CHANGE THE SUBJECT LINE Small 5-Point Extra Credit Before Your Class Starts on 8/26 at 8 AM

Rethink the last part being in an email

ASK Betancourt – still recommend telling them to use

* [Computer Requirements](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
* [Browser Check for Blackboard](https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support/Browser_Checker)
* It

Hi,

I am your instructor for history for an upcoming Distance Education 8-week course. I really like students and I want to be useful to you. I am, however, going to try being really blunt in this email in hopes that each of you succeeds in a very positive way. For **5** points **extra credit**, reply to this email copying in **this** statement in blue:

I saw the information on the textbook and the **external** webcam. I read the 4 items below and I will take care of the 3 things at the top **before** the class opens:

* ~~If I have questions~~**~~before~~**~~our Blackboard opens, I will email you at~~[~~bibusc@wcjc.edu~~](mailto:bibusc@wcjc.edu)~~.~~
* ~~If I have questions~~**~~after~~**~~Blackboard opens, I will email you using Blackboard’s Course Messages (Email) or call your office number (on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 281-239-1577). Be sure to say you are in my distance learning class and say your~~ **~~last~~** ~~name and phone number slowly and twice~~

**FYI:** The Blackboard screens may look different than what you used before. For Fall, all courses have the same black and gray colors with highlights in purple where you click.

**-----------------------------------------------------**

Here are 3 items you have to do and a 4th item you need to think about:

1. 1 Item but 2 Actions to Do: Your instructor cares about students but she is a historian, **not** a techy. As a non-techy but long-term Blackboard user, I do these things **before** the class starts.
   1. Click on **Help & Resources** (top right of the Blackboard opening screen).
   2. Notice the “box” named Technical Support (top left after you click).
      * Under Resources, use **Browser Check for Blackboard**. It will tell you if you need to fix one or more things. If Browser Check says do something, do it!
      * If you need help to fix somethings, look above to see how to **Contact IT**.
   3. If you do not already have 2 supported browsers, get a second supported browser and repeat Browser Check once you do. In that same Technical Support “box” look below to see **Downloadable Resources**. **Why more than 1 browser**? I find that a Blackboard function works on one day and not the next. When I switch browsers, the Blackboard function works again. To put this in a non-techy way, all browsers have to respond rapidly so rapidly to software attacks that they change without finding unintended consequences. If things stop working Blackboard, the problem may not be a change in Blackboard but a change in your browser. Switching to your other browser is a quick way to find out—and perhaps get back to work.
2. You need a textbook **before** the 1st Writing Assignment that starts in a couple of weeks. Information you need to order the book is at the bottom of this email.
3. You need an **external** webcam for online testing. The information for that is also at the bottom of this email.   
   **Tip:** Since this course only requires Respondus for a practice quiz and the Final Exam, depending on **your** location, it might be cheaper and easier to go to a WCJC location that has open labs with Respondus already set up. Computers setup with external webcams are available at these WCJC locations (with the number of these computers in parentheses): Wharton (3), Richmond (4), Sugarland (4), and Bay City (2). If needed, use this [Link to Distance Education’s information](https://www.softchalkcloud.com/lesson/files/8hkmXWAjVbt9S4/Respondus%20LockDown%20&%20WCJC%20Open%20Computer%20Labs.pdf) Link Address: https://www.softchalkcloud.com/lesson/files/8hkmXWAjVbt9S4/Respondus%20LockDown%20&%20WCJC%20Open%20Computer%20Labs.pdf

4th item to think about Distance Education and this course

1. I follow the standards for how the course opens, how things look, and so on that are set by the Distance Education Department. As do other community colleges in the region, WCJC uses Learning Modules. (Getting Started shows you what that means and how Learning Modules can really help you.) That *may* be very different from online courses you had in the past.
2. Instructors in the History Department have freedom to try to help students in different ways, but we are required to do the same **quantity** and **quality** of work that we do in an on-campus 16-week course. **What does that mean to students?**

* This is**not** a “**clickbait” course** a) where a student just comes into the course, b) clicks on the current assignment that pops up, c) clicks more, and d) then goes.
* This is **not**a **correspondence course** a) where you can wait to the last minute to try to do all the work, b) where you can do any work at any time, and c) where there is little interaction between you and your prof and between you and your colleagues in the class.

1. To me, 8-week courses are an endurance contest for students and profs alike. **So** the only way an 8-week endurance contests can work without misery is if you and I follow the same plan. In our case the plan is in a course document called the List of Due Dates. Course Orientation tells you how to use it.
2. This **course is different, but--as one of my students put it--"it is a d--m good deal."**

Use Getting Started so you can make it a good deal for you!

**I look forward to working with each one of you,**

**Dr. Bibus (or Dr. B if it saves you some typing)**

**-----------------------------------------------------**

### Required Course Materials:

#### History Department’s Required Textbook

David M. Kennedy, Lizabeth Cohen, and Mel Piehl, *The Brief American Pageant: A History of the Republic,*9th edition.The ISBN for the 1 volume edition (41 chapters covering both History 1301 and History 1302 is 9781337124645. This ISBN is a “bundle” and includes the textbook and an online program called Mindtap. In this course, we will **not** use Mindtap.

You must use your textbook and other resources provided in the course (including primaries for your writing work assignment) as your **only** source for your written assignments. For all written assignments, you must cite a **specific** page from the textbook or a primary for your facts. (For details, see modules Evidence Quizzes, Writing 1, and Writing 2.)

#### Distance Education’s Statement of Requirements

You will need a computer, an **external webcam** and **microphone**, a reliable internet connection, and access to the WCJC Blackboard site. Following the method recommended by the Distance Education Department, this course requires an **external (clip-able) webcam**. (You may **not** use the internal webcam within your laptop.)