-mail correspondence is the most effective and convenient way in which to communicate with me outside the classroom. The professor/student relationship is professional by nature and, accordingly, your e-mail correspondence should be constructed professionally.

**Attendance and your grade:** This course is structured so that it is to the student's advantage to attend class regularly. From past experience, students who choose not to attend on a regular basis are not successful. I allow three, and only three unexcused absences. After that, each unexcused absence will result in a penalty to your participation grade. If you have a total of nine unexcused absences, you will not pass the course.

**Withdrawals (Course Drop):** The professor is NOT responsible for student withdrawals. The student is responsible for meeting all academic deadlines including withdrawal 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) 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 an 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 WATC. 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 prohibit 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 as 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 the 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

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 1—Introduction to the Course and Policies

Reading: McClay, Introduction and Epilogue

Aug. 26—Introduction to American History and Class Policies

Aug. 28—The Civil War

Week 2—The Ordeal of Reconstruction and Congressional Power

Reading: McClay, Chapter 11

Sept. 2—NO CLASS

Sept. 4—Andrew Johnson vs. Congress, Weakening the Presidency

Week 3—Post-Reconstruction America

Reading: McClay, Chapter 12

Sept. 9—Meanings of the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments

Print out the entire text of these amendments and bring them to class.

Sept. 11—Western Expansion and Indian Conflict

**You must have instructor approval (via email) on a book for your book review today, no later than 4pm**

Week 4—Building an American Empire

Reading: McClay, Chapter 13

Sept. 16—The Spanish-American War

Sept. 18—American Foreign Policy, 1865-1914

Week 5—The Progressive Era (?)

Reading: McClay, Chapter 14

Sept. 23—**EXAM 1**

Sept. 25—Problems with Progressivism and the Growth of the Government

Week 6—Progressivism's Champion, Woodrow Wilson, and the Great War

Reading: McClay, Chapter 15

Sept. 30—Technocratic Rule and Elitism in American Government

Oct. 2—The US and the Great War

Week 7—Fighting the Great War, the American Experience

Reading: James W. Rainey, "Ambivalent Warfare: The Tactical Doctrine of the AEF in World War I," *Parameters: U.S. Army War College* 13 (3) (1983): 34–46; and Stephen J. Lofgren, "Unready for War: The Army and World War I," *Army History* (22) (1992): 11-19. [Both on D2L]  
Oct. 7—World War I, the European Experience, 1914-17

Oct. 9—American Difference and Experience on the Western Front

Week 8—The Roaring 1920s

Reading: McClay, Chapter 16

Oct. 14—Urban Hedonism: Flappers, Jazz, Changing Culture

Oct. 16—Teetotalers, Do-Gooders, and Organized Crime: Prohibition and Al Capone

Week 9—FDR and the New Deal

Reading: McClay, Chapter 17

Oct. 21—Progressive Reaction to the Great Depression

Oct. 23—New Deal or "Raw" Deal? Prolonging the Depression under Roosevelt

Week 10—The Greatest Generation's Greatest Challenge: World War II

Reading: McClay, Chapter 18

Oct. 28—The Second World War and America's Experience

Oct. 30—**EXAM 2**

Week 11—Fighting the Second World War, American Military in Europe and the Pacific

Reading: Military history of the United States during World War II (wikipedia page on World War) [special attention will be paid the problems of using Wikipedia in academic context]

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military\\_history\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_during\\_World\\_War\\_II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_history_of_the_United_States_during_World_War_II)

Nov. 4—America in the Second World War

Nov. 6—Deconstructing Wikipedia as a resource

Week 12—The Cold War

Reading: McClay, Chapter 19

Nov. 11—The Korean War

Nov. 13—The Vietnam War

Week 13—The 1960s and the Baby Boomers

Reading: McClay, Chapter 20

Nov. 18— Counterculture and the Reaction to Middle America

**BOOK REVIEW DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS (NO EXCEPTIONS)**

Nov. 20—Rock and Roll: Dylan to the Fall of Grunge

Week 14—Nixon to Reagan: Stagflation to Prosperity

Reading: McClay, Chapter 21

Dec. 2—The Reagan Revolution: Partial Repudiation of Progressivism



Dec. 4—The Fall of Soviet communism