**See what font is common and go with that**

**TEXTBOOK**

**Do I really need the textbook???**

**For writing assignments, the answer is Yes. For facts and concepts, your instructor’s links and quizzes provide straight-forward resources.**

**The textbook required for all written assignments is** David M. Kennedy, Lizabeth Cohen, and Mel Piehl, *The Brief American Pageant: A History of the Republic,*9th edition.It is the one-volume edition containing 41 chapters and is used for both History 1301 and History 1302.

The ISBN is 9781337124645; however, that ISBN is a “bundle” and includes both the textbook and an online program called Mindtap. In this course, we will **not** use Mindtap.

An announcement in the course covers current information about saving money on your textbook—since those issues vary from semester to semester.

**WHAT HELPS LEARNING?**

**3 Sneaky Causes of Failure at Learning**

Failure at learning comes when people don't ask themselves these 3 questions about the methods they use (or habits they have):

1. If I keep using this method, *how* will I know if I am wrong? FYI: Sooner or later you will be wrong.  
   Example: taking notes in a **separate** notebook instead of writing your notes in your book. If you don't know why this fails, ask me.
2. If I keep using this method, will I finish in time to meet the schedule?
3. If I keep using this method and get good at it, will anyone want to hire me at a decent salary?

Make sure you look at your habits--you can choose habits that match the person you plan to be.

**5 Principles That Work and That Are Worth Sharing**

A brief list quoted by Kathleen F. Gabriel highlights in the clearest way these fundamental principles of how to help learning. She is quoting standard principles that work. The ones I have bolded are things that this course tries to do to help you.

1. What and how much is learned in any situation depends heavily on prior knowledge and experience.

2. Learning is generally enhanced when learners are required to take information that is presented in one format and **"re-represent" it** in an **alternative** format. [**bold** added]

3. Varying conditions under which learning takes place makes learning harder for learners but **results in better learning.** [**bold** added]

4. The single **most important variable** in promoting **long-term retention and transfer** is practice in **retrieval.**[**bold** added]

5. Learning is influenced by both students' and our own [the professors'] epistemologies . (pp. 38-39)

The author: Kathleen F. Gabriel is the author of *Teaching Unprepared Students: Strategies for Promoting Success and Retention in Higher Education.* The quotation is on page 67.

She places this introduction just before the quotation: "As a complement to the investigation of learning styles and learning approaches, it is **also helpful to share with students some of the research findings on how people learn**. In their article 'Applying the Science of Learning,' Halpern and Hakel (2003) discuss **10 'basic laboratory-tested principles drawn from what we know about human learning'** (p. 38). My favorite five to discuss with students are…." [**bold** added]

**How to Learn Is Learnable**

I love history because history (and some wonderful experiences and colleagues) taught me to think. Seeing how my professors learned and having them invest in me made a difference for me. I am glad to help any of you as they helped me.

The methods I use worked for me and they all match the research in learning as well. They may help you.

These students were kind enough to write to me so I'm sharing their statements about how to learn is learnable. I've separated their statements with the ---- line. I have added **bold** in their statements.

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I first wanted to thank you for all that you did for me when I was your student. I do not know if I ever fully expressed this to you but you really made a huge impact on me and my approach to learning. Your dedication and willingness to go above and beyond for your students inspired me to truly give 110% of my effort. (Up until that point I did not do that; I was able to do well in the majority of my classes giving the bare minimum). The methods you taught us to **really understand the information we were faced with versus rote memorization** completely **changed the way that I learn** and I **still use that approach today.**...

I want you to know that had you not invested in me like you did and given me the confidence that I can succeed in life I do not think I would be where I am today or even be the person I have become.

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I just wanted to let you know, that the **skills I learned in your class especially essay writing**, paid off in my geology class in spades. My teacher lets us answer 3 essay questions for bonus points for our test.  He gave us a possible of 8 ?, out of those 8  Five showed up on the test, I could pick any 3 of those. I nailed my essays.

From a second email:

 I remember last semester being lost  by all the different types of information but my meetings with you **helped me see how you presented the information** and it started to click and became a great source of information tools. But it was a **change in learning styles and I had to go through that process of adjusting to change.**

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To tell you the truth, I will be a better teacher myself having had been in your classes!  I have taught my 13 year old **how to read more efficiently** and her grades have improved substantially over the past year!

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**CONTENT**

**I click on the lesson link but nothing happens?**

Lessons are linked to a webpage that opens in a new window, so first be sure that all of your pop up blockers are off. Sometimes one may be working in the background, so you may want to try holding down the ctrl key when clicking on the lesson link.

Sometimes there is a lag time between clicking on the link and the page loading (depending on your connection speed).

**What is the best way to prepare for objective exams (such as multiple choice)?**

Two ways:

Use the Learning Quizzes to make yourself answer questions about concepts (words and locations that are used over and over in history). Why quizzes?

* Reading over a fact does not help--even if you do that over and over.
* Retrieving a fact from your brain--making yourself answer--is what puts a fact permanently in your brain.

Use the study guide for the Unit to make yourself answer about specific events and in a different way.

**GRADING**

**Where are my grades?**

You can access your grades by clicking on the "My Grades" link on the left hand menu. The syllabus and Course Orientation cover when I grade different types of assignments.

**BLACKBOARD**

**I want to email my instructor. How do I do that?**

Once Blackboard opens for the term, you always email within Blackboard itself. Look for Messages (Required Email) on the Course Menu, the menu on the left side of the screen.

1. Click "Create Message."
2. Click the "To" button.
3. Look for your instructor's name followed by (Instructor).  
   Example:   
   Do not choose Jane Doe - Your instructor is unlikely to see your message.  
   Do choose Jane Doe (Instructor)

**I am a little confused on how to post a discussion during Getting Started?**

As a student you can access on demand help for Blackboard at <http://ondemand.blackboard.com/students.htm> or you can click the On Demand for Students on the course menu.

These brief tips can help you in Getting Started. You can click on Discussions on the Course Menu or at the bottom of the Getting Started module. Once you have clicked on a Discussion do this:

* + If you want to submit a response to an existing post, select "Reply."
  + If you to create a new post, select “Create Thread.”

**What kind of discussions are used for assignments?**

Your instructor creates forums for assignments using two main features:

* + For discussions where students help each other learn, your instructor approves your post before it is visible. Blackboard refers to these as “moderated” posts.
  + For discussions where students post their papers and later students peer review others papers, your instructor requires you to post before you can see other students’ posts.

With either method, your instructor provides a link to directions in the Description section of the Discussion. Always look at the Description in a forum.

**Why can't I see the Unit Exams?**

This Blackboard does not display tests unless students can take them. To help you know where an exam will be, I use placeholders saying where the exam will be.