

HIST 1302.003: United States History II

University of Texas at Tyler

TR: 11:00-12:20; CAS 257

Fall 2023

Instructor: Prof. [Matt Stith](#)
Email: mstith@uttyler.edu
Office: CAS 127
Office Hours: Monday, 1:00-4:00pm; Or by appointment.

Course Description:

This course will explore United States history from the end of the Civil War to the 21st century. We will examine social, political, environmental, cultural, and military history and how each together shaped the course of American history.

Content Objectives/Instructional Goals:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a strong understanding of the development of the United States in both a domestic and global context.
2. Develop analytical skills through thinking deeply, reading actively, and writing carefully about American history.
3. Gain a strong sense of scholarly skepticism by balancing everything with hefty amounts of context and perspective; Or embrace the certainty that very little is certain and that everything is and ought to be open to (careful and thoughtful) examination and interpretation.
4. Appreciate and understand that accurate interpretations (see above) can *only* rest on ample and sturdy evidence.

Important Note:

I encourage you to meet with me regularly to discuss or clarify lecture, discussion, or reading—or to talk about American history in general. My job (and satisfaction) is as much to work with students on an individual basis as it is to lecture and facilitate discussion. Please keep this in mind throughout the semester. The best way to meet is after class, during office hours, or by appointment, but always feel free to also send me an e-mail. I will try to get back to you within 24 hours.

Another Important Note:

When you finish this course, my goal is for you to have a strong understanding of the major themes, characters, and connections in the story of America, and I hope you will recognize how enormously impactful this period has been (and remains) in our world today—politically, militarily, environmentally, diplomatically, socially, culturally, and so on. To fully understand and appreciate any story, it is imperative that you know-well the characters and events *in* that story. So, you must commit to memory a lot of material (characters and events) for this class. What class/subject does not require that you remember things? This said, I recognize and appreciate that specific names, events, etc., fade in time. (They fade for me, too.) That's okay. This stuff is the scaffolding. Like scaffolding for any structure, real or perceived, it is critically important early on, but it is not meant to stay forever—just long enough such that the finished product emerges in all its glory and remains for the ages. Simply put, the finished product for this course is your general understanding and appreciation for the American past—an understanding and appreciation that I hope will remain long after the details fade.

Required Reading:

- **Textbook:** Joseph Locke and Ben Wright, *American Yawp*, Vol. 2 (Stanford University Press, 2019)
 - o Free Open Education Resource—Full PDF Available in Canvas or at:
 - (Read Chapter 15 ONLY): https://www.americanyawp.com/text/wp-content/uploads/Locke_American-Yawp_V1.pdf
 - (Volume 2): https://www.americanyawp.com/text/wp-content/uploads/Locke_American-Yawp_V2.pdf
- **Primary Sources:** Interviews with Marvin Mathiak and Gonzalo Baltazar, The Vietnam Center & Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive, Texas Tech University.
 - o Free at <https://www.vietnam.ttu.edu>. Full-Text available on Canvas.

Exams:

There will be three exams. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions. Each question is worth two points for a total of 100. You will receive a study guide at least one week prior to each exam. Exams are *not* cumulative/comprehensive. See schedule below for dates.

Essay:

Using ONLY the books by Sledge and Caputo, carefully craft a 4-6 page, double-spaced essay in which you develop a strong and clear thesis supported by material from both books. You can write about any theme or idea that most intrigues you—from soldier experience in combat to the natural environment, etc. Detailed instructions will be distributed early in the semester. The assignment is worth 100 points. See schedule below for the due date.

Point Breakdown:

Exam I:	100 pts
Exam II:	100 pts
Exam III:	100 pts
<u>Essay (Final)</u>	<u>100 pts</u>
Total:	400 pts

Grade Scale:

400-360pts = A
359-320pts = B
319-280pts = C
279-240pts = D
239-000pts = F

Classroom Conduct:

Be nice. This is college.

Attendance and Participation:

Regular attendance is expected. It is exceedingly difficult to do well in this class without showing up to class.

Make-up Policy:

I will work with you on an individual basis regarding any missed exams, assignments, or other compromised deadlines.

Academic Honesty [*IMPORTANT***]**

Cheating of *any* kind, including plagiarism *and* any AI/ChatGPT, will result in immediate failure of the class and possibly further actions from the University of Texas at Tyler. Plagiarism, put simply, is using another's work as your own without proper citation or usage. This includes everything from copying and pasting from the Internet to failing to cite an idea from another source that you put in your own words. Please carefully read the university policy for cheating and academic dishonesty at the following website: <http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php>

Schedule/Topic Outline:

PART 1: From Reconstruction to the Spanish American War, 1865-1900

- Reading: Locke and Wright, *American Yawp*, Chaps. 15-19
- **Exam I:** Thursday, September 22

PART 2: From 1900 to the Great Depression, 1900-1940

- Reading: Locke and Wright, *American Yawp*, Chaps. 20-23
- **Exam II:** Thursday, October 26

PART 3: From the Second World War to the Modern Era, 1941-2000s

- Reading: Locke and Wright, *American Yawp*, Chaps. 24-30
- **Exam III:** Thursday, November 30

FINAL: **Vietnam War Essay** (Upload on Canvas by 11:59pm on Thursday, December 7)