

**HIST 1302 -- U.S. HISTORY SINCE 1865**

**Fall Semester 2025**

**Th 5:30-6:45 PM**

**Classroom: CAB 334**

**Instructor: James A. Bernsen**

**Office: None**

**E-Mail: [jbernsen@tamusa.edu](mailto:jbernsen@tamusa.edu)**

**OFFICE HOURS:**

**Virtual Hours: Mondays 3-5 p.m.**

**or by appointment**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will cover U.S. history from the end of the Civil War through the War on Terror. Themes to be covered include: industrialization and labor movements, 20<sup>th</sup> century domestic and international politics and economics, communism and containment, media and social movements, civil rights, and the major wars of the time period. We will focus on historical interpretation and critical thinking, rather than merely memorizing names and dates. While a small number of key events will be discussed in detail, the point is to understand them in context and interpret how they are relative to our world today.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Create a thesis argument through the use of historical evidence.
2. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources.
3. Analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on this period of United States history.
4. Develop analytical writing skills. The syllabus includes a dedicated session to writing training and improvement.

**REQUIRED COURSE READINGS**

**Textbook: *The American Yawp***

Online only: <http://www.americanyawp.com/index.html>

**Additional Required Readings:**

***Up from Slavery (Any Edition)***

By: Booker T. Washington

***D-Day: The Climactic Battle of World War II (Any Edition)***

By: Stephen Ambrose

***The Three Wars of Roy P. Benavidez (Any Edition)***

By Roy P. Benavidez and Oscar Griffin

## EXAMS

There will be two exams: one midterm and one final. The exams are given in essay-only format in order to allow you to demonstrate your understanding of historical topics and to provide your own interpretations of historical events and themes. It is more important that you be able to exhibit critical thinking skills than to regurgitate a laundry list of names and dates.

Prior to each exam, you will be provided with a list of five possible essay questions to study. Of those five, two will be on the exam, and you will select one question to write your essay on. You must bring a blank green/blue book to each exam.

Exams will not be cumulative, BUT the questions will be based on lecture, the textbook, and supplementary readings. You will not be able to succeed on the exam by only coming to class and not reading (or vice versa).

## WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

You will be required to write three essays over the supplemental readings. Each of these essays must be at least 1,000 words in length (but no more than 1,300 words), double-spaced, with standard 1-inch margins and 12-point font. Cite your sources in either footnotes or in-text citations. I will provide a prompt for each of the essays, so you will be using the supplementary readings to respond to a specific historical question. We will discuss these assignments and the citation guidelines in greater detail during class. **No internet sources are allowed for these assignments.**

There will be a Special Writing Laboratory on October 10. I have written professionally for 30 years and will spend a session with the students *after* the grading of the first writing assignment to teach writing strategies, use of language and style, and other topics based off the results of the first essays. The aim is to make the students better writers and promote improved content in future essays.

## QUIZES

There will be three quizzes covering the key topics since the last previous quiz. These will consist of fill-in-the-blank and short essay answers. Material will be drawn from the readings and lectures. The main purpose of the quizzes is to better prepare the student for the midterm and final exam.

## GRADING SCALE

Exams—400 points (midterm exam worth 200 points; final exam worth 200 points)

Written Essays: 300 points (3 essays worth 100 points each)

Quizzes: 150 Points (3 quizzes worth 50 points each)

Attendance & Participation: 150 points

## **TOTAL POINTS: 1000**

**A= 1000-900; B = 899-800; C =799-700; D = 699-600; F = 599 and below.**

## **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

**Attendance:** Class attendance is mandatory and is worth 15% of your overall course grade. You will not be able to succeed in this course if you habitually miss class. Please be punctual – do not arrive late, and do not leave early. If you know that you will be late or must leave early, please inform me ahead of time. **If you arrive more than 10 minutes late for class, you will be marked absent for the entire class period.**

**Extra Credit:** I do not offer extra credit.

**Blackboard:** This course has a Blackboard site, which is where your grades will be posted. Powerpoint slides and course announcements will also be posted to Blackboard. Additionally, I may choose to post informal discussion questions on blackboard to facilitate discussion on important topics. Responses will not be graded, but active participation will be considered when determining your participation grade. This is not a “gotcha” but I do want to encourage students to think about the topics, engage in discussion, and gain a deeper understanding of US history.

**Make-Up Exams:** Make-up exams are only allowed for emergencies such as debilitating illness, a death in the immediate family, and religious or school functions. In any case, you must provide documentation of your absence in order to be allowed a make-up exam.

**Late Paper Policy:** I do not accept late papers. All assignments must be turned in by the deadline.

**Classroom Etiquette:** Please be respectful in the classroom. Do not get up and leave early, turn your cell phone to silent mode, and do not hold personal conversations during lecture or discussion. Laptops may only be used to take notes.

**Communication:** E-mail me at any time regarding questions or concerns that you might have. I do my best to respond to email within one day. You may also schedule an appointment to speak with me via phone or zoom outside of regular office hours. All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university email accounts. You must have a Jaguar email account ready and working. If it is not working, contact the help desk at [sahelp@tamusa.edu](mailto:sahelp@tamusa.edu) or 210-784-4357.

**Statement on Artificial Intelligence:** All student work must be generated by the students themselves. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing or any other portion of an assignment for them. This includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments, as well as using artificial intelligence tools including but not limited to ChatGPT.

## Support Services & Disclosures

Academic Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 are federal anti-discrimination statutes that provide comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Title II of the ADAAA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require that students with disabilities be guaranteed equal access to the learning environment through the provision of reasonable and appropriate accommodation of their disability. If you have a diagnosed disability that may require an accommodation, please contact Disability Support Services (DSS) for the coordination of services. The phone number for DSS is (210) 784-1335 and email is [dsupport@tamusa.edu](mailto:dsupport@tamusa.edu).

Academic Learning Center: The Academic Learning Center provides free course-based tutoring to all currently enrolled students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. Students wishing to work with a tutor can make appointments through the Brainfuse online tutoring platform. Brainfuse can be accessed in the *Tools* section of Blackboard. You can contact the Academic Learning Center by emailing [tutoring@tamusa.edu](mailto:tutoring@tamusa.edu), calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center supports graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges as well as faculty and staff. Tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Our language tutors support students enrolled in Spanish courses and students composing in Spanish for any assignment. Our digital studio tutors support students working on digital projects such as eportfolios, class presentations, or other digital multimedia projects. Students can schedule appointments through JagWire under the Student Services tab. Click on “Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center” to make your appointment. The Center offers face-to-face, synchronous online, and asynchronous digital appointments. More information about what services we offer, how to make an appointment, and how to access your appointment can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/WLDCCenter>.

Counseling/Mental Health Resources: As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily functioning. If you are experiencing emotional difficulties or mental health concerns, support is available to you through the Student Counseling Center (SCC). To schedule an appointment call 210-784-1331 or visit Modular C, Room 166 (Rear entrance). **Crisis support is available 24/7 by calling the SCC at 210-784-1331 (after-hours select option ‘2’).** For more information and self-help resources, please visit [www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling](http://www.tamusa.edu/studentcounseling)

Financial Aid and Verification of Attendance: According to the following federal regulation, 34 CFR 668.21: U.S. Department of Education (DoE) Title IV regulation, a student can only receive Title IV funds based on Title IV eligibility criteria which include class attendance. If Title IV funds are disbursed to ineligible students (including students who fail to begin attendance), the institution must return these funds to the U.S. DoE within 30 days of becoming aware that the student will not or has not begun attendance. Faculty will provide the Office of Financial Aid with an electronic notification if a student has not attended the first week of class. Any student

receiving federal financial aid who does not attend the first week of class will have their aid terminated and returned to the DoE. Please note that any student who stops attending at any time during the semester may also need to return a portion of their federal aid.

The Six-Drop Rule: Students are subject to the requirements of Senate Bill (SB) 1231 passed by the Texas Legislature in 2007. SB 1231 limits students to a maximum of six (6) non-punitive course drops (i.e., courses a student chooses to drop) during their undergraduate careers. A non-punitive drop does not affect the student's GPA. However, course drops that exceed the maximum allowed by SB 1231 will be treated as "F" grades and will impact the student's GPA.

Academic Misconduct: Students are expected to exhibit a high level of honesty and integrity in their pursuit of higher education. Students engaging in an act that violates the standards of academic integrity will find themselves facing academic and/or disciplinary sanctions. Academic misconduct is any act, or attempt, which gives an unfair advantage to the student. Additionally, any behavior specifically prohibited by a faculty member in the course syllabus or class discussion may be considered as academic misconduct. For more information on academic misconduct policies and procedures please review the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

University policy prescribes serious consequences for acts of academic misconduct including, but not limited to, a grade of 'F' on the particular paper or assignment or a failing grade in the course. Also, a referral may be issued to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities where the sanctions can vary up to possible expulsion from the University. Considering the potential consequences of academic misconduct, it is obviously in students' best interests to avoid even the appearance of such behavior. If you are ever unclear whether a specific act might constitute academic misconduct, please contact your instructor for an assessment of the situation. All student term papers and other written assignments are subject to analysis by anti-plagiarism software.

The complete academic calendar is available online:

<https://www.tamusa.edu/academics/documents/ay-2025-calendar-09-19-2023.pdf>

## **WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

**September 12: Quiz 1**

**September 19: First Writing Assignment Due (Washington)**

**October 3: Quiz 2**

**October 10: Special Writing Laboratory**

**October 17: Second Writing Assignment Due (Ambrose)**

**October 24: Midterm Exam**

**November 14: Third Writing Assignment Due (Benavidez)**

**November 21: Quiz 3**

**December 7-13: Final Exam Week**

**Week 1: August 29**

Tuesday: (Virtual) Class Introduction

Thursday: Reconstruction

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 15**

**Week 2: September 5**

Tuesday: (Virtual) Capital and Labor

Thursday: The West

**READINGS: Textbook Chapters 16 and 17**

**Week 3: September 12**

Tuesday: (Virtual) Life in Industrial America

Thursday: American Empire; **Quiz 1**

**READINGS: Textbook Chapters 18 and 19**

**Week 4: September 19**

Tuesday: (Virtual) American Empire/Progressive Era

Thursday: Progressive Era **First Writing Assignment Due (Washington)**

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 20**

**Week 5: September 26**

Tuesday: (Virtual) World War I

Thursday: World War I and Its Aftermath

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 21**

**Week 6: October 3**

Tuesday: (Virtual) The New Era

Thursday: The Great Depression **Quiz 2**

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 22**

**Week 7: October 10**

Tuesday: (Virtual) The New Deal

Thursday: Special Writing Laboratory

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 23**

**Week 8: October 17**

Tuesday: (Virtual) World War II

Thursday: World War II; **Second Writing Assignment Due (Ambrose)**

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 24**

**Week 9: October 24**

Tuesday: (Virtual) Exam Review

Thursday: **Midterm Exam**

**Week 10: October 31**

Tuesday: (Virtual) The Affluent Society

Thursday: The Cold War, Part I

**READINGS: Textbook Chapters 25 and 26**

**Week 11: November 7**

Tuesday: (Virtual) The 1950s

Thursday: The 1960s

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 26**

**Week 12: November 14**

Tuesday: (Virtual) Vietnam War

Thursday: Vietnam War **Third Writing Assignment Due (Benavidez)**

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 27**

**Week 13: November 21**

Tuesday: The 1970s & Domestic Terrorism

Thursday: The Modern War on Terror **Quiz 3**

**READINGS: Textbook Chapter 28**

**Week 14: November 26**

Tuesday: (Virtual) Domestic Politics, 1980-Today

Thursday: No Class (Thanksgiving)

**READINGS: Textbook Chapters 29 and 30**

**Week 15: December 5**

Tuesday: (Virtual)

Thursday: No Classes (Reading Day)

**Week 16: December 7-13**

**Final Exam TBA**