

History of the United States of America to 1877
Sul Ross State University
Fall 2026
Online Course, Section EPL-ALP

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

Course: HIST 1301 Section EPL-ALP

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: 1000 points possible

ASSIGNMENT TYPE	NUMBER OF ASSIGNMENTS	WEIGHT TOWARD FINAL GRADE
Examinations	4 exams worth 150 points each Due Dates: 9/15; 10/6; 11/3; 12/8	600 points/ 60 percent
Discussion of Primary Documents with Peers	Tuesday discussions on Blackboard are worth 50 points each; Included are the student's initial post with citations + two discussion questions + reply to one peer; must reference documents for the previous week) Due Dates: 9/8; 9/22; 10/13; 10/27; 11/10; 12/1.	300 points/ 30 percent
Semester of Participation – "Attendance" for online course	Access and be active in the course 3 days per week (Monday – Sunday), every week, or lose 6 points per week. All or nothing, meaning access/active in course three days per week or minus 6 points for the week.	100 points/ 10 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

ADA Statement

SRSU 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 each semester for each class. To help protect confidentiality, students seeking accessibility/accommodation(s) services must submit the [Accommodation Request Form](#) located on our [website](#). Students are welcome to call the Office of Accessibility Services at 432-837-8203 or stop by Ferguson Hall Room 112 if they have any additional questions regarding the process. Our mailing address is PO Box C-122; Alpine, TX; 79832.

Statement Regarding Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The University does not recommend or endorse any specific AI tools or resources. Students should be aware that many generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) store user input and may use this data to train future models. For this reason, students should never upload or share personal, confidential, or identifiable information—such as names, ID numbers, health data, or assignment submissions containing such details—into any generative AI platform. When using AI tools, students should verify whether the tool complies with student privacy standards as indicated by the University. Faculty may recommend specific tools that better align with institutional data privacy policies, but ultimate responsibility for data protection rests with users.

Students are encouraged to use faculty-recommended platforms when engaging in coursework involving generative AI. The University is not liable for any adverse experience or impact when students interact with these tools.

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).

Student Responsibilities

All full-time and part-time students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the [Student Handbook](#) and the [Undergraduate & Graduate Catalog](#) and for abiding by the [University rules and regulations](#). Additionally, students are responsible for checking their Sul Ross email as an official form of communication from the university. Every student is expected to obey all federal, state and local laws and is expected to familiarize him/herself with the requirements of such laws.

SRSU Distance Education Statement

Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website.

Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires a secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

Counseling

Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/365 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](#). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Libraries

The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library and Archives of the Big Bend in Alpine offer 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/. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LoboID and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or by phone (432-837-8123).

No matter where you are based, public libraries and many academic and special libraries welcome the general public into their spaces for study. SRSU TexShare Cardholders can access additional services and resources at various libraries across Texas. Learn more about the TexShare program by visiting library.sulross.edu/find-and-borrow/texshare/ or ask a librarian by emailing srsulibrary@sulross.edu.

Mike Fernandez, SRSU Librarian, is based in Eagle Pass (Building D-129) to offer specialized library services to students, faculty, and staff. Utilize free services such as InterLibrary Loan (ILL), ScanIt, and Direct Mail to get materials delivered to you at home or via email.

Academic Integrity

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for

another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources *unless permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

Classroom 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.

Supportive Statement

I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may 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 a supportive 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.

Tutoring Center

[The Lobo Den Tutoring Center](#) offers FREE tutoring support to help you excel in your courses. Whether you need assistance in Writing, Math, Science, or other subjects, we're here to help!

Important Information:

- **Drop-in and Scheduled Appointments:** Flexible options to fit your needs.
- **Hours of Operation:** Monday–Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM.
- **Workshops:** Attend our regularly hosted academic workshops on STEM topics and professional development, often in collaboration with specialized faculty.
- **Location:** BWML Room 128.
- **Contact Us:** For more information or to book an appointment, email tutoring@sulross.edu or call (432) 837-8726.

Looking for additional support?

- Tutor.com offers FREE 24/7 online tutoring in over 200 subjects, including specialized support for ESL and ELL learners with native Spanish-speaking tutors.
- Access Tutor.com via Blackboard: Log in to your Blackboard account to get started anytime, anywhere.

Take advantage of these valuable resources to boost your confidence and performance in your classes. We look forward to helping you succeed!

University Policies Enforced in this Course Pertain to the Following:

Academic Honesty - Per the University's policy on academic honesty 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 Schwartz: 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.

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.

Primary Document Post/Peer Discussions:

Dr. Fink will assign primary documents to read which pertain to her lectures during the week. Students will answer FOUR of 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 ONE peer. 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 are Graded. Students are expected to access, pay attention to, and actively participate in the course. This means completing the assigned readings, assignments, asking questions and participating in discussions. Students will lose 6 points per week for failing to participate in the course 3 days per week.

Schedule of Lectures & Readings

Week I (Beginning 24 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

Week II (31 August)

Lecture: Spain, Portugal, and the Reshaping of the Americas

Textbook: US History: Ch. 2, pg. 31-52 & Ch. 3, pg. 57-60.

Week III (7 September)

Lecture: The 17th Century – Dutch, French, and English North America.

Textbook: US History: Ch. 3, pg. 60-81 & Ch. 4, pg. 85-94.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #1

Week IV (14 September)

Lecture: British North America to 1770

Textbook: US History: Ch. 4, pg. 95-106 & Ch. 5, pg. 111-127.

Assignments:

9/15 - Examination #1 (All lectures thus far and Chapters 1-4 plus primary documents so far)

Week V (21 September)

Lecture: The Path to Independence.

Textbook: US History: Ch. 5, pg. 128-133 & Ch. 6, pg. 139-160.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #2

Week VI (28 September)

Lecture: The Beginnings of the United States to 1801.

Textbook: US History: Ch. 7, pg. 165-187 & Ch. 8, pg. 139-160.

Week VII (5 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:

10/6 - Examination #2 (All lectures since Exam #1 and Chapters 5-8, plus primary documents)

Week VIII (12 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.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #3 due 10/13

Week IX (19 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.

Week X (26 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.

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #4 due 10/27

Week XI (2 November)

Lecture: Manifest Destiny – Visions of Westward Expansion Textbook:

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

Assignments:

11/3 - Examination #3 (All lecture since Exam #2 and Chapters 9-13 plus primary documents)

Week XII (9 November)

Lecture: A Fracturing America, 1850-1861 Textbook:

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

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #5 due 11/10

Week XIII (16 November)

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

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

Week XIV (23 November) Thanksgiving Week

Week XV (30 November)

Lecture: Reconstruction & Post-War United States Textbook:

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

Assignments:

Discussion Post & Peer Replies #6 due 12/1

Week XVI (7 December)

12/8 - Examination #4 - Final Exam - All lectures since Exam #3 and Chapters 14-16, plus primary documents)

Appendix I: 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

1. Read the two assigned primary documents carefully.

B. Using the documents, answer ALL of Dr. Fink's Required Questions using ONLY Lecture and the Documents.

1. Who is speaking in the documents? What should we know about them? What are their motives? Who is the intended audience?
2. What claims are being made? Refuted? What perspectives are evident from the document?
3. Where did the author(s) of the document get their information?
4. Is this document trustworthy, reputable, verifiable as a source? Why or why not?
5. What beliefs or viewpoints are influencing the author(s) of the document?
6. 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?
7. Note your two favorite quotations from each document and explain why you chose them.
8. How has the meaning of this document changed over time, in your view?

III. Remember to write TWO discussion questions of your own as part of the assignment. Avoid yes/no questions.

IV. Length and Format

1. Length minimum of 4 to 6 pages long, not including title page and source citations.
2. Font = 12pt Times New Roman or Cambria or Arial, double-spaced
3. 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.
 - c. Student responses to questions.
 - d. Do not use block quotations.

Appendix III: Cornell Notes template for listening to lectures/reading textbook

U. S. History Dual Credit with Dr. Fink Fall 2026	Name
RQSA Cornell-style Notes	Unit Title
Reading assignment:	
Cues A. Jot down one to two words that are the main idea/vocab/etc. of a passage. Leave space between each one. B. 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 exam-studying later.	Notetaking Column Record: While reading use the notetaking column to record the supporting facts, ideas, dates, etc. using telegraphic sentences. 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 cue words. 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?" 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.
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>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:	<i>Distinguished</i>	<i>Accomplished</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Developing</i>
	45-50	40-44	35-39	less than 30