Syllabus for HIST 1301E – America, 1492-1877

Textbook:

Course Overview:
This class covers the history this country from the beginning of colonization to 1877 and is intended for freshmen. You will not have to memorize names and dates. Instead, you will be learning about why this country is the way it is and how this affects you. We will be looking at change over time: what caused the change, what effects those changes had on people, and how individuals made a difference. We will also be looking at continuity – what things stayed the same. We will be looking for connections between the events we study and between them and events today. These are the three Cs of history: Change, Continuity, and Connection.

The discipline of history is about investigating events in their context and explaining them in a way that makes sense to us today, to help us understand out own lives better. Think about your own, personal history. What choices have you made that created the person you are today? How did you get here? Those are the same questions we will be looking at in this class, but we will be looking at our country as well as ourselves.

This class is not so much about attaining factual knowledge as it is about thinking about facts: which facts are important, which ones matter to you, and how to communicate your ideas about the facts to others. We will be doing critical thinking exercises in each Chapter. We will also practice communicating. These skills will help you throughout college and in your career.

Another goal is for you to learn that there is more than one way to look at things, and even more than one correct way. In our discussions and your writing assignments, there will be no one correct answer. Instead, you will need to understand all of the material to draw your own conclusions. You will learn to use evidence from the documents to make a strong argument for those conclusions. We will be learning to see bias in others and in ourselves. We will work on being able to see what is relevant and what is not, so you only spend time with relevant material when preparing for your exams. All of these exercises will help you think more like a college student than like a high school student, and you will do better in your other classes. Remember, there is no one right answer to be found in any book (or webpage).

Since this is a compressed class and we must cover the same material as in a regular semester-length class, plan to spend most of your time reading and writing. For an in-class intersession class, you would be in class for four hours each day and spend about the same amount of time reading and doing assignments. You will need to spend the same amount of time for this online class, or even more if you read or write slowly. This class requires eight hours of work a day, the same as a full-time job. Please schedule your time so you are able to complete the work. Otherwise, you will probably not be able to make as high a grade as you want.

All Chapters, even the exams, are open at the beginning of class so you can work ahead if you wish.

Course Description:
This class is five weeks long. There are eighteen chapters plus a final exam, so we will be covering three or four chapters each week. You will be reading and writing more than you are probably used to. This will take quite a bit of time, so you should not also be taking other classes that
require a lot of reading and writing, or working more than twenty hours a week, if you wish to do well here.

On the first day of class, do the Syllabus assignment so you know what to expect in this class, then read Chapter One on the textbook website. It is much shorter than a regular textbook chapter would be. Post your initial Discussion then start taking the quiz. Work on your Writing Assignment and turn it in before the due date. Check the Discussion forum a couple of times in the afternoon and write responses commenting on your group’s posts until the due date.

For the next chapter, read the next Chapter online and take the next quiz until you make the score you want. Post your initial Discussion post before the due date, comment on others as you work on your Writing Assignment. Turn in your Writing Assignment and your responses before the due date. Repeat this for the rest of the class. On the weekends, you can work ahead. Everything is open from the beginning of class so you can work on the questions over time.

Assessment:

There are eighteen chapters. For each chapter you will have a multiple choice quiz and a discussion. For twelve of the chapters you will also have a writing assignment. (On days when we have two chapters due, you will not have a writing assignment, just the quiz and discussion for each chapter.)

The Discussion is worth twenty points, the Quiz is worth ten points, and the Writing Assignment is worth thirty points. You will have a comprehensive final exam worth 200 points. You will have a syllabus assignment due the first day of class that is worth up to 20 points of extra credit. This adds up to 1000 possible points.

Grading Policy:

**A (900-1000 points) Greatly Exceeds Standards**
- All minimum requirements of assignment met and exceeded
- All criteria of the assignment are met and exceeded
- Writing shows analytical skill as well as factual knowledge
- Few or no technical errors (grammar, punctuation, spelling)
- Clear writing style

**B (800-899 points) Exceeds Standards**
- Minimum requirements of assignment met
- The topic is presented with details and specific examples
- The paper shows a good command of facts
- The writing is easy to read, ideas are clear and easy to follow
- Five or fewer technical errors
- Good writing style

**C (700-799 points) Meets Standards – this grade indicates average work for a college freshman**
- Paper meets most requirements of assignment
- Topic is unclear, no purpose to writing
- No or few specific examples used or used incorrectly
- Some factual errors
- More than five technical errors
- Poor writing style

**D (600-699 points) Does Not Meet All Standards**
- Paper lacks several requirement of assignment
- No reference to topic or reference so unclear as to be meaningless
- Writing very general, no examples given as evidence
- No thought apparent
• Poor organization, several technical errors
• Repeated factual errors
• Writing difficult to understand

F (Below 60 percent) Not College Level Work
• Paper does not meet requirements
• Superficial, general references
• Many technical errors
• Many factual errors
• Poor writing style

Learning Objectives:
• Understanding of course material, ability to analyze and evaluate information.
• Ability to synthesize information to create arguments and inquiry.
• Ability to communicate effectively in written forms.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified the following educational objectives for all core curriculum classes in the social sciences:

• To employ the appropriate methods, technologies, and data that social scientists use to investigate the human condition.
• To examine social institutions and processes across a range of historical periods, social structures, and cultures.
• To use and critique alternative explanatory systems or theories.
• To analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the area under study.
• To comprehend the origins and evolution of U.S. political systems, with a focus on the growth of political institutions, the constitution of the U.S., federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.
• To understand the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the world.
• To differentiate and analyze historical evidence (documentary and statistical) and differing points of view.
• To recognize and apply reasonable criteria for the acceptability of historical evidence and social research.
• To recognize and assume one’s responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy.
• To identify and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.

Each chapter also has its own learning objectives.

INSTRUCTIONS

Quizzes:
The quizzes are multiple choice. You will have ten minutes to take each quiz. You may take each quiz as many times as you want and your highest score will count. Each quiz is worth ten points.

Discussion:
There are Focus Questions in a box at the beginning of each chapter. Answer each of these questions in one grammatically correct paragraph. Number your answers so it is easy to tell which
question you are answering. Save all of your answers in one file as .doc or .rtf and submit in the correct Discussion Forum before the due date.

Once you have given your answers, you will be able to see what others have written. Comment on at least two other people's answers. Respond to any comments on your answers. Your initial post is worth ten points and must be posted before the due date to earn points. Your responses to other people’s posts are worth ten points and must be posted before the Chapter closes. All this adds up to your Discussion grade for this Chapter.

You will be graded on how well you understood the material and how well you communicated your ideas. Usually, the longer and more detailed your answers are, the more points you can earn. A simple agreement or other response that does not engage the material will not earn any points. Getting into a real conversation about an issue can earn the most points. Use specific examples but do not quote. Use your own words at all times.

Writing Assignments:

Your writing assignments will come from the documents that are linked on the appropriate pages. You will read the document, write a short essay on it, and submit the essay through the link on that page. The essays will be graded according to the rubric on the Instructions page.

You will be graded on how well you understood the material and how well you communicated your ideas. Usually, the more detailed your answers are, and the higher level of critical thinking shown, the more points you can earn.

Final Exam:

The final exam will be essay questions drawn from the Focus Questions in the Chapters. (Your Discussions should help you make better grades on these questions.) You will submit your answers (saved as one file) in a Turn It In drop box. (This will make it clear if you copied any material from any website or other published material, so do your own work!)

Your answers to each question will take the form of a grammatically correct essay, with an introductory paragraph, several paragraphs proving your points, and a conclusion. Each paragraph will have a topic/thesis sentence and contain supporting evidence to show that your topic/thesis is correct. The more you use specific examples from the Chapters, the better your grade can be. You will be evaluated on how well you proved your argument and how well you communicated your ideas. You are strongly urged not to wait until the last minute to try to write out these answers. An A exam will be several pages in length.

By university policy there can be no make-ups for the final exam.

Extra Credit:

For each Chapter, you can post a status update or comment on someone else’s status update, just as you would on Facebook. This is worth up to three points. You will pretend that you are a person from the time period we are learning about in that Chapter. Be specific. Include who, what, where, when, and how and use this to show that you understand what it was like to live during that time.

Example: Pocahontas – My father wants me to marry John Rolfe to ensure those strange new people become true allies. I am not sure I want to marry a man who is different from us. Those people have strange ideas about what women are supposed to do.

Comment: Your father is wise. If we do not make a strong alliance, they will keep attacking us. Only a marriage will make them kin to us. I do not envy you, but I do encourage you to take this step for the betterment of all your people.

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Acceptable Student Behavior:

Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (Code of Student Life). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. Inappropriate behavior may result in disciplinary action or referral to the University’s Behavioral Intervention Team. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Disability Statement:

West Texas A & M University seeks to provide reasonable accommodations for all qualified persons with disabilities. This University will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to register with the Disability Support Services and to contact the faculty member in a timely fashion to arrange for suitable accommodations.

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Scholastic Dishonesty:

Simply, if you cheat and get caught, you fail this class. No exceptions. Know the rules. Here is the legal language. It is the responsibility of students and instructors to help maintain scholastic integrity at the University by refusing to participate in or tolerate scholastic dishonesty. Commission of any of the following acts shall constitute scholastic dishonesty. This listing is not exclusive of any other acts that may reasonably be said to constitute scholastic dishonesty: acquiring or providing information for any assigned work or examination from any unauthorized source; informing any person or persons of the contents of any examination prior to the time the examination is given in subsequent sections of the course or as a makeup; plagiarism; submission of a paper or project that is substantially the same for two courses unless expressly authorized by the instructor to do so. (2000-2001, CODE OF STUDENT LIFE, Rules and Procedures for Students, West Texas A&M University).

A complete statement regarding scholastic dishonesty can be found in Appendix I of the Student Code of Life at http://www.wtamu.edu/webres/File/Student%20Life/WEB2010-2011CodeOL.pdf.

Any violation of the rules above will result in a failing grade for this class and possible further disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from WTAMU. Students should be aware that Dr. Stuntz is highly trained in detecting cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic misconduct. DO NOT CHEAT!

Attendance Policy:

Students who miss class work for reasons of official University business will be given the opportunity to make up the missed work without penalty. However, students and/or the sponsor/coach of the official University activity must inform individual instructors prior to absence and the work must be made up on the day the student returns to campus.

Students who miss assignments due to illness or emergency should contact the Office of Student Affairs for assistance. Upon receipt of the documentation detailing the illness or emergency, Student Affairs will contact individual instructors, in writing, explaining the nature of the absence and
requesting consideration in making up missed work without penalty. It will be the student's responsibility to follow-up with the individual instructor on missed work. Documents may be sent to Student Services at WTAMU Box 60775, Canyon, Texas 79016 or faxed to (806) 651-2926. Call (806) 651-2050 for more information.

Class Schedule and Due Dates
The initial discussion post and the exams are due before noon, the other assignments are due before midnight, Central time. You may turn in any assignment early.

Week One:
**Monday:** Classes begin. Start reading chapter one.
**Wednesday:** Syllabus assignment and initial post for chapter one due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight
**Friday:** Initial post for chapters two and three due before noon, quiz, responses due by midnight, no writing assignment

Week Two:
**Monday:** Initial post for chapter four due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight
**Wednesday:** Initial post for chapter five due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight
**Friday:** Initial post for chapter six due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight

Week Three:
**Monday:** Initial post for chapter seven due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight
**Wednesday:** Initial post for chapters eight and nine due before noon, quiz, responses due by midnight
**Friday:** Initial post for chapter ten due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight

Week Four:
**Monday:** Initial post for chapters eleven and twelve due before noon, quiz, responses due by midnight, no writing assignment
**Wednesday:** Initial post for chapter thirteen due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight
**Friday:** Initial post for chapters fourteen and fifteen due before noon, quiz, responses due by midnight, no writing assignment

Week Five:
**Monday:** Initial post for chapters sixteen and seventeen due before noon, quiz, responses due by midnight, no writing assignment
**Wednesday:** Initial post for chapter eighteen due before noon, quiz, responses and writing assignment due by midnight
**Friday:** Final Exam Due **before noon**

Critical Thinking Skills:
To help you understand the levels of critical thinking you will be using in this class, here is one version of Bloom’s taxonomy showing the levels of thinking.

- **Remembering**: Retrieving, recognizing, and recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory.
- **Understanding**: Constructing meaning from oral, written, and graphic messages through interpreting, exemplifying, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining.
- **Applying**: Carrying out or using a procedure through executing, or implementing.
- **Analyzing**: Breaking material into constituent parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure or purpose through differentiating, organizing, and attributing.
- **Evaluating**: Making judgments based on criteria and standards through checking and critiquing.
- **Creating**: Putting elements together to form a coherent or functional whole; reorganizing elements into a new pattern or structure through generating, planning, or producing. (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001, pp. 67-68)

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**Remember**: Describe where Goldilocks lived.
**Understand**: Summarize what the Goldilocks story was about.
**Apply**: Construct a theory as to why Goldilocks went into the house.
**Analyze**: Differentiate between how Goldilocks reacted and how you would react in each story event.
**Evaluate**: Assess whether or not you think this really happened to Goldilocks.
**Create**: Compose a song, skit, poem, or rap to convey the Goldilocks story in a new form.


In this class you are assumed to be able to remember what you read. You be asked to understand the information so you can apply it, analyze it, evaluate it, and create your own material from it. Simply moving information from one place to another is not college-level work and will not earn any points. If you copy from the textbook (or anywhere else) for your assignments, you will fail. You need to use these critical thinking skills to pass the class. College is about thinking and learning, not copying.

**Registers of Language**

- **Frozen**—Language that does not change. Examples: Lord's Prayer; Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag
- **Formal**—Complete sentences and specific word usage. This is the standard for work, school, and business. This is the language register we will be using in this class. Your textbook is written in the formal register.
- **Consultative**—Formal register used in conversation
• Casual--Language used in conversation with friends. Word choice is general, and conversation is dependent upon non-verbal assists.
• Intimate--Language between lovers (and twins). This is also the language of sexual harassment.

This list is adapted from a list in the book A Framework for Understanding and Working with Students and Adults from Poverty (Copyright, 1995, Ruby K. Payne, RFT Publishing)

Professor Information:
Dr. Jean A. Stuntz can be reached through the course mail or by using the AskDrStuntz forum. She will answer all emails and questions from 9:00 am to noon Monday through Thursday. She will sometimes be able to check email on the weekends but will certainly get a response back to you by Monday morning.