

History of the United States of America to 1877
Sul Ross State University
Fall 2025
Online Course, Section W 02

Instructor: Tiffany Fink, Ph.D. "Dr. Fink"

Course: HIST 1301 Section W02

Dr. Fink's email: communicate through Blackboard or tiffany.fink@sulross.edu

Office Hours: email only

Course Description: A general survey of the history of the United States from the discovery of the New World to 1877.

Content: HIST 1301 is a general introductory survey of American history covering from the beginnings of human settlement in the Americas thousands of years ago to the end of the post-civil war era in 1877. Together we will examine events of the past, from settlement, to colonization, the American Revolution, nation building, the early U. S. Republic through the U. S. Civil War within a global context and from diverse perspectives.

Approach: Think of this course as a history of being human, experiencing intersections, encounters, exchanges, struggles, and explorations within the geographic space which is now known as the United States of America. These stories are stories of humanity. Being human has always required great courage. In that respect, nothing has changed much between now and then, has it?

Textbook: *U.S. History*. P. Scott Corbett, et al., (Houston, TX: OpenStax | Rice University, 2021.) Textbook available in paperback or online through OpenStax (<https://openstax.org/details/books/us-history>) The online version is free.

Graded Assignments and Weight toward Final Average in the Course:

ASSIGNMENT TYPE	NUMBER OF ASSIGNMENTS	WEIGHT TOWARD FINAL GRADE
Examinations	3 exams worth 375 points each	375 points/ 37.5 percent
(RQSA)Reading questions/short answers	5 RQSAs worth 50 points each	250 points/ 25 percent
Discussion Primary Documents with Peers	6 Discussions on Blackboard worth 50 points each (the student's initial post + reply to three peers)	300 points/ 30 percent
Participation	Cumulative across semester	75 points/ 7.5 percent

Letter Grade Scale:

Total Points Possible: 1000

A = 1000 - 900

B = 899 - 800

C = 799 - 700

D = 699 - 600

F = 599 - 0 points (This is a failing grade, resulting from performance on assignments, OR failure to submit all assignments, OR violation of academic integrity policies, OR failure to attend at least 75 percent of the class meetings)

Instructor Responsibilities:

- The instructor will know the course content.
- The instructor will explain relevant concepts and principles.
- The instructor will facilitate class participation.
- The instructor will treat students fairly and with respect.
- The instructor will work as a partner with the students to create a positive learning environment.
- The instructor will field relevant questions related to the course content.
- The instructor will return assignment grades in a reasonable amount of time.
- The instructor will answer student e-mails within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours during the weekend.

Student Responsibilities:

At the very least, the professor expects the student to attend and participate in class, pay attention, take notes, complete the assigned readings before class, submit assignments on time, take assessments on time, be respectful and remain engaged. All of that means that the student must take responsibility for their actions and their role in their own education. Therefore, please read over the following responsibility statements, then compose an email message to Dr. Fink, the professor, stating your level of commitment to this course (tiffany.fink@sulross.edu).

- You are responsible for attending all lectures, taking notes, and completing the readings.
 - You are responsible for getting notes from a missed class from a classmate.
 - You are responsible for turning in assignments on time.
 - You are responsible for being in class to take quizzes and exams
 - You are responsible for verifying your enrollment in or withdrawal from the course.
- Please note: If you decide to leave/quit/withdraw from the class, but your name still appears on the Banner grade sheet at the end of the semester you will receive an "F" for the course.

Student Learning Outcomes (required by SRSU to include in syllabus):

Students who complete HIST 1301 with a grade of "C" or higher will:

1. Develop an informed, critical and articulate approach to the study of history. Marketable Skills: Critical Thinking: Absorption, comprehension, data synthesis Ibid: Development of pattern recognition and causal skills. Global Fluency: Ability to place the United States in a global context.
2. The history student will demonstrate knowledge of American History, World History, and Non-American History Marketable Skills: Students can meet deadlines in a successful manner. Students can discharge responsibilities in an adequate manner. Students can manage the absorption of data.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of historical events, movements, major turning points and personalities of the past. Marketable Skills: Professionalism: Knowledge and understanding of the civic roles and responsibilities of a United States citizen. Critical Thinking/Professionalism: Ability to relate the importance of the historical past when considering public policy decisions.
4. The history student will demonstrate the ability to write about topics in historiography and how those topics are interpreted. Marketable Skills: Students can utilize data to persuade various audiences. Students can utilize data to generate and strengthen ideas. Students can decipher stances adopted by various individuals.
5. The history student will demonstrate historical research skills in a logically organized, written paper that is mechanically correct and supported by relevant documentation of historical content Marketable skills: Students can identify useful resources from a pool of data. Students can select and organize data in a relevant manner. Students can make written presentations to various audiences.

SLO's will be assessed as follows:

Examinations (3) will assess SLOs 1-5
Reading Questions (10) will assess SLOs 1-3
Primary Document Post 7 Discussion (6) will assess
SLOs 1-5

Course Learning Objectives:

Students who complete HIST 1301 with a grade of “C” or higher will:

1. Be able to trace the historical development of the United States politically, economically, socially and culturally from the Pre-Columbian era to the post-civil war 19th century.
2. Be able to chart long-term historical and political trends in the United States in the 16th thru 19th centuries.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of key historical events, movements and personalities in the History of the United States to 1877.
4. Understand the role that historical interpretation plays in accessing the past and be able to identify and critique various and differing interpretations of the past;
5. The development of critical thinking and writing skills through reading questions, concise historical notebooks, and a primary source-based newspaper article.

TEXES Standards: Students seeking teacher certification in the Core Subjects EC-6 or 4-8, History 7-12, and Social Studies 7-12 areas will cover materials relating to the following standards in this course.

- Core Subjects EC-6 - Social Studies Standard IV, V, VI, VII & IX
- Core Subjects 4-8 - Social Studies Standard IV, V, VI, VII & IX
- History 7-12 - Standards IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX & X
- Social Studies 7-12: Standards IV, V, VI, VII, VIII, IX & X

University Policies Enforced in this Course Pertain to the Following:

Academic Honesty - Per the University’s policy on academic honesty the in the Student Handbook - University’s Policy and Procedures section students are expected to use the highest standards in their academic pursuits and behave in a manner that is beyond reproach. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this class. Any student caught cheating on a quiz will receive an “F” for the quiz and will not be allowed to retake it. Any student caught cheating on exam will receive an “F” for the exam, may fail the course and may face additional disciplinary action by the Dean of Students.

A. D. A. Statement: Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students seeking accessibility services must contact:

Mary Schwartze: Counselling and Accessibility Services,
Ferguson Hall 112 (on-campus in Alpine, TX)
Mailing Address: P. O. Box C-171; Alpine, TX 79832
Phone: (432) 837-8203

If you have an accessibility letter, it is your responsibility to ensure that the instructor has received a copy of it so your specific accommodations can be met.

AI/ChatGPT is NOT permitted in this course.

All work shall be created by the student enrolled in the course, meaning all process work, drafts, brainstorming artifacts, final works will be created/written/formed by the students themselves, working individually as directed by class assignment instructions.

This policy indicates the following constitute violations of academic honesty: a student has another person/entity do the work of any substantive portion of a graded assignment for them, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, and/or using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT).

Appealing the Final Grade: Students wishing to appeal a course grade should first start with the instructor and if not satisfied follow the Behavioral & Social Sciences chain of command: Instructor, Chair, Dean of Arts & Sciences, Vice President of Academic Affairs, President.

Attendance - You are expected to attend class. Per SRSU requirements attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. Students with more than six unexplained absences can be dropped from the course with a grade of "F." If you come into class late it is your responsibility to ensure that the instructor has counted you here. Students more than 15 minutes late will be counted absent.

Classroom Conduct: Per the Student Handbook "students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the University's function as an educational institution." Students should treat their classmates with courtesy and respect. Students talking over others, using persistent profane or vulgar language or otherwise disrupting the class may be dismissed from the class.

Cell Phone Policy: Use of electronic devices during the class is prohibited unless necessary for medical reasons.

Contacting the Instructor: E-mail is the preferred method of communication.

Please use the following format for any e-mail communications:

YOUR NAME: HIST1301: Subject of E-mail.

Late Assignments: Assignments turned in late will lose 10% off their maximum grade each day the assignment is late.

Make Up Exam Policy: Make exams will only be given because of documented emergency situations such as severe/extreme medical conditions for yourself or a dependent, or in the case of a death in the immediate family. Students who have this type of concern must either contact the instructor by e-mail or phone prior to the date of the exam OR bring in a validated excuse upon their first day back in the course. Please note that make up exams will not be the same as the ones given in class.

On Writing Well: The members of the history faculty believe that it is important that students be encouraged to write well in classes other than English. To that end each examination will contain essay questions, and a term research paper will be required. Points may be deducted from your grade for the overall quality of the essay, reflection or paper, including spelling and grammatical errors. (Use Spelling & Grammar Check). **Writing**

Tutoring: Students needing assistance with writing are urged to use the services of the Writing Lab, part of the Tutoring and Learning Centre, located in the Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library first floor. Please check with the Tutoring & Learning Centre for hours of operation. Please note that while the writing tutors can help you with grammar, structure, formatting and citations they will not write assignments for you nor are they your editors.

Course Assignments:

Exams: Students will take three examinations over the course lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions. The exams consist of multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

Please note that the examinations are not cumulative. Knowledge gained about themes, major documents, such as the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and other foundational texts, however, should be reviewed by the students before each exam.

Reading Questions & Short Answers: With each of the assigned readings you will answer 3 short-answer questions. The questions are based on the assigned readings for each week. Answer must indicate that the student used the assigned readings to answer the questions. Students should write their answers without use of artificial intelligence. The professor should be able to tell that the student wrote the responses in their own words, using the readings. Students will submit Cornell-style notes with each RQSA this semester. See Week One in Blackboard for Cornell Notes template. Students must type.

Primary Document Post/Peer Discussions:

Dr. Fink will assign each student primary documents to read which pertain to her lectures during the week. Students will answer Dr. Fink's Required Questions and write TWO discussion questions of their own per document. All of that work shall be posted for the peers to read. Then, each student will respond to the two discussion questions for THREE peers. The grade on the assignment is 75% the student's own initial post and 25% the student's responses to the three peer posts.

Attendance & Participation: You are expected to attend, pay attention and actively participate in the course. This means completing the assigned readings, assignments, asking questions and participating in discussions.

Extra Credit: Extra credit opportunities arise during the semester they will be noted by the instructor. Students may receive a maximum of 30 points extra credit.

Schedule of Lectures & Readings

Week I (Beginning 25 August) ○ Lecture: Syllabus, Introduction to course, Ancient Americas and European Developments pre-1492. ○ Textbook: US History, Ch. 1 – pg. 7-27.

- Assignments:
- Syllabus Assignment ○ Introductions
- *Extra Credit* - Reading Questions/Short Answers #0

Week II (3 September)

Lecture: Spain, Portugal, and the Reshaping of the Americas Textbook:
US History: Ch. 2, pg. 31-52 & Ch. 3, pg. 57-60.

Assignments:

Reading Questions #1

Week III (8 September)

Lecture: The 17th Century – Dutch, French, and English North America.
Textbook: US History: Ch. 3, pg. 60-81 & Ch. 4, pg. 85-94.

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #1

Week IV (15 September)

Lecture: British North America to 1770
Textbook: US History: Ch. 4, pg. 95-106 & Ch. 5, pg. 111-127.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #2

Week V (22 September)

Lecture: The Path to Independence.
Textbook: US History: Ch. 5, pg. 128-133 & Ch. 6, pg. 139-160.

Examination #1

Week VI (29 September)

Lecture: The Beginnings of the United States to 1801.
Textbook: US History: Ch. 7, pg. 165-187 & Ch. 8, pg. 139-160.

Assignments:

Reading Questions #2

Week VII (6 October)

Lecture: Jeffersonian America, 1801-1821
Textbook: US History: Ch. 8, pg. 198-214 & Ch. 9, pg. 217-225 & Ch. 11, pg. 270-275.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #3

Week VIII (13 October)

Lecture: From the 'Era of Good Feelings' to the 'Age of Jackson.'

Textbook: US History: Ch. 9, pg. 226-235 & Ch. 10, pg. 243-249 & Ch. 11, pg. 275-276.

Reading Questions #3

Week IX (20 October)

Lecture: The Age of Jackson and Antebellum Change

Textbook: US History: Ch. 9, pg. 235-239 & Ch. 10, pg. 250-261 & Ch. 12, pg. 297-309.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #4

Week X (27 October)

Lecture: Culture & Society in Early America.

Textbook: US History: Ch. 10, pg. 256-264 & Ch. 12, pg. 310-312 & Ch. 13, pg. 325-339.

Reading Questions #4

Week XI (3 November)

Lecture: Manifest Destiny – Visions of Westward Expansion Textbook:

US History: Ch. 11, pg. 278-292 & Ch. 13, pg. 340-347 Assignments:

Examination #2

Week XII (10 November)

Lecture: A Fracturing America, 1850-1861 Textbook:

US History: Ch. 14, pg. 353-374 Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #5

Week XIII (17 November)

Lecture: Rebellion & Civil War, 1860-1865 Textbook:

US History: Ch. 15, pg. 379-403.

Assignments:

Reading Questions #5

Week XIV (24 November)

Thanksgiving Week – No Classes or Assignments

Consider working on your HFD.

Extra Credit Reading Questions/Short Answers #6

Week XV (1 December)

Lecture: Reconstruction & Post-War United States Textbook:

US History: Ch. 16, pg. 407-430.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #6

Week XVI (8 December)

Examination #3 - Final Exam - Time TBA

Note: Schedule is tentative and may be changed by the instructor.

Schedule of Assignments & Exams

Complete by Due Date/Time

Week 1 Assignments

Syllabus Quiz

Wednesday 3 September by 11:59pm

Introductory Essay

Extra Credit (RQSA #0)

Week 2 Assignments

Reading Questions #1

Monday 8 September by 11:59pm

Week 3 Assignments

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #1

Monday 15 September by 11:59pm

Week 4 Assignments

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #2

Monday 22 September by 11:59pm

Week 5 Assignments

Examination #1

Monday 29 September by 11:59pm

Week 6 Assignments

Reading Questions #2

Monday 6 October by 11:59pm

Week 7 Assignments

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #3

Monday 13 October by 11:59pm

Week 8 Assignments

Reading Questions #3

Monday 20 October by 11:59pm

Week 9 Assignments

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #4

Monday 27 October by 11:59pm

Week 10 Assignments

Reading Questions #4

Monday 3 November by 11:59pm

Week 11 Assignments

Examination #2

Monday 10 November by 11:59pm

Week 12 Assignments

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #5

Monday 17 November by 11:59pm

Week 13 Assignments

Reading Questions #5

Monday 2 December by 11:59pm

Week 14 Assignments

Thanksgiving Week – No Class (Nov 24-Nov 28)

Extra Credit (RQSA #6)

Monday, December 1 by 11:59pm.

Week 15 Assignments

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #6

Wednesday 3 December by 11:59pm

Week 16 Assignments

Final Examination (Exam #3)

To be announced (TBA)

Appendix I: Reading Questions with Short Answers (RQSA) I:

Learning Objective.

The reading questions are designed to build knowledge and skills related to the study of history including but not limited to: reading comprehension, interpretation and synthesis, critical thinking, time management and writing.

II. Directions.

Out of the assigned readings for each week there will be three chapters will be chosen. After reading the assigned chapter answer the two critical thinking questions provided in clear concise paragraph of 200 words per question. III. Format.

Assignments need to be completed in Microsoft Word. All pages to be double-spaced and using 12pt Times New Roman or Cambria font.

- a. Your Name, Date, HIST 1301 and the assignment number need to be in the upper right-hand corner of the page.
- b. Chapter Title on next line, centered
- c. Label each answer with the question number.
- d. Do not use quotations of any kind, including the reading assignment, in your response.

Appendix II: Primary document essay & peer responses

I: Learning Objective

Primary document readings designed to build knowledge and skills related to the study of history including but not limited to historical interpretation and synthesis, reading comprehension, critical thinking, time management and writing.

II. Directions

- A. Read the two assigned primary documents carefully.
- B. Using the documents, answer as many of Dr. Fink's Required Questions as possible using ONLY Lecture and the Documents.
 1. What is the historical setting? What happened in this moment in history that is important to acknowledge to provide context for the documents?
 2. Who is speaking in the documents? What should we know about them? What are their motives? Who is the intended audience?
 3. What is the geographic setting? Why is that important?
 4. How does the content of the document reflect one or more themes from our course? a. How is power reflected?
 - b. In what ways are the concepts of liberty, order, individual freedom, resistance, independence, democracy, or other elements reflected in the document?
 5. What claims are being made? Refuted? What perspectives are evident from the document?
 6. Where did the author(s) of the document get their information?
 7. Is this document trustworthy, reputable, verifiable as a source? Why or why not?
 8. What beliefs or viewpoints are influencing the author(s) of the document?
 9. After studying these documents, what is missing? What do you want to know? What questions formed in your mind as a result of your studies of these documents?
 10. Note your two favorite quotations from each document and explain why you chose them.
 11. How has the meaning of this document changed over time, in your view?

III. Length and Format

1. Length minimum of 4 pages long, not including title page and source citations.
2. Font = 12pt Times New Roman or Cambria or Arial, double-spaced
3. Margins = Normal (1")
4. Page numbers in upper right corner
5. Title Page includes the following centered on the middle of the page
 - a. Title (should be simple and about the two documents)
 - b. Student Name
 - c. Date
6. Narrative includes:
 - a. Citation of each document used in the assignment.
 - b.
 - c. Student responses to questions.
 - d. Do not use block quotations.

Appendix III: Cornell Notes template for RQSAs (see Blackboard for this course)

U. S. History Dual Credit with Dr. Fink Fall 2025	Name
RQSA Cornell-style Notes	Unit Title
Reading assignment:	
<p>Cues</p> <p>1. Jot down one to two words that are the main idea/vocab/etc of a passage. Leave space between each one.</p> <p>2. Questions: As soon after the reading as possible, formulate questions based on the notes in the righthand column. Write one under each cue word. Writing questions helps to clarify meanings, reveal relationships, establish continuity, and strengthen memory. Also, the writing of questions sets up a perfect stage for examstudying later.</p>	<p>Notetaking Column</p> <p>1. Record: While reading use the notetaking column to record the supporting facts, ideas, dates, etc using telegraphic sentences.</p> <p>3. Recite: Cover the notetaking column with a sheet of paper. Then, looking at the questions or cue-words in the question and cue column only, say aloud, in your own words, the answers to the questions, facts, or ideas indicated by the cuewords.</p> <p>4. Reflect: Reflect on the material by asking yourself questions, for example: "What's the significance of these facts? What principle are they based on? How can I apply them? How do they fit in with what I already know? What's beyond them?"</p> <p>5. Review: Spend at least ten minutes every week reviewing all your previous notes. If you do, you'll retain a great deal for current use, as well as, for the exam.</p>
Summary	Use this space to write a two or three sentence summary of what you just read.

Appendix IV: Grading Rubrics for all major assignments except examinations

<u>RQSA Grading Rubric (Worth 50 points each)</u>				
Graded Areas				
Evidence of Reading, Recognizes/Discusses Primary Themes, Recognizes/discusses Significance of key historical figures, Evidence of Synthesis and Interpretation, Correct formatting, punctuation, grammar, spelling.				
Level of performance:	Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing
	50	40	35	20

<u>Primary Doc Peer Grading Rubric (Worth 50 points each)</u>				
Graded Areas	<i>Distinguished</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>
1. Clear, cohesive narrative in their own words				
2. Answers each question regarding the primary source, in their own words				
3. Demonstrated understanding/comprehension				
4. Required parts of the assignment are present				
5. Assignment is written at university-level				
6. Evidence of Synthesis and Interpretation				
7. Presentation & Discussion with peers				
8. Formatting, absent of typos/errors				
Level of performance:	Distinguished	Accomplished	Proficient	Developing
	45-50	40-44	35-39	less than 30