

# HIST 1301: United States History to 1877



DATE/TIME: **TR 9:30AM-10:45AM**  
PROFESSOR: **DR. WILLIAMSON**

ROOM: **LH 300**  
EMAIL: [savannah.williamson@sulross.edu](mailto:savannah.williamson@sulross.edu)

Day	Time	Location
<b>Mondays</b>	9am-12pm	UC 212
<b>Tuesdays</b>	12:30-2pm	LH 211
<b>Wednesdays</b>	9am-12pm	UC 212
<b>Thursdays</b>	12:30-2pm	LH 211
<b>Fridays</b>	<i>By appointment</i>	

## **I. Course Description**

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This class surveys the major social, cultural, and political developments occurring from the exploration of North America to the aftermath of the Civil War. As you will see, the American past is not a simple story of progress. American history is instead populated by both heroes and villains, and often seems to have as many moments of glory as it does instances of injustice. Americans have often disagreed mightily and often violently over an array of important issues tied to the nation's history. This is what makes the past so fascinating and important to recall. In addition to these sweeping concerns, we will pay special attention to the many ways in which a diverse cast of seemingly ordinary women and men participated in the founding and changing fortunes of the American Republic. As we are covering a vast historical terrain, our coverage of the American past is selective rather than comprehensive. This course satisfies Texas state requirements for all graduates.

Instruction in the Core Objectives (critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and social responsibility) will be given and reinforced throughout the semester.

## **II. Student Learning Outcomes**

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HIST 1301 is part of the university's Core Curriculum and as such strives towards both the general goals of the core and the specific objectives for classes designated for inclusion in the American History Foundational Component Area as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. HIST 1301 includes instruction in the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.

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In addition to surveying the important themes of American history from roughly 1492 to 1877, this course will introduce you to the practice of history. We will focus on critically interpreting both primary sources (documents from the period being studied) and secondary sources (historians' analyses of a period or event). Above all, you will learn that history is an analytical discipline. While facts and dates are indeed important, alone they do not allow us to understand the past in a meaningful fashion. Among other things, history is the art of mustering evidence to make an argument or arguments about the past in as compelling a manner as possible. This semester you will be joining an ongoing and constantly evolving debate about American history. If you engage the course material in a meaningful way, this class will help you to read more carefully, think more critically, and write more eloquently.

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### III. Course Objectives

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- The student will think critically, which includes the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information about this period of history.
- The student will gain empirical and quantitative skills through primary and secondary source analysis and research.
- The student will communicate effectively by developing and expressing ideas through written and visual communication.
- The student will gain intercultural competence, a knowledge of civic responsibility, and an awareness of how humans in the past have engaged effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
- The student will understand the role that personal responsibility has played throughout history and gain the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to making ethical decisions.
- The student will improve reading comprehension, argumentative and research writing, and interpersonal communication skills.

#### REQUIRED ASSESSMENTS FOR CORE CURRICULUM, 2023-2024

- A. **CRITICAL THINKING**
  - B. **COMMUNICATION**
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In this course, we are going to disprove the idea that learning history is just: read, regurgitate, repeat. The world of education is changing rapidly, and technology allows us to experiment in ways previously impossible, and therefore to emphasize some additional aspects of an experience doing history.

**First:** in college level history, the impetus is on you, the student, to be responsible for content. High school should have taught you at least how to read a textbook and memorize information. In college, the idea is that you take this to the next level.

**Second:** With the first point established, college history courses are designed to take your thinking to the next level. You are supposed to learn about history thematically, and to be able to express change over time. It's not enough to know that an event happened, or that a person lived and did something; you should be able to explain WHY that event or person was important, or

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symbolic of an era, and how what that event or person represented or did to shape the world afterwards. What are the legacies? What are the controversies? What are the paradoxes?

**Third:** An education in history should not only teach you to WRITE but should also teach you how to ASK EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS both of sources from the past and of the arguments made about them. This is called critical thinking and, well, it's basically why you're here in college, and why we ground higher education in the liberal arts.

**That is why this semester, you will vote for and select one thematic development, based on a contemporary problem, in American history to study.**

### IV. Requirements & Grades

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- This course utilizes an online textbook at no cost to students. To access the textbook, go to: <http://www.americanyawp.com>
- **Attendance:** Students are required to attend class regularly. Attendance does not simply mean occupying a seat but active listening, note-taking, preparation, and participation. If you are not going to attend class, please drop this course as soon as possible.
- **Discussion & Participation (25%):** Most weeks, we will spend a portion of a class period working, usually collaboratively, on an exercise or project focused on either “doing history” or “different ways of seeing the past.” Students are expected to read the assigned materials before the start of class and contribute to discussions of course materials.
- **Two Written Responses (20% total, 10% each)** of the semester grade): Prompts and guidelines will be posted on Bb.
- **Book Review (10%):** Assignment and guidelines will be posted on Bb. The required text will be available for free through the SRSU library as an a-book.
- **Midterm Exam (20%):** Students must be prepared to answer short and long essay prompts and questions.
- **“Doing” History Project (25% of the semester grade):** To measure the success of student acquisition of these mandated skills, one assignment during the semester will require critical analysis of an historical event in United States history from the period before 1877.
  - **Final Term Essay (10%):** Each student will be provided a selection of primary and/or secondary sources to interpret and evaluate, place in historical context, and utilize to construct an analytical essay. The essay will require that students think critically about the sources, examine how individual choices and decisions influenced the course of history, and consider the ways in which people engage with regional, national, or global communities.
  - **Group Presentation (10%):** In their groups, students must use the information from class and work together to create a short film, minimum 3-5 minutes in length, to link course materials and teach that topic to the course. Completion of this assignment is an important component in the successful completion of this course. Further

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instructions will be provided at the appropriate time in the semester. Each group must also give feedback on each person's contributions to the project and each person's role in the project presentation.

### Course Grading

A 90-100%    B 80-89%    C 70-79%    D 60-69%    F 59% or lower

## **V. Course Policies**

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### **Objectionable Materials Warning**

- At times this semester we may be discussing historical events that may be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, I'd be happy to discuss any concerns you may have before the subject comes up in class. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to course material with the class or with me individually afterwards, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our coursework.
- If you ever feel the need to remove yourself from a class discussion, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, please arrange to get notes from another student or see me individually to discuss the situation.

### **Climate of Respect**

- Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose, and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

### **Classroom Demeanor**

- Think of this course like joining a gym—you get out what you put in. As your professor, it is my responsibility to make sure you know how to use the equipment and to assist you when you need a spotter. Meanwhile, it is your responsibility to engage with the course materials, put in the work, and complete the assignments by the designated due dates. The grade you earn is determined by the quality of your effort, not necessarily the time you spend.
- Students should not engage in any behavior that disrupts class: talking during the lectures, passing notes, reading materials unrelated to the course, and the like. Persistent disruptive behavior will result in a failure for the course. The professor also reserves the right to drop disruptive students from the class.
- Be respectful of your classmates and the course instructor. This means that **ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES MUST BE SILENT DURING CLASS**. Do not under any condition text message on your phones and only use your computers for taking notes.

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- Watching videos, playing video games, surfing the internet, emailing, Facebooking and similar behaviors disrupt the class and will not be tolerated. Students who violate the computer policy will not be allowed to use their computers in the future.
- Students **are not** allowed to record or distribute lectures, course materials, or use any kind of electronic recording equipment without the professor's permission. This includes audio and video recordings, as well as photographs of slides and visual aids.
- Students **must** have regular, reliable access to a working computer with internet. At times, we may meet in an online classroom rather than in-person.
- Students are responsible for checking email and Blackboard on a regular basis (at least weekly) to access course materials and information.

### **Classroom Environment**

- I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). I also understand that the recent crises of COVID, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events could impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

### **Children in the Classroom**

The policy described here is thus, a reflection of my own beliefs and commitments to students, staff, and faculty parents:

- All exclusively nursing/breastfeeding babies are welcome in class as often as is necessary to support the nursing/breastfeeding relationship. Because not all women can pump sufficient milk, and not all babies will take a bottle reliably, I never want students to feel like they have to choose between feeding their baby and continuing their education. You and your nursing baby are welcome in class anytime.
- For older children and babies, I understand that minor illnesses and unforeseen disruptions in childcare often put parents in the position of having to choose between missing class to stay home with a child and leaving him or her with someone you or the child does not feel comfortable with. While this is not meant to be a long-term childcare solution, occasionally bringing a child to class in order to cover gaps in care is perfectly acceptable.
- I ask that all students work with me to create a welcoming environment that is respectful of all forms of diversity, including diversity in parenting status.
- In all cases where babies and children come to class, I ask that you sit close to the door so that if your little one needs special attention and is disrupting learning for other students, you may step outside until their need has been met. Non-parents in the class, please reserve seats near the door for your parenting classmates.
- Finally, I understand that often the largest barrier to completing your coursework once you become a parent is the tiredness many parents feel in the evening once children

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have *finally* gone to sleep. The struggles of balancing school, childcare, and often another job, are exhausting! I hope that you will feel comfortable disclosing your student-parent status to me. This is the first step in my being able to accommodate any special needs that arise. While I maintain the same high expectations for all student in my classes regardless of parenting status, I am happy to problem solve with you in a way that makes you feel supported as you strive for school-parenting balance.

- Don't forget to check out the SRSU Lactation Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Lawrence Hall!

### Student Conduct

- Students should not engage in any behavior that disrupts class: talking during the lectures, passing notes, reading materials unrelated to the course, and the like. Persistent disruptive behavior will result in a failure for the course. The professor also reserves the right to drop disruptive students from the class.
- Be respectful of your classmates and the course instructor. This means that ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES MUST BE SILENT DURING CLASS. Do not under any condition text message on your phones and only use your computers for taking notes.
- Watching videos, playing video games, surfing the internet, emailing, Facebooking and similar behaviors disrupt the class and will not be tolerated. Students who violate the computer policy will not be allowed to use their computers in the future.
- Students **are not** allowed to record lectures using any kind of electronic equipment without the professor's permission. This includes audio and video recordings, as well as photographs of slides and visual aids.
- All exams and course work will **only** be accepted on the due dates in the class calendar. In the case of extraordinary medical or personal circumstances, you must contact the instructor **before** the due date of the assignment or exam. If you miss a class for extraordinary circumstances, you must submit appropriate paperwork--a doctor's note, obituary, a bill for a tow truck, and the like.
- Students are responsible for checking email and the Blackboard site on a regular basis because the instructor will send reading questions and other important information to the class.
- If you are having any problems with the course, please come to the office hours of the professor. I am very eager to help students and am committed to your success in the class.

### Grading

- While I am always happy to discuss ways to improve your writing and performance on exams, I am not in the business of haggling over grades. Grades in this class are the product of careful deliberation and are not negotiable. If you find that the instructor—who is human—made a mathematical error, please bring the matter to my attention during office hours.
- In addition to following guidelines and meeting requirements, students will be graded on:

#### THE 5 C'S OF HISTORICAL REASONING

1. **Change and Continuity:** Historians debate what has changed over time and what has remained the same. Change can be a dramatic pivot or a slow shift.
2. **Causation:** Historians debate the causes of historical events. Actually, it would be more accurate to say that we often discuss about causality, sometimes passionately. Few events

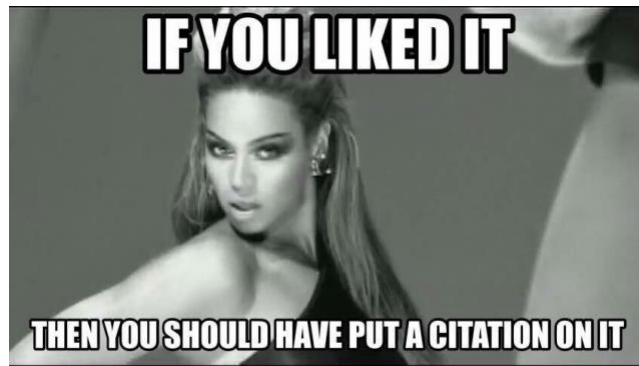
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have only one cause (monocausal), so we debate with one another about which cause should be considered the most important.

3. **Context:** Historians insist that the past must be understood on its own terms. Any historical event, person, idea must be placed in the context of its historical era to be interpreted. The historian's goal is to discover how people in the past understood their own lives, which is often quite different from how we may react to their situation.
4. **Contingency and Connections:** Historians are aware that events happen for a variety of reasons, which are often interconnected. Change one factor, and the event might not have happened at all. This idea helps us to remember that historical events are not inevitable.
5. **Complexity:** Historical reasoning is not about memorizing dates and names. It is about making sense of the messiness of the past, in all its complexity. That often means recognizing that different historical groups experienced events in different ways.

### Late Work

- All exams and course work will **only** be accepted on the due dates in the class calendar. In the case of extraordinary medical or personal circumstances, you must contact the instructor **before** the due date of the assignment or exam. If you miss a class for extraordinary circumstances, you must submit appropriate paperwork--a doctor's note, obituary, a bill for a tow truck, and the like.



### Academic Honesty

- The University expects all students to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is beyond reproach and to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of their classroom. The University may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty, including but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.  
“Cheating” includes:
  1. Copying from another student's test paper, laboratory report, other report, or computer files, data listings, and/or programs, or allowing another student to copy from same.
  2. Using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test.
  3. Collaborating, without authorization, with another person during an examination or in preparing academic work.
  4. Knowingly, and without authorization, using, buying, selling, stealing, transporting, soliciting, copying, or possessing, in whole or in part, the contents of a non-administered test.

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5. Substituting for another student; permitting any other person, or otherwise assisting any other person to substitute for oneself or for another student in the taking of an examination or test or the preparation of academic work to be submitted for academic credit.
6. Bribing another person to obtain a non-administered test or information about a non-administered test.
7. Purchasing, or otherwise acquiring and submitting as one's own work any research paper or other writing assignment prepared by an individual or firm. This section does not apply to the typing of a rough and/or final version of an assignment by a professional typist.
8. "Plagiarism" means the appropriation and the unacknowledged incorporation of another's work or idea in one's own written work offered for credit.
9. "Collusion" means the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing written work offered for credit.
10. "Abuse of resource materials" means the mutilation, destruction, concealment, theft or alteration of materials provided to assist students in the mastery of course materials.
11. "Academic work" means the preparation of an essay, dissertation, thesis, report, problem, assignment, or other project that the student submits as a course requirement or for a grade.
12. "Falsification of Data" means the representation, claim, or use of research, data, statistics, records, files, results, or information that is falsified, fabricated, fraudulently altered, or otherwise misappropriated or misrepresented.
  - All academic dishonesty cases may be first considered and reviewed by the faculty member. If the faculty member believes that an academic penalty is necessary, he/she may assign a penalty but must notify the student of his/her right to appeal to the department chair, the dean and eventually, to the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs before imposition of the penalty. At each step in the process, the student shall be entitled to written notice of the offense and/or of the administrative decision, an opportunity to respond, and an impartial disposition as to the merits of his/her case. The decision of the Provost and Vice President for Academic and Student Affairs shall be final.
  - Please read the complete policy at [http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student\\_conduct\\_discipline.pdf](http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student_conduct_discipline.pdf)

## VI. Student Resources

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- **Learning Strategies, Styles, and Centers**

The University offers tutoring for many subjects, holds numerous workshops on developing better note-taking, reading, and study skills as well as assisting students with writing and test taking strategies through the **Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)**. **Location:** FH 214  
**Web:** <http://www.sulross.edu/academic-center-excellence>

- **Library**



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The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine. Offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires logging in with your LobolD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or phone (432-837-8123).

- **Counseling and Psychological Services**

Provides counseling services and offers other services to students in need.

**Students seeking counseling services must contact:**

Mary Schwartze-Grisham, M. Ed., L.P.C., Coordinator for Counseling and Accessibility Services

**Email:** [counseling@sulross.edu](mailto:counseling@sulross.edu)

**Location:** Ferguson Hall 112.

**Hours:** M-F 8am-12pm and 1pm-5pm.

**Phone:** (432) 837-8203.

**Web:** <http://www.sulross.edu/section/2408/counseling-accessibility-services>

- **Accessibility Services**

Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services each semester and for each class.

**Students seeking accessibility services must contact:**

Mary Schwartze-Grisham, M. Ed., L.P.C., Coordinator for Counseling and Accessibility Services

Location: Ferguson Hall 112

Telephone: 432-837-8691

E-mail: [mschwartz@sulross.edu](mailto:mschwartz@sulross.edu)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832

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### VII. Tentative Course Schedule

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NOTE: 1) Readings and assignments must be **completed** before you come to class on the date of the assignment. 2) The in-class assignments must be completed before the conclusion of weekly class sessions. 3) Discussion readings need to be carefully read before class. 4) If you do not come to class prepared for and ready to participate in the discussion, you may be asked to leave the class and will receive no attendance credit for the day.

**Abbreviations: 1) Blackboard=Bb 2) [American Yawp=Textbook](#)**

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#### *UNIT I*

**Week 1** (August 29, 31) INTRODUCTIONS

**Week 2** (September 05, 07) Written Response #1

**Week 3** (September 12, 14)

**Week 4** (September 19, 21)

#### *UNIT II*

**Week 5** (September 26, 28) Written Response #2

**Week 6** (October 03, 05)

**Week 7** (October 10, 12)

**Week 8** (October 17, 19) MIDTERM EXAM

#### *UNIT III*

**Week 9** (October 24, 26)

**Week 10** (October 31, November 02)

**Week 11** (November 07, 09) Book Review

**Week 12** (November 14, 16)

#### *UNIT IV*

**Week 13** (November 21, 23)—THANKSGIVING, NO CLASS

**Week 14** (November 28, 30)

**Week 15** (December 05, 07) “Doing History” project

**Week 16** **FINAL EXAM PERIOD MONDAY, DECEMBER 11th, 8AM-10:15AM**

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### VII. TEXAS Domain Competency 020 History

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The teacher understands and applies knowledge of significant historical events and developments. These actions will be assessed through multiple historical interpretations and ideas and relationships between the past, the present and the future as defined by the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). The beginning teacher:

- A. Demonstrates an understanding of historical points of reference in the history of Texas, the United States, and the world.
- B. Analyzes how individuals, events, and issues shaped the history of Texas, the United States, and the world.
- C. Demonstrates an understanding of similarities and differences among Native American groups in Texas, the United States, and the Western hemisphere before European colonization.
- D. Demonstrates an understanding of the causes and effects of European exploration and colonization of Texas, the United States, and the Western Hemisphere.
- E. Analyzes the influence of various factors (e.g., geographic contexts, processes of spatial exchange, science, and technology) on the development of societies.
- F. Demonstrates an understanding of basic concepts of culture and the processes of cultural adaptation, diffusion, and exchange.
- G. Applies knowledge and analyzes the effects of scientific, mathematical, and technological innovations on political, economic, social, and environmental developments as they relate to daily life in Texas, the United States, and the world.
- H. Demonstrates an understanding of historical information and ideas in relation to other disciplines.
- I. Demonstrates an understanding of how to formulate historical research questions and use appropriate procedures to reach supportable judgments and conclusion in the social sciences.
- J. Demonstrates an understanding of historical research and knows how historians locate, gather, organize, analyze, and report information by using standard research methodologies.
- K. Knows the characteristics and uses of primary and secondary sources used for historical research (e.g., databases, maps, photographs, media services, the Internet, biographies, interviews, questionnaires, artifacts), analyzes historical information from primary and secondary sources and understands and evaluates information in relation to bias, propaganda, point of view and frame of reference.
- L. Applies and evaluates the use of problem-solving processes, gathering of information, listing, and considering options, considering advantages and disadvantages, choosing and implementing solutions and assessing the effectiveness of solutions.
- M. Applies and evaluates the use of decision-making processes to identify situations that require decisions by gathering information, identifying options, predicting consequences, and taking action to implement the decisions.
- N. Communicates and interprets historical information in written, oral and visual forms and translates information from one medium to another (e.g., written to visual, statistical to written or visual).
- O. Analyzes historical information by categorizing, comparing and contrasting, making generalizations, and predictions and drawing inferences and conclusions (e.g., regarding

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- population statistics, patterns of migration, voting trends and patterns).
- P.** Applies knowledge of the concept of chronology and its use in understanding history and historical events.
  - Q.** Applies different methods of interpreting the past to understand, evaluate and support multiple points of view, frames of reference and the historical context of events and issues.
  - R.** Demonstrates an understanding of the foundations of representative government in the United States, significant issues of the Revolutionary era and challenges confronting the U.S. government in the early years of the Republic.
  - S.** Demonstrates an understanding of westward expansion and analyzes its effects on the political, economic, and social development of the United States.
  - T.** Analyzes ways that political and social factors led to the growth of sectionalism and the Civil War.
  - U.** Understands individuals, issues and events involved in the Civil War and analyzes the effects of reconstruction on the political, economic, and social life of the United States.
  - V.** Demonstrates an understanding of major U.S. reform movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (e.g., abolitionism, women's suffrage, temperance).
  - W.** Demonstrates an understanding of important individuals, issues, and events of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries in Texas, the United States, and the world.
  - X.** Analyzes ways that particular contemporary societies reflect historical events (e.g., invasion, conquests, colonization, and immigration).

These competency variables will be assessed through written responses, essay questions, short answers, and assigned readings.