



Course Syllabus: Survey of U.S. History up to 1865

College of Liberal Arts
HIST 1133 Section X12
Fall Semester 2025

Contact Information

Instructor: Brandon Blakeslee
Office: OD 217
Office hours: By Appointment
Office phone: (940) 397-4150
E-mail: brandon.blakeslee@msutexas.edu

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 Saturday.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

Joseph Locke and Ben Wright, et al. *American Yawp*: *The American Yawp* offers a free and online, collaboratively built, open American history textbook designed for college-level history courses. Unchecked by profit motives or business models, and free from for-profit educational organizations, *The American Yawp* is by scholars, for scholars. All contributors—experienced college-level instructors—volunteer their expertise to help democratize the American past for twenty-first century classrooms. Access the book by going to the website: <http://www.americanyawp.com/index.html> and then following the instructions to download or access the text.

Course Description

General survey of American History from its European origins to 1865. 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](#)

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

- Discussion Questions (350 points)
 - There will be a weekly discussion question for you to answer and each is worth 25 points and I will drop your lowest grade at the end of the semester.
- The Writing Assignment (650 points)
 - It may be Unpopular but... (100 points)
 - Historic Figure Selection (50 points)
 - Annotated Bibliography (50 points)
 - Profile of a Historic Figure (150 points)
 - Critique of Historic Figure (150 points)
 - Defense of Historic Figure (150 points)

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Discussion	350
It may be unpopular but	100
Historic Figure Selection	50
Annotated Bibliography	50
Profile of a Historic Figure	150
Critique of a Historic Figure	200
Defense of a Historic Figure	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.

Projects Required

There is one project for this course that is split into four 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.

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.

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.

Online Computer Requirements

Taking an online 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!!*** There are many places to access your class! Our online classes can be accessed from any computer in the world that is connected to the internet. Contact your instructor immediately upon having computer trouble. If you have technical difficulties in the course, there is also a student helpdesk available to you. The college cannot work directly on student computers due to both liability and resource limitations however they are able to help you get connected to our online services. For help, log into [D2L](#).

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

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:

Be mindful of the calendar for this Course in D2L as it will be the most accurate and up to date for assignments, discussion boards, and general due dates. The table below is the rough dates for each section along with the due dates for the major assignments.

Course Schedule

Module	Theme	Assignment Due
Unit 1 8/25 to 9/28	The Colonial World	"It may be unpopular but..." due Sept 12 Historic Figure Selection due Sept 19
Unit 2 10/01 to 11/02	The New Republic	Annotated Bibliography due Oct. 3 Profile of a Historic Figure due Oct 17
Unit 3 11/05 to 12/05	Early Republic to Sectional Crisis	Critique of a Historic Figure due Nov 7 Defense of a Historic Figure due Dec 5