

Syllabus for US History I and US History II with Links to Examples

This is everything in the syllabus that is not date-specific. It does not include the front page or the List of Due Dates. **An FYI about Syllabus Design:** Faculty are required to use a template (in order and with headings) that is provided to us and to put our content within that template. That is a positive attempt on WCJC's part to help students with different classes.

This is what I would offer to you and—if you wanted—**show** you as we discussed parts of the syllabus. The links for you are ones that I'd click on. Success is possible but it—in my experience—has to be **"intentional"** and thinking about that has saved me many times.

Students fail not because they are incompetent but because they do **not** understand:

- That college is **different** from high school – The rules are different and **the risk shifts to the student**. (With each of these bullets I am trying to make sure you understand because I want you to be OK.)
- That **history is different from other classes**—The History Department **has to follow rules from above the Department** and those rules **apply to every history instructor**. I believe in these rules and support them, but **you have to know about them to succeed**.
- That **this** history class follows those rules but—**with permission** of the Department Chair—is **different** from other history classes. I am doing things to try to help **different** kinds of students:
 - **BOTH learn** what the History Department requires because what it required will help your future
 - **AND be able to earn a decent grade**.

So what do you do with this Syllabus with Examples?

1. If you do nothing else with this, click on these 2 items (with the orange highlight) in the Table of Contents:

- History Department **Student Learner Outcomes:**
- **Caution** about the History Department's Course Objectives and Its **30 Percent** Writing Requirement

2. You can use this Syllabus in many ways:

- Scan down the syllabus looking for **light green** shading where there are things (frequently a link) that I would show you if I was with you.
- Scan down the **Table of Contents** to see what is here. **If you click on an item, you will go directly to that content.**
- **If you know the kind of information you want**, you also can always the **magic combo of Ctrl-F for Find**. Click that and then key the words you want in the box. **Tip:** Try brief search letters first. **Example:** if you want to find **quizzes**, try the letters **quiz** first.
- **If you want a list of words that are definitely in this syllabus**, there is a list about F.I.O. Projects and about quizzes and exams. Use Ctrl-F with those.
- **If you just want to read it straight through**, you can. **Caution:** That rarely works for human brains. There is a **How-To** at the top of the Table of Contents with tips that your prof has learned over the years. **Tip and Offer:** Some of the suggestions in the How-To require that you have the file for this PDF. if you want a .docx or an .rtf (an older version of Word that used to work on Apple) version of our syllabus, just

email. Put in the subject line **Send syllabus file.** If many of you want this, I'll put the syllabus files below this link.

3. If you have any questions, email your instructor in Course Messages. Please put **Syllabus Question** in the Subject line. I will answer you by email OR—if there are many of these questions—create a link that answers all of you.

Table of Contents—You can click on any one of them to jump to that part of the file.

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What Is in Front of Your Syllabus

- *How-To’s* from my own profs and colleagues at work and in teaching and from helping students
- Search words that **may** help **some** people

How to Mark a Document So You Read Once and Use That Marked Document Many Times

You have to **do** something while you reading, such as:

- If you own the book or a print, write in the margin or write at the back of the book or article a page # plus 3-word clue
- If you have a copy of a file, color code what you found. **Tip:** if you want a .docx or an .rtf (an older version of Word that used to work on Apple) version of our syllabus, just email. Put in the subject line **Send syllabus file.** If many of you want this, I’ll put the syllabus files below this link.
- If it is difficult content, read aloud.

How Searching Works to Help You Understand—and Therefore Remember

You can search the file using the **magic Ctrl-F combination**, to find what you need.

How do you do that?

1. Open the syllabus and click Ctrl-F.

Blackboard displays a Find box usually in the upper right hand corner.

2. Copy and paste the word you want into the Find box. Blackboard displays up and down arrows and the number of the times the word is used in the file. You then click on the up or down arrow to go to each spot.
3. Identify any questions you have—and ask me. I will send an email to each of you to make easier for you

Search Words about the 1st Part, 2nd Part, and 3rd Part F.I.O. Project (Writing Work)

Use Ctrl-F (Find) for any words you want

- Fact-checking— notice the definitions in the syllabus
- OVERWRITE (and 1, 2, 3) – how that works
- Plagiarism – notice the definitions in the syllabus
- Plagiarism-checking
- Primary
- Requirement for **30 Percent** of your letter grade
- Secondary
- 1st Part F.I.O. Project – notice what you will do—With these search words, just typing the first 2 words works.
- 2nd Part F.I.O. Project – notice what you will do
- 3rd Part F.I.O. Project – notice what you will do

Search Words about Objective Work (Work graded by machines like tests and quizzes)

Use Ctrl-F (Find) for any words you want

- Final Exam—notice the Review
- Incentive
- Learning Quizzes – notice how they **work** and how many of their questions are on each Exam
- Learning Quizzes – notice Self-Tests and Full-Tests - **Tip:** Unit 1 provides a video on this
- Lessons
- Requirement for 80 percent on Self-Tests and Full-Tests
- Study Guides
- Textbook
- Unit Exams – notice how they **work**

Beginning of the Syllabus for This Class

Course Information

Prerequisites:

TSI satisfied in Reading and Writing

Communication Policy

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: once your Blackboard course is open, do not email your Instructor using WCJC email.

Online Office Hours and On-Campus Hours

- Monday 10 AM-12 PM

- Tuesday 7:30 AM to 10 AM
- Wednesday 12 PM to 2 PM (Wednesday hours are held at 240G, my on-campus office, at Richmond Campus.)
- Thursday 4 PM to 5:30 PM
- Friday 12 PM to 2 PM
- Or by appointment – **Reminder**: I am willing to help you by phone, by email in Blackboard, or with Collaborate.

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 the Discussion immediately below Getting Started and in the current Unit
 - Gradebook changes, such as entering grades and Incentives for Self-Tests for Learning Quizzes (explained below in the syllabus)
2. I will continue to be in Blackboard courses for much more time than those Online Office Hours. **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.
 - 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, Additional Hours for Blackboard Collaborate, and Both Individual Help and Group 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.

I am also willing to *try* Blackboard Collaborate to help one or several of you together. Why do I say *try*? When the pandemic hit, I was trying to use Blackboard Collaborate to make short videos pointing out things in the course. To quote a Distance Education staff member, “you have a terrible Internet connection.” I believe I have gotten Internet fixed, but I have not used Blackboard Collaborate with students so I will have to “practice” with you. The additional benefit to Collaborate is we can record the session and other people who want that same information can use it later.

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.

Example:

- Student Learner Outcomes for the History Department – including requiring that students use **primaries** and **“historical evidence”** and they **analyze (not just repeat)**. Click here [for details about those terms](#).
 - 2 Realities:
 - Reading anything accurately is hard for most of us. Reading primaries is **harder** than other documents for everyone I have encountered.
 - Reading secondaries and primaries are essential for the work of historians and history students. Think of It is this way.
 - If there was a wreck on a corner between 2 cars and their drivers.
 - You should **not** decide and testify about the wreck and its drivers **if you were not there**.

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.

Note: 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 the folder for the 1st Part Writing.)

Distance Education’s Statement of Requirements Modified for This Term

For **this** term, you will need a computer with an internal webcam and microphone, a reliable internet connection, and access to the WCJC Blackboard site.

You do **not** have to have an **external** webcam; however, as Blackboard’s Respondus section states before an exam: “In all instances, you **MUST** be able to perform a **360-degree environmental scan** of your immediate testing area (See How to test with Respondus link above) before an exam.”

Required Preparation to Use Blackboard, Including New Resources to Help You:

You are responsible to prepare your computer and its browser to work with WCJC’s Blackboard. Getting Started in this course includes the Distance Education FAQs that contain the technical information you need.

Also Blackboard provides extensive resources for student:

- **Before** you log in, on the **right** at the **bottom** of **Getting Started in Blackboard**, the introductory link Student Overview of Blackboard **Tip:** With the permission of the Director of Distance Education, this course is different from that overview in some spots, and I will identify those differences in the course.

- **After** you log in, on the **right** at the **bottom** of **My Organizations**, a link to the **Student Resources** section that provides not only the link Student Overview of Blackboard, but also a left menu to help you in a variety of ways, such as:
 - Preparing Your Computer
 - Testing in Blackboard, including how you prepare your computer for Respondus Monitor. **Tip:** Make sure you have what you need and it works before the course starts.
- In the **banner** at the **top** on the **right**, **Help & Resources** such things as:
 - Technical Resources, including downloadable Resources
 - Download Blackboard’s Student App Today
 - Resources for “students who have limited or no internet”

Method of Instruction to Help Students With or Without a Broad Background in History

The course uses one of Blackboard’s models that lets use in one place content **and** the assignments that go with that content. It provides ways that students can make points by teaching themselves or can save time if they already know. The History Department requires that **30 per cent of graded work** consists of writing (called F.I.O. Projects) and that you use primaries (documents written during the period covered by the question). The focus is on evidence, citation, and careful analysis and reasoning. The Blackboard course provides everything you need to do the writing—except the textbook. The textbook serves a) as a reference and b) as a source of maps.

Example:

- **With 30 % specific written work**, you **must** do some written assignments—or—only want a C for the course and **always** make 100% on each objective assignment (a risky plan). If you don’t understand, click [here to see examples of the math](#).

Organization of the Course: 1st list is for US HISTORY 1; the 2nd for US HISTORY II

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:

- 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

United States History II covers from 1877 to the 21st Century. The course is split into these three Units, or major time periods, that reveal shifts in our history:

- Unit 1: Creating a New America from 1860 to 1900
- Unit 2: Moving to the World Stage – America from 1900 to 1945
- Unit 3: Transformations – America from 1945 to the Near Present

Two resources at the top of each Unit help you know how to work:

- A snippet from the List of Due Dates to remind you of what you do in this section of the Learning Folders

- The Study Guide for the Unit helps you focus your work so you save time and succeed on your Unit Exam.

How to Succeed with Learning Folders (All Content & Graded Work) and with the List of Due Dates

The Course Menu (on the left of the Blackboard screen) that lets you directly access:

- **All Learning Folders** with **everything** you need: study guides, instructions, lessons, primaries—including all of the Blackboard tools you use from assignments to quizzes to discussions to exams.
- **List of Due Dates** with what, when, where, and why for all content and graded in the Learning Folders.

How to Succeed with Self-Test and Full-Test Quizzes If You Already Know Something—or Not:

Whether Learning Quizzes on concepts and maps or other quizzes in the course, these quizzes work this way: A **Self-Test** lets **you** find out what **you** know and **you** do not know.

To **succeed**, you need to **measure yourself** accurately and **teach yourself** what **you** do not know. In life and in jobs, you can lose if you do not know something, but in **this** class in a Self-Test you do **not** lose points for not knowing. Self-Test questions are **only** extra credit and **only** worth .01 each. (Think of .01 as equivalent to a penny out of a dollar.)

- Once you submit the Self-Test and have at least 1 question correct, Blackboard **automatically** displays:
 - a. **If** needed for you to succeed, additional information
 - b. The **Full-Test** with the **same** questions in the Self-Test, but with each question worth 1 or more points. You earn full points while **you teach yourself** what you did **not** know. **How does that work?**
 - You may repeat the Full-Test as **many times** as **you** wish until you recognize the word
 - Your **highest** score counts. Persist so you **learn all** the content and **earn all** of the possible points.

What if you **already** know at least **80%** of the answers? That's great and you can get the **full** points **without** taking the Full-Test. **How does that work?**

1. If you are taking a Self-Test with 10 questions and you are pretty sure that you know the content already, do these things:
 - Slow down a bit.
 - Answer carefully.
 - Double check your answers before you submit.
2. If you are right on 8 of the 10 questions, you do **not** have to take the Full-Test, but you **get** the full points.
3. **How and when?** At the end of each Unit **after** the Learning Quizzes close, your **instructor** enters the Full points **for** you. **Why?** If you know the content already, making you click on the Full-Test would not be just.

Course Requirements and Graded Assignments

Getting Started Activities and Trying to Give All Students Their Best Chance in Getting Started:

The Getting Started activities are listed on the last page of the Course Orientation link. If you come in past the due date, you **must** still do these activities, but I will record—temporarily—a 1.11 for each grade with a Comment about the grade if it had been on time. At the end of the term, you email your instructor that you have **not** been late with **any** other assignments. I then change the 1.11 grades to match what I have entered in the Comment for that grade.

Examples of the 1.11:

If there is a problem with a grade or with anything incomplete about an assignment, your instructor enters **1.11** as a temporary placeholder for the grade and posts a comment with that grade telling you what you need to do. You must check Blackboard for your grades.

Learning Quizzes and Pre-Learning and Pre-Earning Questions for the Exams for the Units:

The **exact** words for questions from these quizzes are also 8 (about a third) of the 25 questions on each Unit exam. With Learning Quizzes, that means you can **pre-earn** 24% of your total grade **before** the exams and **pre-learn** those questions.

Examples:

- You can **pre-learn** 8 of the questions on a Unit Exam by doing its Learning Quizzes. **Tip:** Its remaining 17 questions out of 25, you can learn by using its Study Guide with its Lessons.
 - You can **pre-earn** 250 points—200 with Learning Quizzes on history concepts and 50 quizzes about evidence
 - What does your prof mean by pre-earn
 - When you take an exam, it is **one time only**. If the exam is worth 100 points, you may get only 20 or 50 or 98 or 100.
 - When you take a Learning Quiz, you can take its **Full-Test unlimited times** and the **highest score counts**. There may be 20 points for the quiz, but you may get 6 the first time, 18 the second, 20 the third. If you persist, you can get the full points.
- Tip:** Why the setting about the highest score counting? In the early years of my doing this, I had students with perfect scores on a Learning Quiz ask to refresh on those quizzes just before the Unit Exam. A student said that, if he happened to miss 1 question that last time, he did not want to have to retake to get back the full points. That was reasonable so I made them all **highest score counts**.
- If you just click, it will not make a big difference in your life, but, if you try to understand, it can.

Unit Question & Answers (Unit Q&A) and How They Can Help You

Each Unit has a Unit Q & A discussion. They are an experiment and—as an experiment—their point value is low. On the other hand, the List of Due Dates explains how you can earn more than the current points if your “posts are brief and help others.”

How does it work?

1. If you have a question about anything about the Unit—whether in the Study Guide, in a Lesson (the PDFs that provide searchable content), or in a Learning Quiz for the Unit, post it.

Condition:

The Subject line needs to tell your colleague in the class what you are asking so he or she knows whether they have an answer. Save people time.

What You Could Type As Your Question:

Lesson 1: I am not finding ‘Traits of earliest wave of exploring nation states’

2. If you have an answer, you click Reply with a Quote and you answer.

Conditions:

Only use the textbook or your prof’s links or the videos provided in the course. You must state exactly where the other student(s) could find what you talk about. Save people time and always leave what I think of as “your

brain trail.” Sooner or later you will be big time wrong in your thinking and you want to be able to retrace the sources that you looked at.

What You Could Type As Your Answer:

I was having problems with that too. I read in the textbook, but what she was asking made more sense for me when I looked at her Self-Test link on Major Issues in Colonization: Comparing Spain, France, England, and the Netherlands and then I clicked on the Full-Test link with all the answers filled in. **That link is in Lesson 1.**

3 Unit Exams and the Goal of Exam Questions to Be Useful for the Course—and Your Life

There are 25 questions in sets (so students in Blackboard see different questions). Eight (**about a third**) of the 25 sets are pulled from Learning Quizzes so you not only **pre-earn** points for the quizzes, but can **pre-learn** 8 of the 25 questions on an exam. You use Respondus Monitor with Unit Exams in this course. Just above the Exam in the Unit, Blackboard provides tips on how to succeed with Unit exams

The goal of the exam questions determines the remaining seventeen (about two-thirds) of the 25 sets of 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 these types of content 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).
- Each Lesson is like an **ugly** but **free** textbook in “**chunks**,” **each** with a heading telling you what the information is about. What is a chunk? According to *Merriam Webster Online*, a chunk is “a unit of information retained in the memory” (Link Address: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/chunk>). To show how facts **in** the chunk relate to **each other**, the Lessons sometimes use **bullets** or **tables**.
- Since **all** of the Study Guide’s **issues** for a lesson are in **one link**, you can see **everything** you need. **Example:** If you need more information about a Study Guide item for Lesson 2:
 1. Click on Lesson 2, press **Ctrl-F** (for **Find**), and type a **few** letters of the word in the Find box.
 2. Click through **all** uses of that word in that Lesson and you will know **everything** about that “chunk,” including how that “chunk” relates to other “**chunks**” in the Lesson.

Departmental Final Exam—F for the Course If Not Taken

The Final Exam consists of 25 questions, at 4 points each. A **review** is provided in Learning Folders. **Caution:** Departmental policy is an **F** for the **course** if you do **not** take the Final. **Example:** If you have been earning 90% or higher on every assignment and have a total of 895 (an A in this course), but you do **not take the Final Exam**, your instructor is **required** to enter an **F** in the official record.

Introduction to Respondus for the 3 Unit Exams and the Final Exam

Introduction to Respondus-Lockdown Browser (Written by WCJC’s Distance Education, but with Additions in ()

This course requires the use of Lockdown Browser for taking online exams. The Lockdown Browser software prevents a user from accessing other applications or going to other websites during an exam. The webcam records you during the exam to ensure you’re only using resources that are permitted. Together, these tools make it possible for students to take online exams from any location, and at times that are convenient. It also creates a fair testing environment for everyone in the course. Instructions for downloading the Lockdown Browser software are posted in the course.

Personal Comment about why I take Respondus and cheating so seriously.

1. I believe that people who get away with cheating are not prepared for the world of work—unless they live with mom until they die. In my view of life, it's not honorable for me to let you cheat because you will be damaged.
2. Also consider that a prof who let people cheat would get in trouble with WCJC. **Tip:** Respondus retains these videos for 5 years. If I let people cheat, WCJC could prove it with same videos that prove that you cheated. Think about both of those for a bit. The simplest way to success is for both of us to do the right thing.

Caution: On the Left, Your Required Actions – On the Right, How Many Points You Will Lose on Your Exam

Exam Conduct Requirement:	Consequence for Violation of Exam Conduct:
Valid photo ID shown (Caution: your prof is required to compare your Photo ID with your name in Blackboard and with the picture you take of yourself. Place your PHOTO ID so your prof can do that.)	Penalty up to minus 30 percentage points
Correct placement of webcam	Penalty up to minus 30 percentage points
Complete environment scan (Caution: You must show each action shown in this section. Notice the narrator listens to and watches herself in the video. You should too--and do it over if you are not correct.)	Penalty up to minus 30 percentage points
Microphone turned on and recording	Penalty up to minus 30 percentage points
Sufficient lighting of the testing environment (Caution: avoid backlighting and no hats or sunglasses. Favor: “dress appropriately, as if you were in the classroom.”)	Penalty up to minus 30 percentage points
Student is in seated position with computer on hard surface (desk, table, TV tray etc.) (Caution: Not with computer on your lap; not sitting or laying on a bed or a couch.)	Penalty up to minus 30 percentage points
Student remains in webcam view during exam. (Caution: stay in that frame.)	Penalty up to 0 for the Exam
No unauthorized materials near desk area (Examples and a Tip: no phone, no papers, and no clutter of any type. All “out of reach.” Some students take their tests on an empty table in another room or outside.)	Penalty up to 0 for the Exam
No talking with others during the exam or playing of music or other audio recordings.	Penalty up to 0 for the Exam

Caution: Our division requires all faculty to deduct points as shown in the right column if you do not meet the Exam Conduct Requirements in the left column.

WCJC’s Video and Resources in Student Resources to Help Students Succeed with Respondus and Testing

- **WCJC’s video** with a **demonstrator showing exactly how to do each step** with Respondus. **All** students must observe carefully Distance Education’s excellent video.
- The Sample Respondus Exam is available in Student Resources before your course opens so you can determine if your computer works successfully with it.

How Respondus Works in This Class

In this course, you use Respondus with the **3 Unit Exams** and the **Final Exam**. Be sure you make sure your computer, microphone, and internal (or external) webcam work with Respondus. You cannot take these exams without having taken the Sample Respondus Exam and having had your instructor review it for compliance with WCJC’s video of how students are to take the Sample Respondus Exam.

1. Taking an exam with Respondus Monitor requires paying attention to the screen prompts and looking carefully at what you did to be sure **you did** what the **person demonstrating did**.

2. Please understand that in **this** course, your prof will review the video that you make of yourself using Respondus Monitor when you take the Sample Respondus Exam or any history Exam according to two things:
 - a. What is required in **WCJC's video for students**
 - b. What that **video shows faculty** they are to watch for, **not** on how your prior professors graded you

Written Assignments (F.I.O. Projects):

How F.I.O. Projects Work in This Course

The purpose of the F.I.O. Projects is to help you and your colleagues practice skills that are useful **for college**, for the **workplace** (including running your own business), and for **life decisions**. They are **freshman level** and **brief**. You use **only** the textbook and primaries in the course. The course requires you to use sources that **all** of your colleagues in the **class have** and **your prof has**. **Why?** If you cite—for example—page 42, **everyone** in the class **and** your **prof** can compare page 42 with what you wrote using page 42 and can determine fairly if you read it carefully and reasonably.

F.I.O. Projects are **also both simple** and **hard**. You focus on a short, specific historical question as though you were **teaching another student**. Teaching something means you have to **figure something out**. The F.I.O. Project discussion in Getting Started provides an introduction to what those words mean, including an elegant statement by Sam Wineburg, an historian and a scholar of how people learn history. It also covers the word **project**—"a problem engaged in usually by a group of students to supplement and apply classroom studies." Link Address: [URL](#)

Every part of the project and all feedback is based on a few 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. With the exception of the textbook pages, the course provides the two primaries and one video—everything that you need for these three projects:

- 1st Part F.I.O. Project, a brief (maximum of 400 words) project using **all** of the sources and answering the question provided and posted in the 1st Part F.I.O. Project discussion. You should Fact-Check and Plagiarism-Check your **own** paper.
- 2nd Part, Fact-Checking and Plagiarism-Checking of 2 other students' papers
- 3rd Part, the Reply to each of their feedback

You use the same textbook pages and primary sources for all 3 projects. **Why?** Using the same sources reduces the amount students have to read. More importantly (at least to your prof), using the same sources for 3 projects means you can have a brain experience **more typical** of what you will experience:

- In upper level courses
- In the workplace
- In life decisions

Here are real examples from your prof's personal experiences:

- Rereading a source for a second stage of a project can mean that you realize you only understood half of the facts before. You then have to rethink it.
- Trying to give useful feedback to a colleague can mean that you realize that you did **not** find out that he was wrong but **you** yourself had been. You then have to rethink it.

Definitions of fact-check, plagiarize, and reply from *Merriam Webster Online*:

- **fact-check** - to “verify the factual accuracy of (Link Address: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fact-check>). For example, **how would you fact-check your own work?**
 1. You compare side by side:
 - The **meaning of what you wrote**
 - The **meaning** on the **page** of the primary or textbook that you cited.
 2. If that meaning is **not** in your source, you delete or correct your own paper.
- **plagiarize** - According to *Merriam Webster Online*, to plagiarize is “to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one's own.” (Link Address: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/plagiarize>). To check, you would **compare** the two. If they are the same, you use “” in **your** paper.
- **reply** – According to *Merriam Webster Online’s* synonym section, to “REPLY often suggests a **thorough** response to **all** issues, points, or questions **raised.**” (Link Address: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reply>)

Course Evaluation and Grading Scale:

This is a 1000-point course, with points **added** as you earn them. You can see your current Total at the bottom of My Grades. At the end of each Unit and following one of the 3-part writings, 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)

The 1000-point course consists of these points, with the last being written work:

- 55 – Getting Started activities (How you start frequently determines your success at the end.)
- 200--Lesson Quizzes
- 20—3 Unit Question & Answer sessions and 2 instructor videos with quizzes described in the List of Due Dates
- 300—3 Unit Exams @ 100 points each
- 100—Comprehensive Final Exam
- 25—Respondus Review-1, -2, -3, -4, and -5 from the Sample Respondus Exam to the Final Exam
- 300—Projects consist of an 1st-Part F.I.O. Project @ 100 points, 2nd Part F.I.O. Project (Fact-Checking and Plagiarism-Checking 2 students’ papers at 50 points each, and 3rd Part F.I.O. Project (Evidence-Focused Replies to the 2 students who fact-checked your paper @ 25 points each), Evidence Quiz @ 40 and 2 instructor videos with quizzes described in the List of Due Dates @ 5 each

Caution about the History Department’s Course Objectives and Its 30 Percent Writing Requirement

The History Department’s student learner outcomes require that you write with evidence and use primaries as well as secondaries. The written work must be over 30 percent of your final grade, a requirement for all history instructors. This percentage means that **no** one can safely **not** try to do these projects.

Example:

- Student Learner Outcomes for the History Department – including requiring that students use **primaries** and “**historical evidence**” and they **analyze (not just repeat)**. Click here [for details about those terms](#).
2 Realities:

- Reading anything accurately is hard for most of us. Reading primaries is **harder** than other documents for everyone I have encountered.
- Reading secondaries and primaries are essential for the work of historians and history students. Think of it is this way.
 - If there was a wreck on a corner between 2 cars and their drivers.
 - You should **not** decide and testify about the wreck and its drivers **if you were not there**.

How This Course Tries to Help Different Types of Students Succeed with Writing about History:

First, ask your prof if you need help with the basics of evidence. The earlier you get your brain straight about evidence, the easier this class (and your work and your life) will be.

Second, it focuses on evidence so you can learn to prevent problems, not just regret them. If you do not understand feedback, ask your prof what habits of work can help you prevent that problem.

Third, if you already learned these skills that is **wonderful**. If you have **not**, now is the right time to begin to teach yourself these skills that are essential for classes and work and life. You do not have to get everything perfect at the beginning, but you do need to get everything **OK** by the end. To help you:

- I am willing to **overwrite** (a word used for a value being replaced) your 1st Part F.I.O. Project if you make a **higher** grade by the 2nd Part F.I.O. Project or, in some cases (my decision), even by the 3rd Part F.I.O. Project
- If—and this is the **condition**--you carefully **read** the rubric I post through My Grades after I finish grading **each of the 3 projects** and you **email** me in Course Messages (Email) that you **either** understood what you need to do to improve **or** you ask me to talk with you. I will email you back and I will place a 1 in the grade next to each writing grade (as in OVERWRITE 1, OVERWRITE 2, and OVERWRITE 3.)
- If you are making higher grade by the end and if there are 1s in each of those OVERWRITE grades, then I will overwrite the 1st Part Writing. If I have not done this shortly after I announce I have completed grading of the 3rd Part, please **email** me a reminder.

Incentives (Extra Credit with a Reason) to Help You Persist

In this class, there is no extra credit to help a few people make a higher grade, but I do sometimes offer extra credit to help **all** students become persist or even become stronger. One of the ways I do that is with **incentives** for keeping current on the Learning Quizzes. *Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary* defines **incentive** as “something that makes a person try or work hard or harder.” Incentives are voluntary; therefore, they do **not** have a due date.

With Learning Quizzes and the 40-point Evidence Quiz, you can earn 1 incentive point for each quiz if you have **80%** of the questions **correct either** on the **Self-Test** or the **Full-Test** before the date the Unit Question & Answer closes. Here is how it works:

- If you have 80% on a Self-Test, you do not have to take the Full-Test. In those cases, your prof will enter the **Full-Tests** points **for you** when completing the grading the end of the Unit.
- When does your prof enter the incentives? Your prof enters the incentives on the same date as the Unit Q & A closes. It closes on the day the Unit Exam starts. **Why?** To be safe, you ought to be finishing up studying before the Exam starts.
- On the other hand your prof frequently come in one or even 2 **earlier** times to enter incentives and to try to help students. **Example:** If a student has a Self-Test that is less than 80% correct, your prof enters an incentive of .05 instead of 1. The Announcements remind you of what an incentive of .05 means.

Examples: Thinkers who may help you think about success with grit and with 5 abilities to think well:

- What's "grit"?: [Click on this video of a Ted Talk by Angela Duckworth](https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance) (URL: https://www.ted.com/talks/angela_lee_duckworth_grit_the_power_of_passion_and_perseverance)
- "Teach Students How to Learn: Metacognition is the Key!" by Sandra McGuire. Click [here for 5 abilities you need to think well, with the last being "know what you know and know what you don't know"](#).

Grading Response Timeframe:

I generally:

- Enter Getting Started grades on the weekend at the **end** of the first week.
- Enter a 1-point incentive for doing a quiz on the day **after** the incentive date. **Tip:** To succeed both in learning vocabulary and map locations you need for history and in earning extra credit for keeping up, begin work on the day Learning Quizzes open and pace yourself.
- Enter grades and provide feedback for the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd F.I.O. Project usually before the start of the next writing. If I am behind (and I am a slow grader), I send an Announcement to let you know when. Feedback is provided with a rubric that shows up with the grade at My Grades.
- At the end of each Unit, an announcement stating how to calculate your grade. If your grade is lower than you want, ask for help.

Course Policies

Late Work Policy

It is **your** responsibility to email or talk to your instructor if you do not know what to do. The earlier we communicate, the better are our chances for success. **Caution:** Do **not** submit work during the last 15 minutes of availability. It is too risky and it does not fall within this category.

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

1. If your planning at the beginning of the term shows you cannot do these assignments, such as having previously scheduled a trip, tell your instructor immediately and suggest an **earlier** date for you do the assignment.

Tip: Examine the List of Due Dates to determine if you have conflicts and immediately propose an **earlier** date.

Caution: Use the List of Due Dates (**not** the Calendar, **not** My Grades, **nothing else**). Ask; do not assume.
2. If something happens that you cannot 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**.
 - **With a valid, written excuse** for something that **no** one could plan for, these rules apply.
 - If you miss an exam, your make-up exam is taken on the **date of the Final Exam**.
 - If you miss a required writing, you receive an extension, set by me, with no penalty.
 - **Without a valid, written excuse** for something that no one could plan for, you receive a 0.

Tip: If you had an event that does **not** meet the criteria above or you cannot prepare as much as you prefer, do the assignment as best you can. A **low grade** is **better** than a **0**.

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 \(opens in same window/tab\)](#) 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. To be safe, also make a snippet or picture of some type showing any error messages or other screen prompts to show what occurred.

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.

Attendance Policy and Covid-19:

The college has policies about what you are to do if you are exposed to Covid-19. If your condition means that you cannot keep up with your work, notify your instructor as quickly as possible and provide documentation as applicable.

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 consequences. Also see the Academic Honesty Statement for Online Classes in Getting Started. **Caution:** In this course, copying any part of an assignment from the Internet or another source is a zero **(0)** on the assignment.

Caution: With how I grade and how I require you to use and cite sources I provide in the course or specific textbook page, your prof can:

- Not only catch cheating without trying
- But also prove it.

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 first page of this syllabus and in the Essential Information section (below). In making this decision, make sure you also understand the 6 Drop Rule from the Texas legislature.

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.

Optional Addition: Why Learning How to Figure Things Out Is Useful

Make sure you click the links if you are not positive that you understand every row.

- “Why Historical Thinking Matters”-Click on [this “interactive presentation where Professor Sam Wineburg discusses how historians investigate what happened in the past.”](http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/why/) (URL: <http://historicalthinkingmatters.org/why/>) Wineburg researches how thinking works.

He explains what history is: “**Boring names, facts, dates - this is history for a lot of people.** But historians think about history differently. **They see themselves as detectives**, often unsure about what happened, what it means, and rarely able to agree amongst themselves. This **process of trying to figure out things you don't already know is as different from mindless memorization as you can get.**”

- **Figuring out things** is the hard part of writing (and earning a living). For example, **over 60% of students since 2011** usually did not know basics such as being factually accurate when writing about **real** things until this course. Click here to see what past students said [they did not know before](#).

Optional Addition: What Are the 5 Big Rewards of College?

1. Some employers require specific courses or programs for specific jobs.
2. Some employers want to know that you have been able to teach yourself enough to pass college courses.

Think of it this way. If you were paying someone money for work, you would want proof that person had all of these traits that you will be practicing if you do the work in Section 2:

- “Grit”
- Good Habits
- Self-Management

3. With a history course requiring primaries and evidence, you can gain from **mentored practice** in **figuring something out**. (See the phrase with Wineburg above.)

Mentor: “a trusted counselor or guide

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/mentor>

Practice in **figuring something out** matters for your success:

- To be able to figure something out is a **survival skill** now that you are the **manager of your own life**.
- To be able to figure something out is a **skill employers will pay for**—and employers will keep you in a job when they have to layoff others.
- To figure something out is to experience **joy**. If you have not had that feeling yet, it is time to try it.

4. College provides the general knowledge to **protect your future**.

The required courses for a freshman program are based on the establishment of a curriculum called the **liberal arts**.

Notice the meaning. You want to be a free person. Here is help from *Merriam Webster’s Unabridged Dictionary*:

- Meaning of **liberal arts** in "[1745-1755; trans. of L *artes liberales* - works befitting a **free man**]" [bold mine - in other words, for a person who was **not a slave or serf.**]
- Note: in the late 1700s (think about that famous date of **1776**) 3/4s of world population was in servitude (slavery or serfdom). **Only 1/4 profited from their own labor--and learning** or even had a chance to learn
- Root word of **liberal**: "1325-75; ME < L *liberalis* of freedom; befitting the free, equiv. to liber *free* + *alis* A]
- "liberalis of freedom, befitting the free"

5. As part of your college experience, history can help you because it is the **vocabulary of our nation**. As Wineburg says, history is **not** "boring names, facts, dates." Instead, history introduces you to the basics of:

- Demographics
- Economics
- Government
- Knowledge, including science, technology, culture, arts, and how we transfer knowledge to the next generation
- Religion
- Sociology

Tip: The more you learn, the more you can learn. Click [here for vocabulary and the "Mathew effect"](#) on learning.

FYI: When I say the word *college*, I do not just mean a 4-year degree. In this economy and for you as an individual **any** of these paths could be fine:

- Technical program in a community college—**but be sure you take history**. (That's an advertisement for the discipline I love and that I have had pay off for me for all of the diverse paths of my life.)
- 1st Year Plus a Technical program
- 1st 2 years of college
- 4 years of college
- Graduate degrees

Dates Set by WCJC That Are Not Covered in the List of Due Dates:

- Last day for you to "Drop" the course with grade of "W": **Date provided in your syllabus.**
- Holidays: **Holidays listed in your syllabus**

List of Due Dates in a One-Page Format

The List of Due Dates is available in a two-page printable form as a separate link on the Course Menu. **Copy of List of Due Dates provided in your syllabus.**