



Course Syllabus: Old South

Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences
HIST 5043-X10
Fall 2026

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Whitney Snow

Office: OD 223

Office hours: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays (9:00-10:00 A.M.); Tuesdays (8:00-10:00 A.M.); and by appointment

Office phone: (940) 397-8917

E-mail: whitney.snow@msutexas.edu

Course Description

This class is designed to provide students with a firm foundation in the antebellum South. For generations, the Old South was mythologized, a fact that complicates its history since the region exists largely in the popular imagination. Our aim is to examine the region as it existed. Consequently, some of your readings will be primary documents, written by contemporaries—black and white, northern and southern, men and women, African, American, and European—who moved to, lived in, visited, and otherwise observed the South prior to the Civil War. This class is not designed to offer an encyclopedic history of the antebellum experience. Indeed, the broad geographical and chronological scope of the subject—15 slave states, 11 of which seceded, and two-and-a-half centuries of Anglo-American settlement (to say nothing of French and Spanish influences)—preclude a comprehensive history of the region in a single semester. The class will, however, cover central cultural, social, economic, political, intellectual, and environmental themes that defined antebellum society in the South. It also stresses the critical analysis of historical events and documents to make sense of their (sometimes contested) meanings.

Textbook & Instructional Materials

- Bynum, Victoria. *Unruly Women: The Politics of Social and Sexual Control in the Old South*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1992.
- Diaz, Maria Angela. *A Continuous State of War: Empire Building and Race Making in the Civil War-Era Gulf South*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2024.

- Friend, Craig Thompson and Lorri Glover, ed. *Southern Manhood: Perspectives on Masculinity in the Old South*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2004.
- Hyde, Sarah L. *Schooling in the Antebellum South: The Rise of Public and Private Education in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2016.
- Maltz, Earl M. *Slavery and the Supreme Court, 1825-1861*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2009.
- McMillen, Sally G. et. al, ed. *Major Problems in the History of the American South Volume I: The Old South*. 3rd ed. Boston: Cengage, 2012.

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'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](#) In this class, academic dishonesty also includes the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). While other professors may condone or encourage the use of AI, it is NOT permitted in this class and will result in a zero.

Graduate Assistant

Please refer to D2L where you will find the email and office hours of the graduate assistant.

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

This course includes two book reviews, fourteen weekly discussions, 2 movie assignments, and two exams.

Table 1: Points allocated to each assignment

Assignments	Points
Book Reviews (2)	25%
Weekly Discussions (14)	15%
Movie Assignments (2)	15%
Term Paper	25%
Exams (2)	20%
Total	100%

Table 2: Total points for final grade.

Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Book Reviews

Students will write a book review on Hyde's *Schooling in the Antebellum South* and Diaz's *A Continuous State of War*. The instructions are as follows: 1) Each book review must be typed in 12-point font, Times New Roman and double-spaced. 2) The margins should be 1 inch on the top and bottom and 1.25 inches on the left and right. 3) To submit each book review, once on our classroom D2L dashboard, click on "Assessments" and then click on "Assignments." You should then see the dropboxes for the Hyde Review and the Diaz Review. The Hyde Review is due by October 9. The Diaz Review is due by December 4.

Movie Assignments

Students are required to write two 5-6-page film critiques. Please select from the list of pre-approved movies posted on D2L under "Movie Assignment Instructions." Each movie assignment needs to be at least 5 pages and no more than 6 pages. Each must be in 12-point font, Times New Roman and be double-spaced. The margins should be 1 inch on the top and bottom and 1.25 inches on the left and right. Movie Assignment #1 is due by September 18. Movie Assignment 2 is due by November 13.

Discussion

Each week, students will post a 2-paragraph response to ONE of the primary documents in that week's assigned chapter of McMillen's *Major Problems in the History of the American South*. "Discussions" can be found on D2L under "Communication." Conversation is strongly encouraged. These discussions are worth 15% of your overall average. Each will be assessed on a 0-100 scale and all will be averaged to deduce your overall discussion grade. You are welcome to

start a discussion any Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday. However, your weekly discussion should be posted by 11:30 P.M. Thursday at the latest. This is to allow your classmates to comment or reply to your post by 11:30 P.M. Friday. When analyzing a primary document, remember the following components: Who is the individual or who are the individuals behind the document? What is the document about? When was the document written? Where was the document written? Why was the document written? What is the document's significance and why does it matter?

Term Paper

Students must write a 20-25-page term paper and are permitted to select a topic, per professor approval. This term paper is due by November 25. Basic expectations can be found below while more in-depth instructions can be found under "Content" on our D2L classroom dashboard. 1) Your term paper should be typed, double-spaced in 12-point font Times New Roman. 2) Your term paper should be based on both primary and secondary sources. 3) Your term paper must include a thesis (argument). 4) You must use at least 15 books (preferably those published by university presses). 5) You must use at least 4 book chapters or peer-reviewed journal articles. 6) Use the latest version of Chicago Manual of Style. 7) Include a bibliography at the end of your paper. Be sure to have your primary and secondary sources in separate categories.

Mid-Term Exam

Students are required to take a midterm exam. The instructions are as follows: 1) Once you are on our D2L classroom dashboard, click on "Assessments" near the top of the page. 2) Under the drop-down list, click on "Assignments" and you will see the midterm dropbox. You must upload your midterm into the dropbox by 11:30 P.M. on the due date—October 23.

Final Exam

Students are required to take a final exam. The instructions are as follows: 1) Once you are on our D2L classroom dashboard, click on "Assessments" near the top of the page. 2) Under the drop-down list, click on "Assignments" and you will see the final exam dropbox. You must upload your final exam into the dropbox by 5:00 P.M. on the due date—December 7.

Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities will be posted under "Content" in our D2L classroom dashboard. Click on "Extra Credit" to see the options. Attending one extra credit will add two point to your lowest book review.

Make Up Work/Tests

Legitimate excuses are official university absences, documented illnesses, and/or close family deaths. Students must provide the necessary proof like university paperwork, doctor's excuses, or funeral remembrance cards. The acceptability of any other excuse will be at the discretion of the instructor. For such an excuse, the instructor will deduct a letter grade for every day an assessment is late.

Important Dates

- Last day for term schedule changes: August 24-27
- Deadline to file for graduation: September 21 for December graduation and October 5 for May graduation
- Last Day to drop with a grade of "W:" November 23
- 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 login to our D2L classroom dashboard at least once each week of the semester.

Computer Requirements

This 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!!*** 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](#).

Recording Classes

****Recording classes is generally prohibited without the professor's explicit permission.*** Such recordings, when permitted, are for personal use only and may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published without the professor's prior consent. When it is feasible and appropriate, students may record classes to accommodate disabilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act, with prior approval of Disability Support Services. Such recordings may not be uploaded to the internet or otherwise shared, transmitted, or published.

Instructor Class Policies

Remember "netiquette." Be civil in any discussions. Debate is healthy but keep it respectful. Be mindful of 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 application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Student Wellness Center, (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](#).

Emergency Aid Resources for Basic Needs

Unexpected life circumstances can affect anyone. If you are experiencing challenges meeting basic needs—such as housing, utilities, food, transportation, healthcare, technology, textbooks or other life necessities, resources may be available to help. Visit the [Student Emergency Support and Resources webpage](#) to learn more, and explore emergency support opportunities through MSU and how to access them. For additional information, please contact the Office of Student Affairs: Clark Student Center #108, (940) 397-7500, student.affairs@mstuexas.edu.

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 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

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:

Please pay close attention to each week’s assigned reading and assessment(s).

Week or Module	Assigned Readings	Due Date
Week 1 August 24-28	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 1	Nothing due
Week 2 August 31- September 4	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 2; and Friend, p.vii-49	Discussion Post #1 due by September 4
Week 3 September 7-11 (September 7 is Labor Day)	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 3; and Friend, p.71-113	Discussion Post #2 due by September 11
Week 4 September 14-18	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 4; and Friend, p.136-196	Discussion Post #3 and Movie Assignment #1 due by September 18
Week 5 September 21-25	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 5; and Hyde, Intro and Chapters 1-2	Discussion #4 due by September 25
Week 6 September 28- October 2	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 6; and Hyde, Chapters 3-5	Discussion Post #5 due by October 2
Week 7 October 5-9	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 7; and Hyde, Chapter 6 and Conclusion	Discussion Post #6 and Book Review #1 due by October 9
Week 8 October 12-16	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 8; and Bynum, Introduction and Chapters 1-3	Discussion Post #7 due by October 16

Week or Module	Assigned Readings	Due Date
Week 9 October 19-23	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 9; and Bynum, Chapters 5-6 and Epilogue	Discussion Post #8; and Midterm due by October 23
Week 10 October 26-30	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 10; and Maltz, Chapters 1-8	Discussion Post #9 due by October 30
Week 11 November 2-6	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 11; and Maltz, Chapters 9-15	Discussion Post #10 due by November 6
Week 12 November 9-13	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 12; and Maltz, Chapters 16-27 and Conclusion	Discussion #11 and Movie Assignment #2 due by November 13
Week 13 November 16-20	Readings: McMillen, Chapter 13; and Diaz, Introduction and Chapters 1-2	Discussion Post #12 due by November 20
Week 14 November 23-27 (Thanksgiving Break is November 26-27)	Readings: Diaz, Chapters 3-4	Term Paper due by November 25 (graduate students only)
Week 15 November 30-December 4	Readings: Diaz, Chapters 5-7 and Conclusion	Book Review #2 due by December 4
Finals Week	Final Exam	Final Exam due December 7