



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
SAN ANTONIO

Spring 2026

HIST 2322 World Civilizations II (23437)

Thursday 12:30 – 1:45 pm
Madla 224



Instructor: Professor Zhaojin Zeng

Office: Central Academic Building 313B

Office hours: TTH 10:45 – 12:15 or on Zoom by email appointment

Email: zzeng@tamusa.edu

Course Description and Goals

This course provides an introductory survey of world history from the era of the New World encounters around 1500 to the present global age. It highlights both broad historical patterns and localized experiences, encouraging students to approach world history as a framework for understanding the past while also pursuing their own interests in diverse forms of knowledge. Designed for undergraduates across all majors, the course offers essential background for understanding globalization today, while also revealing the different rhythms of change: the rapid transformations brought about by technology, migration, and exchange, as well as the slower evolution of social and cultural values.

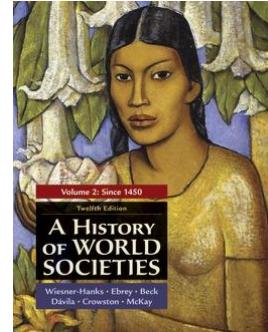
For History majors, this course serves as a foundation for more advanced study in interactive and interdisciplinary approaches to the past. For those considering careers in teaching or research, it provides preparation for the world-history curriculum increasingly emphasized in secondary schools and colleges. Beyond the field of history, the course also supports students preparing for

graduate study in law, business, public policy, international relations, and other humanities and social science disciplines.

Course Texts and Resources

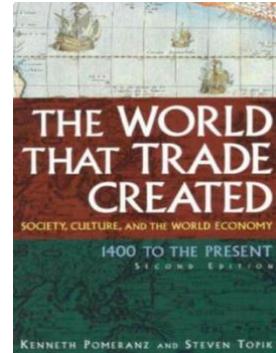
1. Required Textbook:

- Wiesner-Hanks, et al. *A History of World Societies, Volume 2 (Twelfth Edition)*, Bedford/Saint Martin's, 2020.
- Paperback ISBN: 9781319302467
- Value editions and earlier editions are also acceptable.



2. Supplemental Materials:

- Kenneth Pomeranz and Steven Topik, *The World that Trade Created: Society, Culture, and the World Economy, 1400 to the Present*. New York: Routledge, 2018. [Recommended but not required to buy; selections used as optional readings]
- Some selected journal articles, newspaper reports, and book chapters are available in electronic format on Blackboard.



3. Additional Digital Resources

- **World History for Us All (UCLA)** – A comprehensive, standards-based model curriculum for teaching world history from a global perspective.
<https://whfua.history.ucla.edu>
- **History World** – Interactive timelines, narratives, and quizzes covering a wide range of world history topics.
<https://www.historyworld.net>
- **World History Commons** – A curated collection of teaching resources, primary sources, and scholarly materials for world history.
<https://worldhistorycommons.org>
- **World Digital Library** (Library of Congress & UNESCO) – Rare books, maps, manuscripts, and photographs from around the globe.
<https://www.wdl.org>
- **Our World in Data** – Global data visualizations on long-term historical trends such as population, technology, health, and environment.
<https://ourworldindata.org>

Course Assignments & Grading

1. Attendance (10%): Students are required to attend all class meetings. Attendance for each class meeting is taken on a credit/non-credit basis in the formats of sign-up sheets, pop quizzes, and exit notes, among others. There is no make-up for missed attendance. Each absence results in a one-point deduction in your final grade. Exceptions can only be made with a doctor's note or other legitimate documentation for extreme conditions/causes.

2. Class Participation (10%): Students are required to fully engage in the class by asking and responding to questions, actively participating in discussions, carrying out group work, and performing other required class activities. The grade is based on the instructor's subjective, but very fair, evaluation of student involvement in class activities during the entire period of the course.

3. Primary Source Analysis Essay (20%): An essay of 3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman, standard margins, analyzing a piece of historical primary sources, which could be historical photographs, paintings, archives, documents, and video or audio recordings.

4. Two In-Class Exams (30% each, 60% total): In-class exam that contains identifications, multiple choices, short-answer questions, and other forms of questions. No make-up exams will be offered unless a legitimate and reasonable request, such as a medical emergence, is made BEFORE the exam. One exam will be held in the middle of the semester, and the other at the end of the semester. *Study guides* will be distributed beforehand to facilitate your exam preparation.

*** Extra Credit Opportunities** (2 additional points towards final grade): In order to incentivize student participation in talks, lectures, or other extracurricular events on campus or in the city of San Antonio, one extra point, for each event you attend, will be given toward your final grade. Two points/events maximum for each student. Prior to attending the events, students need to consult by email and seek written approval from the professor. Upon returning from the extracurricular event, students will submit on Blackboard a 250-word report that briefly summarizes the event and shares your experience and thoughts.

*** Final Grade Scale:**

A = 90 to 102, B = 80 to 89, C = 70 to 79, D = 60 to 69, F = 0 to 59.

*Straight letter grades only, no plus or minus (+/-).

Course Policies

Academic Accommodations for Individuals with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-San Antonio is committed to providing all students with reasonable access to learning opportunities and accommodations in accordance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, Disability Support Services is located in the Central Academic Building, Suite 210. You can also contact us via phone at (210) 784-1335, visit us <https://www.tamusa.edu/DisabilitySupport-Services/index.html> or email us at dss@tamusa.edu. Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory, physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Support Services as soon as possible.

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.

Financial Aid & 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 includes 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 his/her 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 his/her federal aid.

Academic Integrity Policy: Students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic Dishonesty for which a student is subject to penalty includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submissions, misrepresentation of academic records, facilitating academic dishonesty, unfair advantage, and ethical misconduct. This includes holding other students to the same standards and reporting any incidents of alleged violation of the honesty policy to the instructor involved or, if necessary, to the appropriate academic department head. All students are responsible for being familiar with the Academic Dishonesty Policy, which may be found in the Texas A&M University-San Antonio Student Handbook.

Student Misconduct: Appropriate conduct is essential to the effective functioning of the University. University policy defines unacceptable conduct, both academic and non-academic

misconduct, and penalties for such behavior in The Student Handbook and 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.

Course Writing Policy: All assignments should be crafted originally and directly by students. In the meantime, all information/materials, created by others and then used in students' work, should be given credit to in the appropriate citation styles. Note that writing first in a language other than English and then having it translated into English via digital tools is prohibited.

AI Policy: Per University requirements, this course specifies the following rules regarding the use of generative AI tools, including but not limited to, GhatGPT, Google Gemini, Grok, Deepseek, etc. 1) Students should create original work for this course, and the use of AI can only be allowed when it serves as a *supplemental* tool for writing improvement, material/data locating, and other non-essential research processes. 2) AI-generated contents, as well as writings and sources created by others, should always be properly cited and acknowledged in your work; otherwise it is considered as plagiarism and violation of academic integrity. 3) If students do use AI tools in any process of their coursework, students must provide a detailed statement on how AI tools informed their research and writing process and the final product, including how you validated any AI-generated contents; this statement does not contribute to the word count of your assignments and does not automatically justify your use of AI tools. 4) The instructor reserves the right to request further information or reassign the assignment in the case of lack of transparency in the use of AI-generated contents in your work.

Submission Policy. Students need to follow the course instructions to submit all completed assignments, on time, to the correct places, online, in print, or in class, etc. *Submissions late for the first hour will be penalized for 5% deduction in grade and for 20% deduction if late between the 2nd hour and one day. Late assignments will NOT be accepted if submitted beyond 24 hours past the due time.*

Grading. Students wishing a reconsideration of their grades may consult the professor, and requests must be made by email within THREE days of the posting of the grades. In the case of regrading, assignments will be graded afresh. Grades may go up or down. Students should immediately inform the professor of any discrepancies between grades recorded on the course website and the grades they have received on assignments.

Digital Device Policy or “No Screens” Policy. On-screen distractions in class have become a besetting problem, frustrating other students and faculty alike. This course thus simply complies with the History Department’s “no screens” policy: *laptops or cellphones are NOT allowed to use during the class and must be stowed in your bags.* Students will be notified in advance if laptops will be needed during a particular session for a group activity, or to consult readings they may not have printed out.

Communication Policy. **In-Class Communication:** The physical or virtual classroom in this course also serves as an intellectual space for open and free academic conversations between class participants, which consist of the instructor and registered students. Visitors and audit/outside students can be allowed only if the instructor grants approval in advance. Recording, and spread to outside outlets of, class conversations in any way is strictly prohibited unless there is written permission from the instructor. **Email Communication:** E-mail me directly any questions or concerns that you might have in relation to your coursework. **Please do NOT use the “send message” function on the Blackboard platform.** All correspondence between professors and students must occur via university official 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 or 210-784-4357

Etiquette. Please arrive on time. Please do not come and go during the class period. If you are unavoidably late, as a courtesy to the class, please enter quietly so as not to interfere with the concentration of other students.

Student Support and Resources

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, calling (210) 784-1307, or visiting the Central Academic Building, room 202.

The Writing, Language, and Digital Composing Center: The center provides writing assistance to graduate and undergraduate students in all three colleges at Texas A&M-San Antonio. Writing tutors work with students to develop reading skills, prepare oral presentations, and plan, draft, and revise their written assignments. Students can make individual or group appointments with a writing tutor. Email writingcenter@tamusa.edu to make an appointment.

TAMUSA Library: Librarians from the Archives & Special Collections offer one on one research assistance by appointment for history students. Topics include brainstorming a topic,

search techniques, or even citation help. Feel free to make an appointment with the librarian via the link: <https://tamus.libcal.com/appointments?u=30503>

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 (January 22) World History as An Analytical Approach

Review: The syllabus is posted on Blackboard

Watch: David Christian's Ted Talk "[The history of our world in 18 minutes](#)"

Week 2 (January 29) The Acceleration of Global Contact, 1450-1600

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapter 16.

Optional: 1) David Christian, "World Environmental History" from *Oxford Handbook of World History*. 2) "Pearls in the Rubble: Rediscovering the Golden Age of Quanzhou, ca. 1000–1400" in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 3 (February 5) European Power Expansion and the Old Worlds, 1300-1750

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapters 17-18 (quickly browse ch.17)

Optional: 1) "hydraulic states/civilizations" <https://www.britannica.com/topic/hydraulic-civilization> 2) "When Asia Was the World Economy" in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 4 (February 12) New Worldviews and Ways of Life, 1540-1790

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapters 19-20 (quickly browse ch.20)

Optional: 1) "Empire on a Shoestring: British Adventurers and Indian Financiers in Calcutta, 1750–1850" in *The World That Trade Created*, 2) "Deals and Ordeals: World Trade and Early Modern Legal Culture" in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 5 (February 19) Revolutions in the Atlantic World, 1775-1825

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapters 21-22 (quickly browse ch.21)

Optional: "How the Other Half Traded" in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 6 (February 26) The Industrial Revolution, 1760-1850

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapter 23

Optional: "How Opium Made the World Go 'Round" in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 7 (March 5) Exam I: taken in-class, closed book

Optional: Sven Beckert's talk "[Empire of Cotton: Global Origins of Modern Capitalism](#)"

Week 8 - March 9 - 13: Spring Break – No Classes

Week 9 (March 19) Ideologies of Change in Europe, 1815-1914

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapter 24

Optional: “Sweet Industry: The First Factories” & “Why We Work So Hard: The Industrious Revolution and the Early Modern World” in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 10 (March 26) Africa, the Ottoman Empire, and the New Imperialism, 1800-1914

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapter 25

Optional: “Clubs, Casinos, and Collapses: Sovereign Debt and Risk Management Since 1820” in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 11 (April 2) Asia and the Pacific in the Era of Imperialism, 1800-1914

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapter 26

Optional: “From Court Bankers to Architects of the Modern World Market: The Rothschilds” in *The World That Trade Created*

Friday, April 3, 11:59:59 pm: Assignment - Primary Source Analysis - due on Blackboard

Week 12 (April 9) The Americas in the Age of Liberalism, 1810-1917

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapter 27

Optional: “Sideways Breakthroughs and Stalled Transitions: Crooked Paths from Coal to Oil, 1859–2012” in *The World That Trade Created*

Week 13 (April 16) The Great World War and Revolution, 1914-1929

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapter 28

Optional: Watch Odd Arne Westad’s talk “[The Cold War: A New History](#)”

Week 14 (April 23) The Great Depression and World War II, 1929-1945

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapters 29-30 (quickly browse chapter 29)

Watch: BBC Documentary: [History of the World in Two Hours](#)

Week 15 (April 30) Decolonization, Revolution, and the Cold War, 1945-1991

Reading: *A History of World Societies*, Chapters 31-32.

Optional: 1) “Epilogue: The World Economy in the Twenty-First Century” in *The World That Trade Created* 2) PBS Documentary [Trump’s Trade War](#) (2019)

Week 16 Exam II: Thursday, May 7, 10:00 – 11:50 am