COURSE SYLLABUS

UNITED STATES HISTORY, Since 1876 online
HIST 1302.01 * CRN 80960
3 credit hours

FALL 2015
As a required course, there is no prerequisite for HIST 1302 beyond the university’s approval

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History Dept. 936-294-1475

RE, Office Hours & Correspondence
Since this is an online course, we will routinely conduct all of our business via cyberspace. Otherwise, use your university-issued email address exclusively. The class will be receiving information regularly through Blackboard (henceforth, Bb), therefore it is incumbent upon each of you to keep up—and in a timely manner. Do not let your account go over its usage limit! If you have an emergency during business hours, please call the history department office.

Important Note Regarding TECHNICAL ISSUES
The number for Bb support is 936-294-2780. Otherwise, be aware of two useful items in your Bb course menu. The “Need Help?” tab will let you know whom to contact. The Technical Support icon located just above the course menu will lead you to additional Bb support.

Another important note...never use the “digital drop box!”
Textbook

Without this book, you will be unable to pass the course.

According to our textbook representative, the following link will take you to the least expensive version of this volume (an eBook sans MyLab and other features that run up the price); it is for sale or for rent:

If you would like to acquire a physical copy, please visit the SHSU Barnes & Noble campus bookstore: http://shsu.bkstore.com/ (make sure it is volume 2 of the 7th ed.)

Course Objectives
As mandated by the university’s core curriculum, your professors are obligated to include four “Skill Objectives”—Critical Thinking, Communication, Personal Responsibility, Social Responsibility—in every 1000- and 2000-level syllabus. I have coupled these objectives with my own goals for this class.

- **Primary Course Objectives**
  - Course Objective 1: Factual knowledge. Students will gain a factual knowledge of American history from Reconstruction through the modern age.
  - Course Objective 2: Personal responsibility. Students will develop a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values and a sense of responsibility.

- **Additional Course Objectives**
  - Critical Thinking: Students will be encouraged to think critically and analytically, rejecting the simplistic idea that “things just happen” in favor of the more complex ideas of contingency and social constructs.
  - Communication skills: Students will cultivate knowledge in a way that will enable them to communicate with substance. Students who have embraced such clichés as “Knowledge is power,” and, “If you are going to say something, have something to say” will appreciate that effective communication begins with substance.
  - Social Responsibility: Social responsibility will be addressed in this course as students learn about how individuals’ actions and choices impacted their communities and their nation, for better or worse.
A Note of fair Warning!!!
Everyone needs to view this [link](http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/) and this [link](http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/).

**University Policies**

**Important note.** The following link will take you to the University policies regarding Academic Dishonesty, Absences for Religious Holidays, Students with Disabilities, and Visitors in the Classroom. Many of these will not apply to online students, but be advised to make sure you know which ones obligate you. If you are unclear, please ask me: [http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/](http://www.shsu.edu/syllabus/).

**Course Description & and Instructional Method**

This course will cover the period of United States history beginning with Reconstruction and ending with the modern age. Almost every week you will be responsible for covering a chapter from *The American Journey, vol. 2*, which will represent the guiding theme for the lectures and virtual assignments (i.e., online selections from various websites such as History News Network, YouTube, and Wikipedia).

The instructional method for this class will involve 1) textbook readings, 2) virtual assignments and 3) occasionally lectures. The sweep of American history is very broad. Even when divided into two semesters, it will go by with breathtaking swiftness. You do not want to fall behind!

**Important note:** To see the schedule of weekly assignments and exams, go to Bb and click on the tab “Units.” It is located on your course menu. There you will find 13 units, each with a list of assignments, resources, and a link to the weekly exam.

**Study Tips**

1) **Textbook Readings.** Rather than providing you with a list of identification terms, let me make available something more direct and helpful. For each chapter in the textbook, you will find a corresponding bank of multiple-choice and true-false questions located in Bb. These represent your "reading checks." These are not compulsory exercises, and you will not be graded on them. BUT, I will draw from this test bank when I construct your exams.
Important note: I will **not** expect you to prepare answers for any **essay questions** that might be included in the test bank.

2) **Virtual Assignments.** It may surprise some of you to learn that there is a wealth of history-related clips and readings floating around on the internet that are either thought-provoking, or just plain fun to see/read/listen to. It would be a bummer to spoil the moment by making you memorize everything you’re experiencing. So, in that regard...

**Important note 1:** Any exam questions related to the virtual assignments will be designed simply to make sure you saw/read/listened to them. Ergo—if you pay attention, you should get most of them right. (An example... In one clip, Charlie Chaplin unknowingly sprinkles cocaine on his cereal, thinking it is sugar. If I ask you how he reacts, and you have watched the film clip, I’m pretty sure you’ll get that one correct.) Keep in mind that the main purpose of these virtual assignments is to help you cultivate an appreciation and fondness for history.

**Important note 2:** Every now and then a student will inform me that a link is not working. When this occurs, I will try and execute the necessary changes and inform you. That student, by the way, will receive a 5-point bonus for the “heads up.”

3) **Lectures.** Unless otherwise noted, the lectures presented to you will be podcasts from previous classes. **Important note:** **disregard** any references to information that might obligate you to do something. Obviously, if the lectures are podcasts from previous semesters, any such information was directed to students taking the class at that time. These lectures will address topics that have transformed the values, institutions, and material fortunes in American life.

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**Examinations & Grading**

My philosophy regarding exams has changed in recent years because of the way most youngsters have adapted to technology, and the tendency of so many to wait until the last minute to prepare. For these reasons I will post exams almost weekly, rather than hold you responsible for two or three large blocks of information over the course of the semester. There will be no final; the last exam, however, will be administered during the week of finals.

Preparing for exams in this manner will compel you to develop timely study habits, and the information will be fresh, thus facilitating the acquisition of “factual knowledge of American history,” your first course objective. Moreover, if you grow accustomed to this routine, it will help you “develop a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values”—your other course objective!

- The exams will open at noon on Fridays and close at midnight the following Monday. As outlined above, weekly examinations covering the textbook, virtual assignments, and any lectures or other material will be administered via Bb, located in the appropriate unit. The course grade will be calculated on an averaged 100-point scale.
- The exams will open at noon on Fridays and close at midnight the following Monday.
- On each exam you will have 20 minutes to answer between 25 and 50 questions, composed of some variety of multiple-choice, matching, and true-false.
- As much as I would like for you **not** to refer to the material at hand, a “closed book” exam would only penalize honest students. Be reminded—the time limit for taking the exams will be BRIEF. Without studying, it is unlikely that you will find sufficient time to look up each answer.
- If you feel as if you are running out of time, do not panic. If you exceed the time limit, the system will not shut down, and you will not be ejected from the exam. It will, however, post an icon on
Gradebook, so you won’t be able to see your grade. If it takes you a couple or three extra minutes, no big deal...if, however, you’re taking an hour to finish these exams, I’m going to assume you are taking advantage of me. In this case, I reserve the right to have you re-take the exam under video supervision through the DELTA center.

- If you are ejected from the exam, contact me immediately at his_rtc@shsu.edu. If I do not respond within a few minutes, feel free to contact the DELTA center at delta@shsu.edu. Either I or someone on duty at the DELTA center will clear and reset your exam. If you get far enough into the exam and feel you’re doing well enough where you would like for me to prorate your grade, hold off on contacting DELTA.

- **Important note:** On Tuesdays, after the exams close, the results will be made available to you. Reviewing the results can be most helpful, and each student should be encouraged to make this part of their weekly routine. Please know that I cannot release the results any sooner, because I don’t want the answers floating around in cyber space.

- In all, **13** exams will be made available to you.
- Only your **10** best efforts will count toward your course grade
- **Note**—you are responsible for taking only **10** exams. If you know that school or personal-related matters will weigh heavily upon you during some particular week, then do not feel compelled to invest your time in studying for a history exam that you know will not be a "keeper." BUT, do not leave yourself without the "wiggle room" to deal with unanticipated matters that might come up later...remember "Course Objective No. 2: “Students will develop a clearer understanding of, and commitment to, personal values.”