

History 315L

The History of the United States since the Civil War

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Summer 2020 - Unique Course #80830
Lectures: Various Times (See Below)
Online

Professor Suri's office hours:
By appointment

Teaching Assistants:
TA office hours are listed on our [Canvas page](#)

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Course Aims

This course is designed to provide students with a grounding in some of the most controversial, enduring, and relevant topics in the history of the United States, broadly defined. Students will read a wide range of monographs and primary source materials. Lectures and discussions will encourage students to compare and contrast various points of view, and interrogate broad historical transformations since the Civil War. The course will emphasize **intensive reading, analytical writing, and critical thinking**. The instructor and teaching assistants will, at all times, encourage students to articulate different points of view. Our central purpose is to stimulate informed, thoughtful, and intelligent perspectives on the American experience. This includes close attention to politics, society, culture, economy, diplomacy, and military affairs. It also includes an international and transnational understanding of how Americans have interacted historically with those defined as non-Americans. Instead of comprehensiveness and textbook detail, this will be a course about big ideas, big transformations, and big debates – that continue into the twenty-first century. We will not strive for consensus or agreement in this course; we will nurture learned discussion and collective engagement with the complexities of our society's history.

Academic Accommodations and Academic Integrity

Upon request, the University of Texas at Austin provides appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact Services for Students with Disabilities (<https://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>).

Academic integrity is central to the mission of the university. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs, or ideas found in published volumes on the Internet, or created by another student. For more information about the university's expectations for academic integrity, see: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/>.

Core Curriculum Student Competencies

As required by the Undergraduate Studies Advisory Committee, with the guidance of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, this course fulfills the Coordinating Board's Exemplary Educational Objectives and Core Objectives, Core Component 60 for U.S. History. Following the Core Objectives, this course examines past events and ideas relative to the United States. This course analyzes the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role. Lectures, readings, written assignments, and discussions in this course will address four Core Objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility.

Flag CD

This course carries the flag for Cultural Diversity in the United States. Cultural Diversity courses are designed to increase your familiarity with the variety and richness of the American cultural experience.

Description of Online Format

This is a digital version of the HIS315L course – unlike almost all other courses offered at The University of Texas, you will be viewing this class online (from the comfort of your own home, library, or coffee joint) rather than in-person. Students will attend class by logging into the course and watching recorded lectures posted to Canvas. As students watch the lecture videos, they will answer a series of questions (“pings”) related to the video content for a grade. Consequently, you must watch all videos posted to Canvas.

There will be two types of lecture segments. The first are the short video segments that are already posted to Canvas. The second are live sessions that will be live streamed through Zoom, and will take place at specified dates and times (see schedule below). Students are not required to attend the live sessions, but they are highly recommended.

Live Zoom Meeting	Time
Thursday, June 11	11:00 am – 12:00pm CDT
Tuesday, June 23	4:00pm – 5:00pm CDT
Wednesday, July 1	6:00 pm – 7:00 pm CDT

The course is built around the Modules section of our Canvas course website. **YOU SHOULD USE THE MODULES SECTION OF THE CANVAS COURSE WEBSITE EVERYDAY.**

Everything you need for this course, including on-demand lecture videos, readings, and weekly assignments will be listed here. All live lectures will be posted in their respective modules for your review about 24 hours after they have been streamed. Each week includes 5 modules that have been divided by topic. **You must work through all modules in sequential order.** You will not be allowed to skip to a future module until you have completed the assigned work in the previous modules.

Specific information about the online course format follows.

Canvas class website: To get to everything associated with the class, go to: <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1252053>. You can enter directly at this URL or through Canvas (<https://utexas.instructure.com/>). To log into Canvas and the class website, you will need your UTEID and password. Once you reach the class website, you can navigate your way to other areas.

Some of the most important features include:

1. **Homepage** – The homepage will have links to the Course Syllabus, the technical requirements and test stream webpage, the live video stream of the lectures, information regarding technical questions and other important information. On the left-hand side of each page of the Canvas course site are navigation tabs to all parts of the website, including the Syllabus.
2. **Modules** – The Modules page includes links to the Assignments, Readings, Lecture video archives and other course documents. This will be where much of this course will take place. You will be required to move through all modules in sequential order.
3. **Video Stream** – The Video Stream is the page on which you will find the live lecture stream for the course. The Video Stream will also display the outline for the current lecture, links and pop-ups for live quizzes and other participation activities.

Most of your activity on Canvas will take place in the **Modules** and **Video Stream** tabs.

Required internet-enabled device: All students are required to have access to an internet-enabled laptop or desktop computer. Tablets and smartphones are not supported. Your computer should have enough battery life to last an entire class period and meet the following requirements:

- Computer laptop or desktop
- RAM: at least 2GB
- Modern and updated operating system (MacOS or Windows)
- Browsers: Safari, Firefox, or Chrome (highly recommended)
- 5Mbps internet connection speed (check here: <http://beta.speedtest.net/>)

You should confirm that your computer is able to stream the video lectures by visiting the test stream page at <https://www.laits.utexas.edu/tower/tech.html>.

There are multiple computer labs on campus for your use if you do not have a personal computer or laptop. (You can find a listing of these labs here: https://ut.servicenow.com/sp?id=ut_bs_service_detail&sys_id=3dd65c7c4ff9d200f6897bcd0210c77d). If you do not have an internet-enabled device, some inexpensive ones are available at local stores or on the internet, some for as little as \$100.

Bandwidth limitations: Because the streaming video is bandwidth-intensive, you should not access YouTube, Skype, Gmail video chat or other online video system, or any other program that is bandwidth-demanding. During the class session, you should be watching the lecture, taking written notes, and nothing else! (I recognize the temptation to multi-task. If you find yourself frequently distracted online, I recommend you try browser-based solutions like StayFocused or LeechBlock that prevent you from accessing certain tempting websites during class hours).

Course communication: Most of the communication in the course will happen through the course Canvas website.

During Live Sessions:

Class Chat feature, which is monitored by a teaching assistant. It will be used for group responses to discussion questions from the professor posed during class.

Ask the Professor a Question feature on the Video Stream. This is the forum where students should ask questions for clarification or further elaboration.

We expect that you will treat online discussions as though you are having a civil, respectful discussion with your fellow classmates in the same classroom. Please refrain from using profanity or any euphemisms for profanity. Please do not bait other commenters or personally attack them. Please do not use sarcasm in a way that can be misinterpreted negatively. And please do not make the same point over and over again. In short, please just respect the right of your colleagues to ask questions and discuss their opinions about the subject matter of our course on the discussion board. Violators of these discussion rules will simply be shut out of the online discussion board and will be asked to see the professor in person.

Outside of Class: The TAs and professor will often post Announcements in Canvas. Click on the “Settings” link in the upper-left corner of your Canvas page, to adjust your email address and notification preferences. This will allow you to receive email updates whenever course Announcements are made, or when assignments and grades are posted.

If you have a specific, personal or grade-related question, please email your TA.

Please do not use the Inbox feature within Canvas for course-related email.

Even though this is an online course, you are encouraged to communicate with the professors and TAs. Come to our posted online office hours, or send an email to set up an appointment if none of the weekly office hours fit your schedule.

Honor system for quizzes and writing assignments: By taking this class, you agree to abide by the University of Texas regulations concerning cheating. During the quizzes you cannot receive help from others or discuss your writing assignments with other students. If you observe others cheating, you are honor bound to contact the TAs or instructors.

Information and data security: All quizzes and online interactions in Canvas will be saved and stored. All information will be kept for educational and general academic research. Any research or data sharing with other researchers will involve de-identifying the data, including the removal of names, UTEIDs, email addresses, or other information. To further ensure that your information is secure, please do not include identifying information in your online interactions with others. Remember that in online interactions, the instructors and TAs will have access to all information. Please communicate in a respectful manner.

Reporting technical problems. If you experience a technical problem during class, your first course of action should always be to immediately report the issue to tech support via the tech chat accessible through the Home Page or the Dashboard. Please note that you must report any technical issue before the end of the lecture during which the problem occurs. The professor and teaching assistants will not address the ramifications that your technical problems might have on your grade if tech support does not have a record of your problem. If you experience a technical problem outside of class, please follow the link to contact tech support in Canvas.

Video “Ping” Attendance

In addition to the live online sessions, students are required to watch each of the recorded lectures in the Modules section for the given week of the semester. Videos are listed under the Modules section in our Canvas course, and have been divided by date and topic. While you are not required to watch these lectures on their assigned days, it is recommended you do so, so that you will not fall behind in your course work. Additionally, you must complete each week’s modules in sequential order. In other words, you will not be allowed to watch other lecture videos until you have completed the module before it.

As you watch each video, you should expect 1-5 “pings.” These are content-specific questions that relate to what you are watching. When it is time for a “ping,” a question will appear over your video. Your video will pause until you answer the question, and you will have up to 1 minutes to do so. If you do not answer the question the first time, you will have an opportunity to answer it when you view the video again. If you attempt to skip through the video just to find the ping question, it is possible that you will miss one of your questions, and you will lose points.

Your ping answers will be graded based on accuracy. Your ping grades will be updated at the beginning of the following week, and will count as part of your attendance grade.

TA Online Office Hours

Your assigned TA will have two office hours per week, during which you are encouraged to contact him/her with questions about class content and/or structure. These office hours will be held online, through Adobe Connect. This format allows the TAs to adjust hours to maximize student availability, and students will be able to connect to TAs from anywhere that is convenient for them. There will be a weekly announcement regarding office hour times, and you are encouraged to make outside appointments should those times not fit in with your schedule.

To join online office hours, please use a laptop (not a tablet or phone) to go to the link for your assigned TA’s virtual meeting room. These links, and the times the TA will be available, can be found on the Canvas home page by clicking the “Online Office Hours” link.

Weekly Response Essays

Each week, by **11:59 pm on Saturday**, all students must post a short response essay **for each of the 5 assigned modules** on the course website (available through UT's Canvas course management system): <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/1252053>. That means each student must submit 5 separate short essays each week, each posted under the appropriate lecture.

Each response essay will be **one paragraph** and should not exceed 250 words. Your paragraph should summarize the key arguments in the module's assigned readings: What were the key points in the assigned readings for that lecture? Each response essay should offer the student's critical assessment of the week's readings: What was most persuasive? What was least persuasive? Which are the issues and questions that need more attention and explanation?

Each week the teaching assistants will read and grade 2 of the 5 weekly response essays. While the TAs will review the 3 other response essays, students will automatically receive credit for their work, if submitted on time. Students are expected to write clear and well-informed essays each week, based on close reading of assigned books/documents and careful listening to all lectures. Students are also expected to write in a professional manner, with topic sentences, appropriate evidence, persuasive language, and coherent arguments. Avoid passive voice and split infinitives. Proof-read your essays for correct grammar, syntax, and spelling. We will grade the essays based on content and writing style! The weekly writing assignments will compose 20% of each student's course grade.

Citations

For all written assignments – weekly response essays, the document analysis, and examinations – students are expected to indicate when they take information from a written, digital, or oral source. When in doubt, cite your source! This applies to quotations, paraphrases, and specific information in a source. For citations, students should follow the Chicago Manual of Style:

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

Document Analysis

All students will write a 3-page analysis of a document from the primary materials included with each lecture. (See the Canvas course site for each lecture.) Students should choose a document assigned for the lectures before June 20. Students will write an analytical essay that follows this format:

Page 1: Describe the argument of the document and the purpose of its writer(s). Quote the most compelling phrases in the document, and explain their importance.

Page 2: Contextualize the document. Explain what the document tells us about the time during which it was written. What do we learn about American society, politics, and culture from the chosen document? What do we learn about the hopes, fears, visions, and frustrations of the era during which the document appeared?

Page 3: Critique the document. Describe inaccuracies, prejudices, exaggerations, and misleading statements in the document. Analyze how the document could have offered a more compelling account of the historical period. How could it tell us more about society, politics, and culture in the United States at that time?

Document analysis essays are due by 11:59pm on June 17.

The document analysis essay will account for 15% of the student grade.

Video Assignment

Based on their document analysis papers, and the comments they receive from the teaching assistants, each student will video record a formal 2-minute presentation (120 seconds) on his/her chosen document. The presentation should have the following format:

First 30 seconds: Introduce the document – title, author(s), when was it written, who read it.

Second 30 seconds: Summarize the document – what are the key arguments and purposes of the document.

Third 30 seconds: Contextualize the document – explain what the document tells us about its time, place, and the larger history of the period.

Fourth 30 seconds: Critique the document – assess the accuracy, prejudices, exaggerations, and impact of the document. Tell us what made the document effective or ineffective in achieving its purpose.

The goal of this assignment is to give students experience with delivering a formal presentation. The TAs will grade the presentations based on:

1. Organization;
2. Clarity of presentation;
3. Fulfillment of all four substantive components described above;
4. Fluency of presentation.

Guidelines for recording the video include:

- If you record your video using a phone, please turn the phone sideways to record in landscape mode.
- Review the video for sound and picture quality before submitting.
- Submit only one 120-second video per student
- Construct the file name: “UTEID_Video” (without quotation marks)
- .mp4 and .mov formats are strongly suggested

Detailed instructions for submitting the video through Canvas will be provided.

The video presentations are due by 11:59pm on July 1.

The video presentations will account for 15% of the student grade.

Final Exam (1 Question)

The course will conclude with a take-home examination. It will cover material from the entire semester. The professor will distribute an examination question at 12pm on July 9 – the last lecture module date. Students should write a 1200 word (4 double-spaced pages, 12-point font) answer to the question. The student essay should make use of material from assigned readings, class lectures, and weekly discussions. Students may consult books and discuss their answers with one another. Each essay, however, should reflect the **original writing of each student**. Students should proofread their essays for clarity, substance, and style (grammatical mistakes, passive voice, and sloppy writing will incur grade deductions.) **Students must submit their final examination answer by 11:59pm on July 11.** We will not accept late submissions.

This examination will account for 25% of each student's grade.

This course uses the +/- grading system; students should note that their final grade breakdown will reflect this system.

Grades

Weekly Response Essays:	20%
Document Analysis:	15%
Video Assignment:	15%
Final Exam:	25%
Video Ping Attendance:	25%

Final grades will be based on +/- letter grade system.

A = 94-100

A- = 90-93

B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86

B- = 80-83

C+ = 77-79

C = 74-76

C- = 70-73

D+ = 67-69

D = 64-66

D- = 60-63

F = 0-60

Required Readings

Each lecture, listed below, has specific required readings in the assigned books and primary documents. The assigned books must be purchased or borrowed from the library (see below). The primary documents are available online, linked to each lecture through Canvas. **You are required to complete the assigned readings before you watch each recorded lecture. You must do all of the reading.**

Assigned Books

All of the books are available in paperback and electronic versions.

Hahn, Steven. *A Nation Under Our Feet: Black Political Struggles in the Rural South from Slavery to the Great Migration* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005).

May, Elaine Tyler. *Fortress America: How We Embraced Fear and Abandoned Democracy* (New York: Basic Books, 2017).

McGerr, Michael. *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America, 1870-1920* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

McPherson, James M. *Abraham Lincoln and the Second American Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

Ngai, Mae. *Impossible Subjects: Illegal Aliens and the Making of Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014).

Suri, Jeremi. *Power and Protest: Global Revolution and the Rise of Détente* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2005).

Week 1 (modules available 6/4):

- 6/4 Module 1: Introduction
No reading assignments.
- 6/5 Module 2: The Civil War and the Second American Revolution
McPherson, 3-64;
Hahn, 62-115;
Primary Documents on Canvas.

Response Essays for Modules 1 and 2 Due Saturday, June 6 at 11:59pmWeek 2 (modules available 6/4):

- 6/8 Module 3: Reconstruction and its Achievements
McPherson, 131-52;
Hahn, 163-215;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/9 Module 4: Politics and Society in the Shadow of Reconstruction
Hahn, 265-313;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/10 Module 5: The New South
Hahn, 317-411;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/11 Module 6: Gilded Age Society and Global Capitalism
Live Zoom Session 11:00am to 12:00pm CDT
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/12 Module 7: Imperialism
Hahn, 412-64;
Primary Documents on Canvas.

Response Essays for Modules 3-7 due Saturday, June 13 at 11:59pmWeek 3 (modules available 6/14):

- 6/15 Module 8: Populism
Hahn, 465-76;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/16 Module 9: Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and the Progressives
McGerr, xiii-xvi, 3-74;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/17 Module 10: The Great War and the Progressives

McGerr, 77-218;
Primary Documents on Canvas.

Document analysis essay due by 11:59pm on June 17.

- 6/18 Module 11: Herbert Hoover and the Associative State
McGerr, 221-319;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/19 Module 12: The Great Depression
Ngai, 17-90;
Primary Documents on Canvas.

Response Essays for Modules 8-12 due Saturday, June 20 at 11:59pm

Week 4 (modules available 6/21):

- 6/22 Module 13: Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/23 Module 14: The New Deal and the Coming of World War II
Live Zoom Session 4:00pm-5:00pm
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/24 Module 15: The Origins of the Cold War
Ngai, 127-166, 175-201;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/25 Module 16: Cold War Society and Culture
Ngai, 202-224.
- 6/26 Module 17: Nuclear Stalemate and the American Economic Miracle
May, 13-56;
Primary Documents on Canvas.

Response Essays for Modules 13-17 due Saturday, June 27 at 11:59pm

Week 5 (available 6/28):

- 6/29 Module 18: The Second Reconstruction
Suri, 7-43, 88-130;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 6/30 Module 19: The Vietnam War
Ngai, 227-64;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 7/1 Module 20: The Global Disruption of 1968
Live Zoom Session, 6:00pm-7:00pm CDT
Suri, 131-163;
Primary Documents on Canvas.

Video Presentations due by 11:59pm on July 1.

- 7/3 Module 21: The New South (Again) and American Politics in the 1970s
Suri, 164-259;
Primary Documents on Canvas.

Response Essays for Modules 18-21 due Saturday, July 4 at 11:59pm

Week 6 (available 7/5):

- 7/6 Module 22: The Reagan Revolution and the End of the Cold War
May, 57-95;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 7/7 Module 23: Millennials in American History
Suri, 260-65;
Ngai, xxi-xxviii;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 7/8 Module 24: Free and Unfree Labor
May 161-94;
Primary Documents on Canvas.
- 7/9 Module 25: The Election of 2016 and the Future of American History
No reading assignments.

Response Essays for Modules 22-24 due Thursday, July 9, at 11:59pm (No Response Essay due for Module 25)

Take-home exam distributed at 12pm on July 9.

The final exam is due by 11:59pm on July 11. We will not accept late exams, no exceptions!