## Course Information

### Prerequisites:

TSI satisfied in Reading and Writing

### General Education Core Objectives:

* **Critical Thinking Skills (CT)** - creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information
* **Communication Skills (COM)** - effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication
* **Social Responsibility (SR)** - intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
* **Personal Responsibility (PR)** - ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making

History Department Student Learner Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Create an argument through the use of historical evidence.
2. Analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources.
3. Analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on this period of United States history.

### Revision: Communication Policy (Also an Announcement in Your Course)

#### Online Office Hours - Google Voice # - Required Email

* Call **281-786-0197** (Google Voice). If I do not answer during Online Office Hours, please leave a voice mail. Please slowly spell your **last** name as it is in WCJC’s records and identify your class.
* Email **Connie Bibus (Instructor)** in Blackboard Course Messages. **Caution:** WCJC’s policy has changed: do not email using WCJC email.

Online Office Hours:

* Monday 10 AM-12
* Tuesday 8 AM to 1 PM
* Wednesday 12 PM to 3 PM
* Thursday 7 AM to 9 AM
* Friday 11 AM to 1 PM
* Or by appointment.

#### Your Responsibilities to Communicate

You **must** log in **at least 3** times a week and check **both** Course Messages (Email) **and** Announcements. Both are on the Course Menu (Blackboard’s menu you may display on the left of the screen). **If I email you in Blackboard**, you **must** read **and reply** or **call your instructor** if you do **not** understand. You **must** read **all** Announcements **since your last login**.

#### Your Instructor’s Timeframe for Responding

I make every effort to respond to Blackboard Course Messages (Email), phone messages, and discussion postings within 36 hours (weekends and holidays excepted). **2 Tips about My Schedule**:

1. The hours listed as my Online Office Hours are times that I check Google Voice and move from course to course and check in **each** course one by one for:

* Course Messages (Email)
* Discussions, especially those placed near the top of Learning Modules (All Content & Graded Work)
* Gradebook changes, such as entering grades and Incentives for Self-Tests for Learning Quizzes

1. With this shift of on-campus classes to being online, I am –and will continue to be—in Blackboard courses for much more time than those hours because I am still in the process of shifting my on-campus courses to online courses. **An example of what this means for you:**

* If you send an email **before** one of the office hours above, the odds are I will answer during that office hour or shortly after that.
* If you send it **after** my office hours for that day, I am likely to be trying to finish something for a class and I will **not** come back to email **until** the next day’s office hour.

#### Online Office Hours and Individual Help

During Online Office Hours, I am also glad to help you online or work with you by phone. (The Google Voice phone number is above.) If we **both** have Blackboard open, working together by phone frequently brings the fastest solution.

**Why Not Blackboard Collaborate?** I have Blackboard Collaborate in our course and have used it to create short videos pointing out things in the course. My own experience (some words seem not to record) and feedback (you have a “terrible Internet connection”) from a Distance Education staff member using Collaborate with me seem to show that using the phone is likely to help you more as long as we **both** have Blackboard open.

### Required Course Materials:

#### Revision: History Department’s Required Textbook - As of 3/27 Available for Free as an E-Book!

**This textbook is required for all written assignments:**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.

**How do you get it?** See the information at the top of Learning Modules (All Content & Graded Work). You’ll find information from the Chair of the History Department. Use the link in the information plus the attached “flyer.”

**This remains true:** 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 for Evidence Quizzes and for the 3-Part Writing.)

### Method of Instruction:

The course uses Blackboard’s **“Learning Modules” method** so you can use in 1 place content (such as Lessons, videos, and primaries) **and** assignments that go with content. Except for the textbook, the Blackboard course provides all you need. It also provides ways that students can make points by teaching themselves or can save time if they already know.

Writing for history courses may be different from other writing you have done, but writing for history helps you develop habits and skills that will help you in the workplace or when making a decision. The History Department requires that 30 per cent of graded work consists of writing and that you use primaries (documents written during the period covered by the question). The focus is on evidence, rigorous citation, and careful analysis to determine and support a historical argument. The Blackboard course provides everything you need to do the writing—except the textbook.

### For United States History I -Organization of the Course:

United States History I covers from the 1500s to 1877. The course is split into three Units, or major time periods, that reveal shifts in our history. The three time periods are:

* Unit 1: From New World to New Empires - the 16th Century to 1776
* Unit 2: From Making a Revolution to Making a Nation - 1776 to 1830s
* Unit 3: Transforming the Nation - 1830s to 1877

### Blackboard and Its Use in This Class:

In this course, you need to use Blackboard for these things:

1. Using required resources (such as each Unit’s study guide and Lessons) and required primary sources (sources created during the period we are studying) and, if needed, optional resources (such as maps and links)
2. Taking required Learning Quizzes (on concepts and maps) and Evidence Quizzes (on the basics of evidence)
3. **Revision:** Submitting written assignments for the 3-Part Writing using **one** Blackboard discussion to submit your Evidence Draft and, at the date in the List of Due Dates, to do your Fact Checking of another student’s paper. You use a second discussion to submit your Final Evidence Paper.
4. Using Blackboard’s My Grades to see your grades throughout the course and, if needed, your instructor’s Comment to you about that grade as guidance on what **you** need to do. ***Caution***: Always make sure that the **setting for Order By** (in the upper right corner) is: **Course Order.**

### Blackboard and Different Student Situations:

* If you have limited Internet or computer access, see me for ways to work with less time online. Glad to help.
* If you use WCJC’s computers in a student lab, you do not have to prepare your computer to work with Blackboard. If you want to use your own computer, you **do** have to prepare it for Blackboard. **Tips**for that preparation of your computer are at Blackboard’s Help & Resources. The two main Resources to use are:
  + Computer Requirements – Tells you any you need to prepare common computers
  + Browser Check for Blackboard – Tells you what is OK and not OK (and you need to change) about your current browser
* If you are not seeing something in the course that you were shown in class or that you saw on a previous day, you may solve your problem just by changing the browser you are using today. For example, if you were using Firefox, try Chrome or Edge.

## Assignments:

### Getting Started Activities:

The Getting Started activities are:

* Take the Departmental Pre-Test to determine how much you already know about this period of history
* Complete listed work in an open lab during your class period.

To help you, the instructor provides a quick demonstration of how to login to Blackboard and provide some quick emergency information for your prof (worth 10 points),

### How Both Learning Quizzes and Evidence Quizzes Work and Can Help You:

Whether Learning Quizzes (concepts and map locations) or Evidence Quizzes (basics of evidence), quizzes consist of:

* A self-test so **you** find out what **you** know and **you** do not know. The name is **self**-test because **you** are testing **your**self so **you** know what **you** need to do.) The goal is positive so no points are lost. Self-Tests are extra credit and have questions that are only worth .01. (A .01 is so small that it is equivalent to a penny compared to a dollar.)  
  ***Tip:*** On the other hand, it is in your interest to answer Self-Tests accurately so measure your own brain accurately for 2 reasons:
  1. You want to know what you know and do not know so you can work efficiently and correct weaknesses.
  2. If you already know the content in the Self-Test and prove that by being correct on over 80% of the questions on that Self-Test, you earn the points for its Full-Test **without** taking it.   
     The instructor enters those points at the end of each Unit **after** the Learning Quizzes close.
* Once you submit the self-test, Blackboard **automatically** displays additional content (if needed) and a Full-Test that has the same questions (worth more points) so that you can earn full points while **teaching yourself** the vocabulary and map locations **you** do not know. You may repeat as many times as you wish, and your **highest** score counts.

### Learning Quiz Questions That Are Also Unit Exam Questions:

Learning Quizzes are 20% of the course. Eight of the 25 sets (about a third) in a Unit Exam are from these Quizzes so you **pre-earn** points with quizzes and **pre-learn** 8 of the 25 unit questions.

### Revision: 3 Unit Exams and the Course Goal of Exam Questions Being Useful for Your Life:

There are 25 questions in sets (so students in the classroom sitting side by side have different questions). In addition to the 8 questions from the Learning Quizzes, there are 17 from the Study Guide (and class lectures). The goal of the exam questions determines those 17 exam questions. In this class, questions do **not** require that you show you know **everything**, but you show that you know **something.** The questions focus on your recognizing significant traits of such things as regions, time periods and their dominant beliefs or events, and representative historical figures.

***Tips:***

* The best way to recognize and learn these things is in your instructor’s Lessons in each Unit, not in a textbook.
* The best way to use the Lessons efficiently is to use them **with** the Unit’s Study Guide (top of each Unit’s folder).
* The Lessons are like a textbook that has bullets and that you can **search**. **Example:** if you need more about something in the Study Guide about Lesson 2, click on that Lesson, press Ctrl-F (for Find), and type a key word in the Find box. Click through all uses of that word in that Lesson.

**Revision:** To try to help, there are 2 ways available to you with Unit 2 (and an equivalent way for Unit 3).

1. The way using the Study Guide and the Lessons plus videos in the Lessons-The way we did it with lectures.
2. The way using paper quizzes and interaction with colleagues in the class. Unit 2 uses aids such as quizzes that can **speed up learning—and we need to**. Blackboard Items (a way to stick information in a module) cover how you can use a paper quiz and click Review so you are on a list for your prof to check. If you made below a 60 on Unit 2 Exam, your incentive is 5; over a 60, 10. If you click Review on an aid, I will evaluate your Exam to see if you get the extra credit. Make sure you use that aid.

If you have questions about some of the fill-in the blank questions on these aids, email me to set up a Blackboard discussion so you can ask or answer questions. If you post an answer to another person’s question, be sure to give evidence, such a page number in the textbook or the location in a Lesson or whatever will help that person find out more.

**Revision:** There is no choice but to do online Exams in Blackboard. I will take the existing exam (with its versions) and convert it to an online test so you will not have the same questions as everyone else.

How will online testing work?

* Available for 48 hours with the times in the List of Due Dates
* No password
* 1-time only
* 25 questions displayed 1 at time (an Internet issue)
* 50 minutes (the length of time for a MWF class)
* You may have the aids out or the lessons or anything else that I provide to help yourself if your brain goes blank on a specific question. 2 **Cautions:**
  + Google does not answer well my kind of questions—questions that do **not** require that you show you know **everything**, but you show that you know **something.**
  + If you have not tried to learn this, you will run out of time fast.

### Revision: Departmental Final Exam—F for the Course If Not Taken:

**Revision:** We will not use the official Final Exam. The substitute will be questions from the Unit 1, 2, 3 Exam, with 1/3 of the questions coming from each exam. The Final Exam will work exactly like the Unit 2 and Unit 3 Exams except for the timing and dates of the test per the WCJC Official Schedule:

* Opens Sunday May 10 12:01 AM
* Closes Wednesday May 13 11:59 PM

### Revision: Informal Written Assignments – Going online means logistics problems.

**Revision:** We still use the videos, but going online ends the Unit Video Forms. The replacement for the 2 remaining 20-point assignments are:

* As shown and introduced before Spring break, we will not do Unit 2 Video to have enough points for a 70 point Final Evidence Paper.
* To help students persist with the Writing, Unit 3 Video becomes a grade for Persistence with trying to write. **Our kind of writing is really figuring something out—and figuring things out is a work place and a life skill. Trying to write is what lets you learn how write. Persistence:** If you try Part 1, 10 points; Parts 1 and 2, 15 points; Parts 1, 2, and 3, 20 points).

### Revision: Formal Written Assignments with the 3-Part Writing:

For this term, this section is moved to the List of Due Dates except for this general statement:

In this course, you focus on a specific historical question as though you were **teaching another student.** You follow rules for citation provided in the course. Every part of the writing and all feedback is based on 5 very basic rules for evidence—rules essential not just for history but keeping a job. Grading is not about your style or your opinion or your memories—or mine. It requires you practice skills essential to get and keep a good job (or develop your own successful business).

### Revised: Writing Work as a Ladder to Practice Writing with Evidence

Think of this course as providing a **ladder** to practicing evidence skills. You can practice higher skills until those skills are a **habit** for you. We focus on **5 Good Habits for Evidence**—5 habits that **help you** not only **succeed,** but also **prevent problems**. If you do not do well on those habits with the first part of the 3-Part Writing, but you do succeed with the later assignments, then at the end of the term I **overwrite** that **lower** grade. For this to happen, you must:

* Have met **each** requirement in the directions
  + for the **earlier** part or parts where you were not successful
  + as well as for the part that you believe shows you have changed
* Have used the feedback to change and/or asked for help such as a phone conference.

## Course Evaluation:

### Grading Scale:

This is a 1000-point course, with points added as you earn them. You can see your current total in Blackboard. At the end of each Unit, I post an Announcement in Blackboard to help you determine your current letter grade. If the grade is lower than you want, please ask for help. The Final Letter Grade is determined by this scale:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Point Range** | **Final Letter Grade** |
| 895 – 1000 | A (exceptional) |
| 795 – 894 | B (above average) |
| 695 – 794 | C (average) |
| 595 – 694 | D (below average) |
| Below 595 | F (failing) |

Revised: Grading Formula:

The 1000-point course consists of these points, with the first 2 being general assignments, the middle 3 being objective assignments (gradable by computer or previously a Scan-Tron), and the last being related written assignments:

* 10 – Instructions (and tasks) provided in Getting Started, with a class day to get ahead in your work
* 90 –Self-Management and Participation to help you
* 200 – Learning Quizzes
* 300 – 3 Unit Exams @ 100 points each
* 100 – Comprehensive Final Exam– Departmental policy is an **F** for the **cours**e if you do not take it.
* 300—**Revised:** Written work consists of 4 Evidence Quizzes on the basics of evidence with history (40), 1 Video Form (20), 3-Part Writing--Part 1: Evidence Draft 1 (50), Part 2: Fact Checking (100), and Part 3: Final Evidence Paper (70, with 20 of those points coming from Unit 2’s Video Form), and Persistence (20, with those points coming from Unit 3’s Video Form.  **Persistence is for trying:** If you try Part 1, 10 points; Parts 1 and 2, 15 points; Parts 1, 2, and 3, 20 points).

The History Department’s Course Objectives and the Requirement for 30% Writing:

The History Department has student learner outcomes that require writing based on evidence and that require that you use primaries as well as secondaries. The written work **must** be over 30 percent of your final grade, a requirement for all history instructors. That minimum means formal writing assignments are essential to pass.

### Your Course and Incentives for How You Work and Opportunities to Become Stronger

This course does **not** offer extra credit at the end of the class to help a few people make a higher grade. It does offer **incentives** (defined below) and opportunities to **all** students for doing things that will make them better students.

#### Helping Varied Students Persist by Using Incentives with Quizzes

*Merriam-Webster’s Online Dictionary* defines the word **incentive** as “something that makes a person try or work hard or harder.” With quizzes, you earn 1 point for each quiz if by the date in the announcement if you:

* **Either** already knew the content in the Self-Test and were correct on **over** **80% of the questions** on that **Self-**Test, you earn the points for its Full-Test **without** taking it. (At the end of each Unit after the Learning Quizzes close, the instructor enters the points for the Full-Test.)
* **Or did not** make 80% or more on the Self-Test, but were correct on **over 80% of the questions** on the **Full**-Test. Why Do the Full-Tests?
  + Its Full-Test lets you teach yourself any missed concepts by taking the test as many times as you want and the highest score counts.
  + Completing **either** **Self**- **or Full-**Test to over 80% of the questions correct results in the 1 point incentive.
  + That the highest score counts is also an incentive to **persist**—a habit everyone needs.

Revision: Helping Varied Students Succeed with Self-Management and Participation

This is proportional to the prior Self-Management points for participation. For Unit 2 and Unit 3, if **100%** of the Learning Quizzes at 80% or higher, 30 points; if 90%, 27; if 85%, 25; if some but not all 80%, 23.9.

Revision: Course Policies:

Where needed this replaces prior policies with the Distance Education equivalent.

### Technology Outage Policy:

If Blackboard is non-functioning, first, please try a different browser to determine if the source of the problem is browser-specific. If the problem persists within another browser, then submit a [Request for IT Support Form (opens is same window/tab)](https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=gNKAeYP5_0uJgB4XjiLf--K__bPc9nhIoNnZd3BVurtUQ08wODI0TjdQQ1ZWNElVNFkzVjM4SDdSTS4u) or contact them directly at 979-532-6568. See Blackboard’s Help &Resources page (upper right side of Blackboard’s Login Page) for a link to IT Help Desk hours of operation. Also contact your instructor immediately using a working form of communication (email, phone, etc.) should a Blackboard outage occur.

### Attendance Policy:

WCJC’s Student Handbook explains responsibilities for attendance and when a student should withdraw from the course. With distance education, Blackboard stores extensive data on time spent and where. Given the speed of an 8-week course covering 16 weeks’ of work, students should log in **at least 3** times a week to work online with quizzes, resources, and student discussions. Students should also work offline, including careful reading of the required sources.

### Online Classroom Behavior Policy/Classroom Civility:

WCJC’s Student Handbook explains student responsibilities for civility. As with on-campus classrooms, each student is expected not to disrupt the class or abuse any person. Blackboard stores what you do (including messages you create with any tool), when you do it, and where you go. Some Blackboard tools—such as Blackboard Discussion tool—not only store messages permanently, but also make what you write visible to everyone in the class. When communicating publicly with the whole class and with individuals, you need to be both kind and collaborative.

### Academic Honesty Policy:

WCJC’s Student Handbook explains student responsibilities and provides examples of misconduct. It states “plagiarism and cheating refer to the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help during a test; copying tests [or] assignments….” The Handbook provides details on college-level policies. In this course, copying any part of an assignment from the Internet or another source is a zero **(0)** on the assignment.

### Six Drop Rule:

Under section 51.907 of the Texas Education Code, “an institution of higher education may not permit a student to drop more than six courses, including any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution of higher education.” This statute was enacted by the State of Texas in spring 2007 and applies to students who enroll in a public institution of higher education as a first-time freshman in fall 2007 or later. There are many exceptions to this rule. Please refer to the current WCJC catalog for information.

### Dropping a Course with a Grade of “W:

In the History Department, instructors may **not** drop students. **Students must drop their course**. WCJC sets the last date for a student to drop a course. That date is on the second page of this syllabus and on the List of Due Dates (below).

## Late Work Policy:

With due dates for any assignment, including exams and required writing, there are **no extensions** unless it is appropriate to make an extension available to **all** of you. You have these responsibilities:

1. At the **beginning** of the term, **compare** **all** of the Due Dates with your personal schedule. If you cannot do an assignment on a Due Date, tell your instructor immediately and suggest an **earlier** date. Example: If you previously scheduled a trip on the date of a Unit Exam, suggest an **earlier** date to do the exam.
2. If something happens that no one could plan for, such as suddenly becoming very ill (doctor’s note required) or having a death in the family, tell your instructor **immediately** and provide a **valid, written excuse**.   
   **What happens depends on whether you have a valid, written excuse for this event:**

* **With** a valid, written excuseprovided **immediately**, these rules apply.
* If you miss an exam, your make-up exam is taken on the date of the Final Exam.
* If you miss one of the written assignments, you receive an extension, set by me, with no penalty.
* **Without** a valid, written excuse, you receive a **0**.   
  ***Tip:***Remember a **low grade is better than a 0** so do the assignment as **best you can** and submit it **on time.**

Revision: List of Due Dates and *Your* Responsibilities:

It is your responsibility:

* To talk to me if you do not know what to do or need help. The earlier we talk, the better your chances of success.
* To use the List of Due Dates to determine what is DUE and when—including preparation that you need to do.