

HIS 315K (38750)
T/TH 9:30-11 am
JES A121A

Professor
Steven Mintz

Office Hours
T/TH 11 – 12 noon
and available by
appointment.
GAR 3.312

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Teaching Assistants
Marsha Black
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Course Description

Too many students spell history b-o-r-i-n-g. They regard history as a jumble of disconnected facts. The word they use to describe history is "irrelevant."

High school history too often consists of little more than lectures, textbooks, worksheets, and memorization of names and dates. In fact, history need not be dull.

In this class, you will be a detective, a myth buster, a problem solver, and a forensic scientist. You will debunk or confirm legends and folklore. You will investigate some of history's most gripping mysteries and take part in some of history's biggest debates.

You will uncover the hidden history behind front-page

headlines as well as the roots of a host of everyday rituals and customs.

You will examine Hollywood's version of the past and separate fact from fiction. You will re-fight past battles, re-live key episodes in the past, and ask what-might-have-been.

You will also explore the uneasy relationship between academic history and popular memory—those legends and traditions that exert a much more powerful grip on our imagination.

This class offers an innovative perspective on U.S. history. Its approach is global, comparative, and multicultural, and it ties past events to contemporary issues.

Divided into modules that must be completed weekly, the course includes a wealth of sources including gravestones, maps, film clips, and

What Is in This Syllabus

Course Structure...2
Learning Objectives...2
Course Communication...2
Course Evaluation...2
Grading Scale...2
Important Notes...3
Schedule...4

music—that bring the past to life and allow you to understand the key issues and controversies of U.S. history from a fresh perspective.

Grading is based on multiple choice questions, short-answer exercises, and interactive activities.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester a student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate mastery of essential facts, chronology, and periodization. These include the sequence of major events and the division of history into meaningful categories.
2. Demonstrate familiarity with historical controversies and conflicting interpretations.
3. Explain how historians are able to reconstruct certain significant facts about the past.
4. Formulate meaningful and research-able historical questions and construct concise, sophisticated, compelling theses.
5. Exhibit the methodological skills characteristic of history as a discipline. These include the ability to locate, weigh and evaluate evidence, assess arguments, and construct convincing interpretations.
6. Demonstrate historical thinking. This includes the ability to describe how institutions, customs, or social roles evolved over time.
7. Analyze the connections between past and present in a nuanced, balanced manner.

Course Structure

Although we will meet twice a week, all the instructional materials are in online modules accessed through Canvas. These will serve as your readings and graded activities.

should consult the schedule below. You will complete your assignments by logging into the course on Canvas, selecting the weekly module, and completing all activities found within the module.

Although you will work through the online modules at the convenience of your own schedule, there are mandatory weekly deadlines and you

You are required to have access to an internet-enabled laptop or desktop computer. We recommend that you use Chrome when accessing the modules.

Course Communication

To ensure that you receive class announcements, sign up for Canvas notifications.

To edit your notification preferences, login to Canvas and navigate to your "Account." Under

settings, update your email and include other forms of contact that you check daily. Once completed, navigate to "Notifications" and edit appropriately.

Course Evaluation

Unlike a conventional history class, in which grades depend on quizzes, a midterm, and a final exam, your grade in this class depends on your performance on activities distributed across the weeks. You will not have a mid-term or final in this course.

You will have access to two modules per week, which must be completed before its due date. Each module is worth 100 points. 60 points are from multiple choice questions and 60 points from essay questions. There is a minimum character requirement for most essay questions of 1200 characters including spaces. For details about how your short answer responses will be graded, see Canvas.

Class Essentials

Read Carefully: Your modules are due on the date and time specified on the syllabus. Please be aware that for the work to be graded, you need to submit your answers via Canvas. We will not accept late work and we will not accept work emailed to your professor or TA. If you're having trouble, please email gatewaytechsupport@austin.utexas.edu and cc your professor and TA. This address is staffed during normal business hours, so please do not wait to the last minute to submit your work. We are not

Final Grade Scale

Final grades will be based on +/- letter grade system.

A = 93-100%, A- = 90-92%
B+ = 88-89%, B = 83-87%
B- = 80-83%, C+ = 78-79
C = 73-77%, C- = 70-72%
D+ = 68-69%, D = 63-67%
D- = 60-62%, F = 0-59%

responsible for technical errors related to your individual equipment (e.g. home wi-fi or laptop) and such problems are not grounds for an extension of the due date.

To ensure that you have completed the entire module and all your work was submitted, please check the table of contents page for your module. Completed items will display a green check mark next to them. Always access your modules through the course homepage or the Assignments tab in Canvas. Accessing your module through the Grade tab provides a read-only view of your work."

Extra credit opportunities: In most class sessions, you will have an opportunity to respond to questions and earn extra credit. To respond to these questions, you must bring an internet connected device - a smart phone, a tablet, or laptop - to class and connect to our class in Canvas.

Primary source packet: You will need to have available during class the primary source packet located on the FAQ page. You can print it out or display it on your tablet or laptop.

Know your TA: At your earliest opportunity, go to the FAQ page and identify the name, contact information, and office hours of your teaching assistant. Your TA is not only responsible for grading your written work, but is a valuable resource who can help you succeed in this class by improving your writing and study skills.

Objectionable Materials Warning

Many will find topics covered in this class to be disturbing. Topics such as, war, inequality, and episodes of violence are aspects of U.S. history that cannot be erased. Our readings and audio-visual sources contain depictions of explicit violence, sexual brutality, ethnic and gender stereotyping, obscenity, profanity, offensive language, and endorse views that many will consider immoral. Students are advised that we will touch on mature subject matter regarding politics, economics, foreign policy, class conflict, racism, sexism, and sexuality, in U.S. history, in a scholarly and critical manner. These sources were in wide circulation in the culture at large, and are, in the instructor's opinion, essential to understanding this country's history.

Academic Integrity

Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced. For further information, visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.

The online course format allows us to monitor and detect issues involving identity verification, collusion and plagiarism. A violation of the course policy may include (but is not limited to) the following:

- Providing your UT EID and password to another person,
- Recording any quiz, assessment or assignment material in any format,
- Failing to properly cite ideas, data, or arguments that are not originally yours.

Please be aware that we are using a software system that automatically detects behavior that violates course rules. As part of this effort, we will occasionally send students email notifications when any problematic behaviors are detected. These emails are intended

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<p>mainly to remind students of the course code of conduct, and carry absolutely no implications for a student's grade in this course. We will only investigate cases where our system determines that there is a considerable amount of evidence that the code of conduct is not being followed. Regardless of the results, the faculty member, in consultation with Student Judicial Services, will make the final determination as to whether or not a paper has been plagiarized.</p>	S
<p>Students with Disabilities Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students. It is the student's responsibility, to make the instructor aware of any special accommodations or needs in a timely manner. Students with disabilities may request appropriate accommodations from the Services for Students with Disabilities at 512-471-6259 (audio) or 512-232-2937 (audiovisual) or http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/how-to-register-with-ssd/. As soon as you have received your letter of accommodation, please send a scanned copy to your professor.</p>	
<p>Religious Holidays The instructor complies with University policy regarding religious holidays. Students must inform the instructor at least 14 days prior to any assignments that they will miss. Students will be given a reasonable time to make up any items. It remains the student's responsibility to complete the modules in a timely fashion.</p>	
<p>This course may be used to fulfill three hours of the U.S. history part of the university core curriculum and addresses the following four core objectives established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board: communication skills, critical thinking skills, personal responsibility, and social responsibility. This course carries a cultural diversity flag.</p>	
<p>Geographical Literacy This class will participate in a new History department initiative to improve student geographical literacy. Geographical literacy helps us to deepen our understanding of the complex processes of the past when we have a better grasp of time, space and place. You will do a series of map exercises this semester that reinforce your key conceptual issues and content knowledge, and you will access those exercises through Canvas.</p>	

Assignment Schedule

Module	Due Date (Fridays at 7am)
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3: The World in 1492	June 15
4: The Colonial Era	June 15
5: The American Revolution	June 22
6: The Constitution & Bill of Rights	June 22
7: The First New Nation	June 29
8: The Jacksonian Era	June 29
9: Slavery	July 6
11: Age of Reform	July 6
13: The Impending Crisis	July 10
14: The Civil War	July 10