

Department of Humanities
Dr. Christopher B. Davis
Email: cdavis@sulross.edu
Phone: 830.703.4845
Office: Del Rio, F215
Hours of Availability:
M-T, 1p-4p
W-H, 1p-3p



America, 1600-1865

HST 5311
Online

Course Description

This short semester course will focus on early America. It will begin well before the foundation of the United States with an examination of the general state of North America and Native American groups. Then students will study topics such as colonial development, pre-revolution events, challenges of the early republic, slavery, and the factors leading up to the Civil War. The overall goal will be to understand broad trends backed up with examination of specific moments in depth.

Course Style

Activities will focus on reading, writing, and short teaching segments.

Importance of Communication

It is vital that students stay in communication with me as the course progresses. Most struggles students have in college courses can be resolved with simple conversations between student and teacher. If there are difficulties with concepts or assignments, it is not a cause for embarrassment

or panic but an opportunity to improve skills and expand knowledge. Just get in touch. We will work through the issue.

I try to make communication as easy as possible and keep regular hours when I am available to talk. We can meet in person, talk on the phone, or video chat.

If you cannot meet during my hours of availability you can request another time when you are available. Please just email me to set up a time.

Resources

This course does not use a specific textbook. Resources will be provided via Blackboard, so please see the Class Week resources tab.

All resources provided are for your use in this class only. That is why they are being provided via a password protected system like Blackboard. Do not illegally reproduce or distribute them.

Syllabus

Please keep your syllabus accessible for the entire semester. It will serve as a guide to not only class assignments but also to understand class expectations. If any revisions have to be made to the class schedule during the semester, I will let you know via a class announcement. Students are responsible for knowledge of all class announcements.

Participation

As a short semester online class, it is important for students to maintain focus on completing assignments. It is best to check your SRSU email and Blackboard daily to stay current.

Grading

Weekly Writeups	400 points
Weekly Teach-a-Topic	200 points

Your grade will be the number of points you receive on the items listed above divided by the total number of points possible. For example, if you receive 540 points among the assignments that is 540 divided by 600 equals 0.9 or 90%. That is the minimum needed for an A in the class.

Note: There are no extra point opportunities in this course. It is best to keep up with your scores on assignments to know how you are doing.

Writing Assignments

This class will have four writing assignments—each five pages long. The goal in each is to absorb the information you have explored during the week and develop a comprehensive exploration that is unique to you. This is not a book report where you just restate the information provided. The goal is to show what you have learned. How do the sources, as a group, help you understand the topic well? What overarching themes do you take away from the sources? What specific information helped you understand those themes in a new way? Do you see areas that you lack understanding and need to research further? Since these writing assignments are the main source of grades for the semester it is expected that they are of very good quality. More information will be provided on these assignments.

Teach-a-Topic

The goal of a teach-a-topic assignment is for you to explore a topic of your choosing and then help other students understand it well. The process is to select a topic that you want to know more about, research the topic from multiple sources, and then produce a seven-minute video explaining the topic to your fellow students. More information will be provided on these assignments.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs)

- 1) Develop the ability to understand history rather than simply memorize.
- 2) Communicate causes and effects clearly.
- 3) Have the ability to explain the “why” of history instead of just the “who, what, when, and where.”
- 4) Improve short-form writing skills in content, organization, style, and grammar.
- 5) Develop skills in assessing non-textbook material for how it connects to the course content.

ADA Statement

Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact Kathy Biddick in Student Services, Room C-102, Uvalde campus. The mailing address is 2623 Garner Field Road, Rio Grande College-Sul Ross State University, Uvalde, Texas 78801. Telephone: 830-279-3003. E-mail: kbiddick@sulross.edu.

Class Weeks

Week 1

May 31 – June 7

- **Early America and Native Americans**

Week 2

June 7 – June 14

- **Colonies and the Road to Independence**

Week 3

June 14 – June 21

- **Early U.S. – Foundations and Challenges**

Week 4

June 21 – June 28

- **Slavery and the Civil War**

Week 5

- **Wrap Up**