

HIST 1301-016: United States History I

Monday & Wednesday, Fall 2026

Professor Contact Info.

Dr. Alexandria Castillo

Contact: alexandria.castillo@tamusa.edu

Office Hours: CAB 318A, (in person) Mon/Wed 11:00am-12:00pm
(via Zoom) by appointment

Course Description

Incorporating many perspectives, this course examines pre-Columbian societies, colonial America, the American Revolution, the early Republic, westward expansion, and the Civil War, among other topics. TSI Restriction(s): Reading and Writing

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

Required Texts

All assigned readings will be provided **on the Blackboard course page**.

(Optional text, listed as AY in weekly schedule)

Joseph L. Locke and Ben Wright. *The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook, Vol. 1: To 1877*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2019. (eBook available through the TAMU-SA Library)

Grades

Attendance and Class Participation.....	20%
In-Class Exam 1.....	15%
In-Class Exam 2.....	25%
Primary Source Document Share.....	10%
In-Class Exam 3.....	30%

Course Assignments

Attendance and Class Participation are required in this course. Some class time will be devoted to lecture, but one of the benefits of smaller classes is the opportunity for more one-on-one interactions between instructor and student and between students; therefore, time will be set aside each class for discussions of the material. The aim is to facilitate a collaborative learning environment where concepts and events can be openly discussed and placed within broader contexts. Discussions will focus on the week's lecture material and assigned readings.

Each *In-Class Exam* is meant to evaluate your ability to execute the techniques for primary source document analysis that we have practiced in-class. Each exam will require a hand-written response to a specific prompt and utilizing a provided primary source document. Exam 1 will be done in class on **Wednesday, Sept. 23** and focus on one of the readings/techniques from Weeks 2-4. Exam 2 will be done in class on **Wednesday, Oct. 21** and focus on one of the readings/techniques from Weeks 6-9. Exam 3 will be done in class on **Wednesday, Dec. 2** and focus on one of the readings/techniques from Weeks 10-14.

The *Primary Source Document Share* assignment is a chance to illustrate your mastery of one of the analysis techniques practiced during the semester utilizing a primary source document of your choice. Your primary source document must be related to North America, written before 1865, and cannot be the subject of an assigned reading. This assignment has both an online submission and an in-class component; you must complete both to receive credit for this assignment. First, post the full Chicago Style citation and your original analysis of one primary source document to the Discussion Board in Blackboard prior to the **Week 13's Wednesday class meeting**. Second, share your document, and related analysis, in class during our **Week 13's Wednesday class meeting**. (For more details, see Instructions in the Week 13 module in Blackboard.)

Late Submission Policy

This policy governs the submission of all assignments, exams, and papers for this course. Please read it carefully.

All assignments are due on the date and time specified in the course syllabus and/or on the learning management system (Blackboard). Timely submission is a fundamental professional expectation and a critical component of success in this course. To maintain fairness and ensure the timely progression of the course and grading, you are expected to plan your time accordingly and submit all work by the designated deadline.

Late assignment submissions will not be accepted and there will be no make-up exams or retest opportunities.

A late submission will **only** be considered in **rare, exceptional, and unavoidable circumstances** that are beyond the student's control. (Example: documented medical emergencies, bereavement, etc.) Technical issues (e.g., a computer crash, internet failure, or poor time management) are **not** considered rare or exceptional circumstances and will not warrant an extension.

Blackboard

Students access Blackboard through the [JagWire Portal](#). You will then use your Student User ID and network password to login. Once logged in, click on the Blackboard link. The course card will appear on your Dashboard. Blackboard is where you will access the syllabus, course readings, other relevant course materials, and course grades, so make sure to login to Blackboard early and often!

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory and will be taken each in-person class meeting. You are expected to arrive on-time. Documentation (doctor's notes, coaches' notes for athletic events, instructors' notes for school-related events, etc.) will be required for an absence to be considered an "excused absence." Mental attendance is also required. You cannot effectively participate if you are asleep, texting, listening to music, etc. Also, you must come to class prepared, specifically regarding the assigned readings. Assigned readings must be completed prior to class time (see the weekly reading schedule included below). If this becomes an issue, you will be marked absent and be ineligible for any class participation/attendance points for the day. The "Attendance and Class Participation" grade is the easiest way to get points in this course, do not waste this opportunity!

Academic Misconduct & Plagiarism

The written assignments will require you to work with primary and secondary sources, and you will need to specify where you're getting your information. **When in doubt, cite!** Turning in someone else's work/ideas as your own will not be tolerated and **will result in a zero** on that particular assignment, as well as a report to the Department Chair, Dean of the College, and the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. We will go over how to properly cite sources early in the course, but if you have any questions about how to cite your sources, please ask me! If you are unsure if your behavior is academically dishonest, ask! If you have any questions concerning the definition of "academic misconduct" at TAMU-SA, please review the Student Handbook: <https://www.tamusa.edu/studentengagementsuccess/documents/studenthandbook2021-2022.pdf>.

Also, as stated on Page 1 of the syllabus, writing and critical thinking are key learning outcomes of this course, therefore all written assignments should be prepared and created by you! Developing these skills is an important step in your professional development and vital for an

increasingly competitive workplace. HIST 1301 assumes that all work submitted by students will be generated by the students themselves, working individually or in groups. Students should not have another person/entity do the writing of any portion of an assignment for them, which includes hiring a person or a company to write assignments and/or using artificial intelligence (AI) tools like ChatGPT. **Use of any AI-generated content is not allowed in this course.**

Important Student Services

- The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The WLDCC offers a variety of free appointment-based support sessions to help you with your writing such as real-time online sessions, assignment reviews, and in-person tutoring. In-person sessions will be held in either CAB 208 or Classroom Hall 304. Make appointments either by email (WLDCC@tamusa.edu) or online via the Student Services tab in JagWire.
- The Office of Disability Support Services (DSS): If you have a documented disability or chronic illness that could impact your participation in this course, you are strongly encouraged to contact DSS to ensure you are provided the necessary accommodations. You can contact DSS by phone (210-784-1335), email (dss@tamusa.edu), or in-person (CAB Suite 210) to schedule an appointment.
- Student Counseling Center (SCC): This center provides free, confidential counseling services to enrolled students by trained and licensed staff. This includes individual therapy, group therapy, and/or utilization of the Virtual Relaxation Room, or a referral to a community provider. Walk-in appointments are accepted any time Monday – Friday, 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM (Modular C, Room 166). Call (210-784-1331) or email (stucounseling@tamusa.edu) to schedule an initial appointment.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1: Course Introduction & New World Expansion

Introductions, Syllabus, & Assignments

The Voyages of Christopher Columbus and Cultural Encounters

Reading(s): no assigned readings

Week 2: Spanish Conquest of Mexico

The Fernando Cortes Expedition

Fall of Tenochtitlán and the Mexica Empire

Reading(s): Bernal Díaz History of the Conquest, 1519-1520

Week 3: The English in the Chesapeake

NO CLASS MONDAY (Sept. 7)

English New World Colonization Attempts & The Struggles of Jamestown

Reading(s): no assigned readings

Week 4: The English in New England

Puritan Settlements in New England
Religious Rifts and Political Pressures

Reading(s): The Trial of Anne Hutchinson, 1637

Week 5: The Middle and Southern Colonies: Labor and Society

Early Colonial Competitions in North American Territory
The Origins of British American Slavery

Reading(s): no assigned readings

****In-Class Exam 1, Wednesday Sept. 23****

Week 6: North America in the Eighteenth Century

Economic Growth and Demographic Changes
“Enlightened” Ideas and Religious Revival

Reading(s): Jonathan Edwards’s Sermon excerpt, 1741 & Gilbert Tennent Sermon excerpt, 1740

Week 7: Competing for North America

European Expansion in North America
The French and Indian War and its Consequences

Reading(s): The Trial of Captain Thomas Preston, 1770

Week 8: The American Revolution

NO CLASS MONDAY (Oct. 12)

The Fight for Independence

Reading(s): AY Chapter 5 & Diary of a Revolutionary Army Physician, 1776

Week 9: Debating Democracy and the Limits of the American Revolution

Constitutional Debates and Dilemmas
Defining the United States and its Citizens

Reading(s): no assigned readings

****In-Class Exam 2, Wednesday Oct. 21****

Week 10: Domestic Challenges & International Intrigue under Thomas Jefferson

Jeffersonian Republicanism
The War of 1812

Reading(s): Thomas Jefferson’s Private and Public Indian Policy, 1803 & Excerpt from The Indian Prophet and His Doctrine, 1812

Week 11: Andrew Jackson and New Generation Politics

The Many Results of the Election of 1824
Jacksonian America

Reading(s): The Removal of the Cherokees, 1808-1836

Week 12: The Atlantic Slave Trade

African Experiences in the Atlantic Slave Trade
Slave Life in North America

Reading(s): Slaves Tell Their Own Story, 1800s

Week 13: The Consequences of the Market Revolution

Changing Economies and New Social Questions
The Second Great Awakening and the Quest for Social Reform

Reading(s): no assigned readings

****Primary Source Document Share Wednesday, due online and in-class****

Week 14: “Manifest Destiny” and Westward Expansion

New Territories, Old Problems: Prelude to the American Civil War
NO CLASS WEDNESDAY (Nov. 25)

Reading(s): no assigned readings

Week 15: A Union in Peril: The American Civil War

A Nation Divided: The South Secedes
Northern Advantages vs. Southern Strategies

Reading(s): no assigned readings

****In-Class Exam 3, Wednesday Dec. 2****

Final Exams Week (Dec. 5-11): NO FINAL EXAM