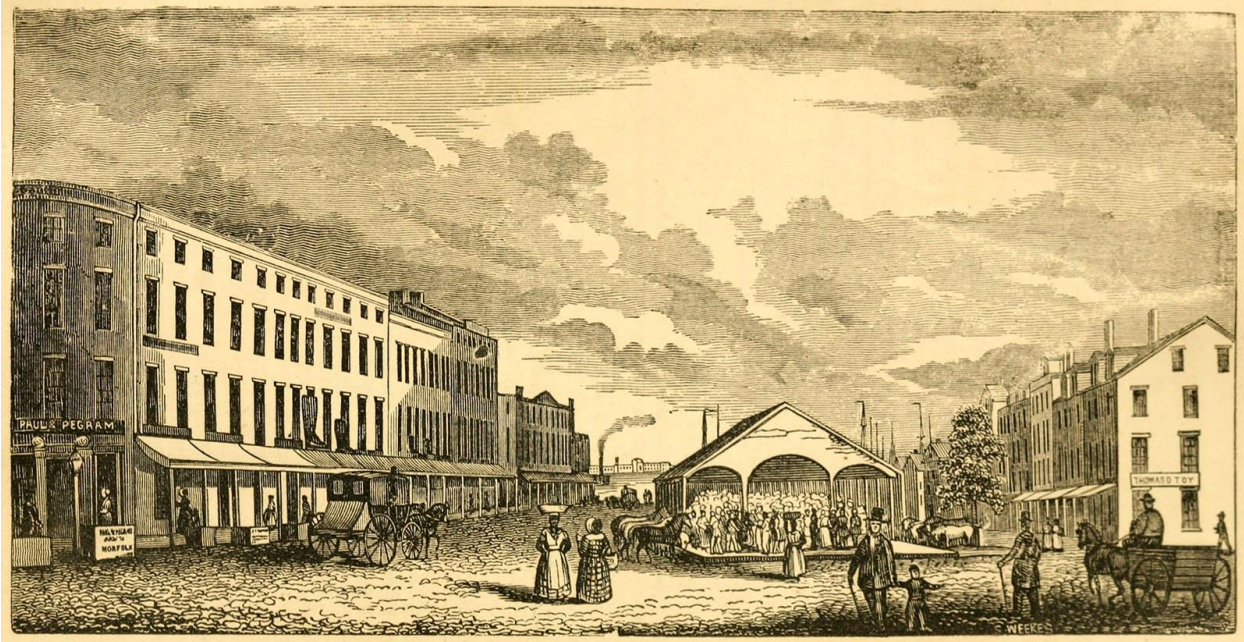




History 2610.401 American History to 1865 Asynchronous Online 8- Week 1 Fall 2026

Instructional Team

Instructor: Joshua I. Lopez (A-G)

Office: Wooten Hall A239

Email: Joshua.Lopez@unt.edu

****Please email me using Canvas email***

Zoom Room: <https://unt.zoom.us/j/7778155406>

Office Hours: Thursdays, 1:30pm-3:30pm, or by appointment

Teaching Assistants

Grace Kola-Balogun (H-O)

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About The Course

Course Description

In this course, we will explore American history from the pre-colonial period to the Civil War. While exploring American history, you will learn how to think with historical documents, or primary sources. You will learn how to contextualize and interpret primary sources; understand the perspectives presented in them; assess what historical documents may or may not be able to tell you about the past; and consider the significance of the people, events, and ideas they detail. Through our focus on primary sources, we will prioritize process and inquiry over the accumulation of facts, names, and dates in order to think more critically about history, how it is made, and its significance to us today.

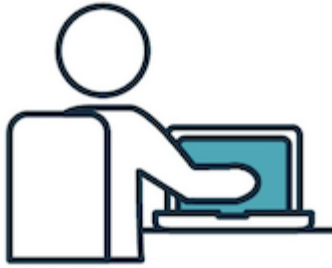
Course Prerequisites or Other Restrictions

There are no prerequisites or other restrictions for this course.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. However, any changes I make will not be substantial, and I will communicate fully with you and give you ample time to prepare.





Course Structure

This course is delivered 100% online. The class is also asynchronous. I will make weekly modules available to you at least two weeks in advance, so that you may pace yourself through the course in a manner that suits your schedule and needs. Because we do not have set meeting times, you have a degree of flexibility that is unavailable in the traditional, in-person classroom. You choose when you read and study for the course as long as your assignments are completed by the due date. The class is also on an accelerated schedule. We will be learning 16 weeks worth of material in half the time. Over the 8-week session, it is important that you remain consistent and up-to-date with the course so that you do not fall behind. Successful students in this course, then, must be self-directed and self-motivated. What you take away from the course will be determined by how much time and effort you put into it.

Objectives and Outcomes



American History State Course Objectives

Courses in this category focus on the consideration of past events and ideas relative to the United States. Courses involve 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. Successful students in this course will develop:

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

History 2610 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to:

- Explain the main ideas presented in primary sources
- Paraphrase primary sources
- Contextualize primary sources in their historical context
- Analyze the language and imagery used in historical documents
- Assess the significance of primary sources

Materials



This course uses open educational resources that are accessed electronically. Additionally, this course uses a low-cost, electronic documentary reader. I may provide other readings and resources such as handouts, short articles, links to websites and webpages, and other files via Canvas. You are responsible for accessing these materials. If you need assistance, please contact me or a teaching assistant immediately. Additionally, students will need access to a computer, speakers, reliable internet access, and a word processor, such as Microsoft Word or Google Docs.

American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook, edited by Joseph Locke and Ben Wright. This is an open-source reader, meaning it can be easily accessed online for free at any time here: <https://www.americanyawp.com/>

Containing Multitudes: A Documentary Reader of US History Volume I: To 1877 edited by Wesley G. Phelps and Jennifer Jensen Wallach. Purchase access code through UNT Bookstore.

Technical Assistance

Part of working in online environments like Canvas involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UIT Help Desk: UIT Student Help Desk site (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

Telephone Availability:

- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm

Laptop Checkout: 8am-7pm

Course Requirements and Grading

Assignments

Weekly Reading and Writing Assignments

My goal in this course is to invite students into the process of historical inquiry. Over the course of the semester, we will read primary sources, connect them to their historical context, and read them closely. We will also communicate what we learn about a time period, historical event, or person through our inquiry in a variety of writing assignments. This means that reading, writing, and thinking are central to what we do in this class. Students are expected to complete weekly reading assignments, which include chapters from the textbook, *American Yawp*, and assigned primary sources. The reading and writing requirements may be vigorous but I assure you that consistent and genuine engagement with this course will be rewarding.

Weekly Primary Source Analysis (5 assignments scored at 40 points each; 200 points)

Students will practice primary source analysis in this weekly assignment. This assignment will guide students through the process of analyzing historical documents in preparation for the Midterm exam and Signature Assignment.

Midterm Exam (100 points)

Students will complete a midterm exam where they will be assessed on their comprehension of course reading materials and primary source analysis.

The Signature Assignment (100 points)

Students will complete the core assessment which evaluates what students have learned about primary source analysis and contextualization. Students will be asked to write an argumentative essay, and they must incorporate evidence from primary sources.

Historical Documents and Artifacts Research Project (200 points)

Students will conduct a mini-research project where they will seek out historical documents and artifacts and create a slide presentation explaining the significance of their historical sources. The project will consist of:

- Topic Proposal (40 points)
- Primary Sources Worksheet (60 points)
- Final Slide Presentation (100 points)

Grades Break Down and Grading Scale

- **Weekly Primary Source Analysis:** 200 points
- **Midterm Exam:** 100 points
- **Signature Assignment:** 100 points
- **Historical Documents and Artifacts Research Project:** 200 points

Total Percentage Possible: 600 points

- **A** = 540 - 600
- **B** = 480 - 539
- **C** = 420 - 479
- **D** = 360 - 419
- **F** = 359 - 0

Course Policies

Communication Expectations and Etiquette



During office hours, the instructional team's priority is answering your questions and responding to your emails. If you email us during our office hours, we will respond right away. **Outside of office hours, you may still contact us, but we will respond to emails within a 24-hour period. We may not respond to emails during the weekend.** If you contact us during the weekend, please be aware that we will receive your message, and we will contact you as soon as possible on the following Monday.

When you contact me, the instructor, please email me via Canvas email. Canvas email assists me by sorting my email by class. This helps me to identify which course section students belong to, and I am able to assist you in a timely manner. Please only email me via Canvas email. Students who do not use Canvas email to contact me may not receive a response from me. An exception to this policy are official university notices from the Dean of Students, UNT's CARE Team, the office of Disability Access, UNT Athletics, and other departments who may be writing on your behalf.

Finally, please note that all communication between students, the instructor, and teaching assistants are considered exchanges between professionals and should be written accordingly. I will expect all students to communicate in a manner consistent with a professional setting. Professional communication includes using an appropriate greeting, clear and thoughtful language, complete sentences, and a courteous tone. Your emails should clearly state the purpose of the communication and avoid slang, excessive informality, demands, or language that could be interpreted as disrespectful.

Unprofessional communication may result in a request to revise and resend the message and, in repeated or serious cases, may be addressed in accordance with university conduct policies. This policy is intended to help students develop professional communication skills that are essential both in college and beyond.

You may use the example below as a template or guide for composing your own emails.

Example of a Professional Email:

Hi Professor Lopez,

I am writing to you about my grade on the midterm exam. I did not score as high as I hoped, and I wanted to talk with you so that I may understand why I received the score that I did. I have class during your office hours. May you be available some time in the afternoon on Monday or Wednesday? I look forward to your reply.

Best,

Student name

Late Work

Assignments are due on the date and time listed in the course schedule. Each week, a weekly primary source analysis will be due on Sundays by 11:59pm. Major assignments will also be due on their schedule due dates by 11:59pm.

Late work will not be accepted except in cases of documented, extenuating circumstances.

Extenuating circumstances are serious, unavoidable situations that are beyond a student's control, such as medical emergencies, family emergencies, or university-approved obligations. When students are faced with such circumstances, they must notify me as soon as possible and provide appropriate documentation. I will grant approval for late submission on a case by case basis. Approval for late submission is not guaranteed. Documentation is required for approval for late submission.

Technical issues, workload from other courses, work schedules, travel, or forgetting a due date do not qualify as extenuating circumstances. Assignments submitted late without prior approval and documentation will receive a grade of zero.

Academic Dishonesty and AI-Usage

Academic dishonesty, according to UNT's "Student Academic Integrity" policy, includes the intentional and unintentional engagement in cheating, plagiarism, and the facilitation of academic misconduct, to name a few. Students who are suspected to be engaging in such activities may face receiving a failing grade on an assignment, failing the course, or being reported to the dean of students. Cheating and plagiarism include submitting a completely AI-generated response.

In regards to generative AI, I understand that you will use such tools in various writing activities both in and out of the classroom. I will therefore support your understanding of the uses, ethics, and limitations of generative AI tools. This technology has many abilities and also limitations; its use requires research skills, critical thinking, and digital literacy. Therefore, if students use generative AI, they will be expected to use it **responsibly** and **transparently**. ***Students may only use generative AI as a tool in the writing process, specifically to brainstorm, research, outline, and edit and proofread assignments.*** Students should note, too, that responses generated by AI are not always accurate and they may contain misinformation, incorrect citations, and incomplete references, so students will be required to review, revise, and integrate their own knowledge and skill in order to be considered for the highest score possible.

Students who use generative AI in their assignments must acknowledge their use through citation and annotation. The following is a template for citing your use of generative AI:

Chat-GPT-3 (or name of Generative AI-Tool). (YYYY, Month DD of query). "Text of your query."
Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>.

Additionally, I will expect you to describe in your own words the strategies and techniques you used to compose with AI tools in a descriptive annotation of 2-5 sentences following your citation. **Even if you use Grammarly to proofread your assignment, please provide a citation and brief note as the AI-Detection software cannot distinguish between AI-Generated content and softwares.** Be as specific as possible in your annotation. It is your responsibility to be transparent and proactive. Both citation and annotation are required. Failure to acknowledge your use of AI tools through citation and transparency through a descriptive annotation will result in an automatic 0 for academic dishonesty.

Students in this class may only use generative AI to brainstorm, research, and outline for their assignments as well to proofread and edit their work. Students whose work is flagged for 40% or more for AI-generated content but does not contain the required citation and annotation will result in an automatic 0 for academic dishonesty.

Example of a citation and annotation:

Chat-GPT-3. (2025, May 1). "What is the historical context for Christopher Columbus's voyage journals?." Generated using OpenAI. <https://chatgpt.com/c/695c35d8-ee88-8326-9e1eb97bf5131942>

I asked ChatGPT for help understanding the historical context surrounding Columbus's document. I read its answers and checked for accuracy using American Yawp. Then, I used ChatGPT's response to help me write my historical context section in the essay.

Course Schedule

Week 1: August 17 - August 23

American Origins and Making an Atlantic World

Readings:

From American Yawp:

- Chapter 1: American Origins
- Chapter 2: Making an Atlantic World
- Journal of Christopher Columbus, 1492
- Bartolome de las Casas describes the exploitation of Indigenous people, 1542
- The Story of the Virgin of Guadalupe, 1649

Assignments Due August 23 before midnight:

- Weekly Primary Source Analysis #1

Week 2: August 24 - August 30

Colliding Cultures and British North America

Readings:

From *American Yawp*:

- Chapter 3: Colliding Cultures
- Chapter 4: British North America
- Rose Davis is Sentenced to a Life of Slavery, 1715

From *Containing Multitudes*:

- Document 3.3: Colonial Virginia Laws

Watch: TedTalk, "The History of Chocolate" (on Canvas)

Assignments Due August 30 before midnight:

- Weekly Primary Source Analysis #2

Week 3: August 31 - September 6

Colonial Society and Conducting Primary Source Research

Readings:

From *American Yawp*:

- Chapter 5: Colonial Society
- Royall Family Portrait, 1741

Assignments Due September 6 before midnight:

- Weekly Primary Source Analysis #3
- Historical Documents and Artifacts Research Project - Topic Proposal

Week 4: September 7 - September 13

American Revolution and the Midterm Exam

Readings:

From the *American Yawp*:

- Chapter 6: The American Revolution
- Women in South Carolina Experience Occupation, 1780

From *Containing Multitudes*:

- Document 5.2: The Boycott Agreement of Women in Boston

Read Jennifer Gonzalez's "The Hands that Spun the Revolution" (On Canvas)

Assignments Due September 13 before midnight:

- Midterm Exam

Week 5: September 14 - September 20

The New Nation and Getting Forward

Readings:

From *American Yawp*:

- Chapter 7: The New Nation
- Chapter 9: Getting Forward
- Harriett H. Robinson Remembers a Mill Worker's Strike, 1836

From *Containing Multitudes*:

- Document 8.2: Lucy Larcom Describes Working in a New England Textile Mill

Assignments Due September 20 before midnight:

1. Weekly Primary Source Analysis #4
2. Historical Documents and Artifacts Research Project - Primary Source Worksheet

Week 6: September 21 - September 27

Growth and Conflict and The National Crisis

Readings:

From *American Yawp*:

- Chapter 11: Growth and Conflict
- Chapter 12: The National Crisis
- Proslavery Cartoon, 1850

From *Containing Multitudes*:

- Document 11.1: Harriett Jacobs Describes Being Sexually Exploited
- Document 11.3: Frederick Douglass Describes Longing For Freedom

Assignments Due September 27 before midnight:

1. Weekly Primary Source Analysis #5

Week 7: September 28 - October 4

The Civil War

Readings:

From *American Yawp*:

- Chapter 13: The Civil War
- General Benjamin F. Butler reacts to self-emancipation, 1861
- William Henry Singleton, a formerly enslaved man, recalls fighting for the Union, 1922

From *Containing Multitudes*:

- Document 14.2: Hannah Johnson, Mother of a Black Soldier, Writes to Lincoln

Assignments Due October 4 before midnight:

1. Signature Assignment

Week 8: October 5 - October 9

Historical Documents and Artifacts Research Project

Assignments Due FRIDAY October 9 before midnight:

1. Historical Documents and Artifacts Research Project - Presentation Slides