

HIST 1301.060: United States History I (Online)

University of Texas at Tyler

Fall 2025

Instructor: Prof. [Matt Stith](#)
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Office Hours: Tuesday: 3:30-5:30; Thursday: 12:30-1:30; Or by appointment

Course Description:

We will explore American history from human origins in North America (~14,000 BCE) to the end of Reconstruction (1877). In doing so, we will examine social, political, environmental, cultural, diplomatic, and military history and how each together shaped the course of American history.

Content Objectives:

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.
4. Appreciate and understand that accurate interpretations 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.

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 early 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. 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 early American past—an understanding and appreciation that I hope will remain long after the details fade.

Required Reading:

- Joseph L. Locke and Ben Wright, *The American Yawp*, Vol. I (Stanford University Press, 2019)
 - o **FREE** at https://www.americanyawp.com/text/wp-content/uploads/Locke_American-Yawp_V1.pdf and on Canvas
- Vicki Betts and Randal B. Gilbert, eds., “Personal Experiences of Lindsey Zollars During the Civil War,” *Chronicles of Smith County, Texas* 51 (2021): 29-38.

Quizzes:

There will be 10 quizzes, each consisting of ten multiple-choice, true/false, or matching questions over the reading and notes for each module. Each quiz is worth 10 points. Quizzes are designed to help familiarize you with at least some of the important material that will appear on the exams. You will have TWO chances to take each quiz, and the highest score will be recorded. All quizzes will be **posted by 10:00am on Wednesday mornings** and will be **due by 11:59pm on Friday nights**. See the below schedule for specific due dates.

Exams:

There will be THREE exams. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice questions (worth two points each) for a total 100. Exams are not cumulative. I will open the exams by 10am on Friday morning, and you will have until 11:59pm on each Sunday night to finish. Once you begin the test, you will have exactly 55 minutes to finish. See schedule below for specific dates. I will post a study guide a week before each exam.

Civil War Essay:

Using ONLY the Lindsey Zollars piece available on Canvas, craft a 1,200+ word, double-spaced essay in which you develop a strong thesis supported by material from the article. You can write about any theme or idea that most intrigues you. Detailed instructions will be distributed early in the semester. The assignment is worth 100 points. See schedule below for the due date. Cheating of any kind, including the use of any AI, will result in failure both on the assignment and the class. See below.

Point Breakdown:

Quizzes: (10 x 10 pts)	100 pts
Exam I:	100 pts
Exam II:	100 pts
Exam III:	100 pts
<u>Civil War Essay:</u>	<u>100 pts</u>
Total:	500 pts

Grade Scale:

450-500 = A
400-449 = B
350-399 = C
300-349 = D
000-299 = F

Online Classroom Conduct/Decorum:

Practice decorum and decency in all discussion posts and communication with fellow students and the instructor.

Make-up Policy:

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

Academic Honesty [*IMPORTANT***]**

Cheating of any kind, including plagiarism or the use of AI, will result in immediate failure of the class and possibly further disciplinary measures 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. I strongly recommend reviewing the university policy for cheating and academic dishonesty at the following website: <http://www.uttyler.edu/judicialaffairs/scholasticdishonesty.php>. AI is not permitted in this course. All work students submit for this course should be their own. Using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process is expressly forbidden. Deviations from these guidelines will be considered a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values.

Grade Grubbing:

Except for legal university accommodations, there will be no special circumstances offered to any *individual* student with respect to increasing their grade (such as extra work, bonus opportunities, or similar requests) beyond what is offered to the *entire* class. This is especially important to remember at the end of the semester. The best way to make the grade you want to make is to do your very best on the work required throughout the semester and to ask for honest help on assignments—not bonus points or favors after all assignments are finished. It is bad practice and unethical to request that professors offer you something that isn't offered to the entire class.

Schedule/Topic Outline:

MODULE 1: Pre-Columbian America to the French & Indian War (14,000 BCE – 1700s CE)

- Weeks 1-2: (Aug. 25-29; Sep. 1-Sep. 5):
 - o Unit 1: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 1
 - o Quiz 1 (Friday, 9/5)
- Week 3: (Sep. 8-12)
 - o Unit 2: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 2
 - o Quiz 2 (Friday, 9/12)
- Week 4: (Sep. 15-19)
 - o Unit 3: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 3
 - o Quiz 3 (Friday, 9/19)
- Week 5: (Sep. 22-26)
 - o Unit 4: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 4
 - o **Exam I** (Friday, 9/26)

MODULE 2: Revolutionary America and the Early Republic (1754ish-1815ish)

- Week 6: (Sep. 29-Oct. 3)
 - o Unit 5: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 5
 - o Quiz 4 (Friday, 10/3)
- Week 7: (Oct. 6-10)
 - o Unit 6: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 6
 - o Quiz 5 (Friday, 10/10)
- Week 8: (Oct. 13-17)
 - o Unit 7: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 7
 - o Quiz 6 (Friday, 10/17)
- Week 9: (Oct. 20-24)
 - o Unit 8: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 8
 - o Friday, 10/24: **Exam II**

MODULE 3: Antebellum America, Civil War, and Reconstruction: 1816ish-1877

- Week 10: (Oct. 27-Oct. 31)
 - o Unit 9: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 9
 - o Quiz 7 (Friday, 10/31)
- Week 11: (Nov. 3-7)
 - o Unit 10: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chaps. 10-11
 - o Quiz 8 (Friday, 11/7)
- Week 12: (Nov. 10-14)
 - o Unit 11: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 12
 - o Quiz 9 (Friday, 11/14)
- Week 13: (Nov. 17-21)
 - o Unit 12: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chap. 13
 - o Quiz 10 (Friday, 11/21)
- Week 14: (Nov. 24-28) **Thanksgiving Break**
- Week 15: (Dec. 1-Dec. 5)
 - o Unit 13: Outline; Notes; Video Lecture(s); *American Yawp*, Chaps. 14-15
 - o Friday, 12/5: **Exam III**
- Final Exam, aka **Civil War Essay** due THURSDAY, Dec. 11

