

HISTORY 2620.431/450: The United States Since 1865



Fall 2026

Class Location: The World Wide Web (Asynchronous)

Instructor:	Dr. Manny A. Grajales
Office Location:	Wooten Hall, 266
Virtual Office Hours:	Wednesday 3pm to 4pm or by appointment I also have in-person office hours for my in-person classes: Monday/Wednesday, 11-12 & 2:30-3:30
Instructor's University Email:	Manuel.Grajales@unt.edu
Graduate Teaching Assistant(s):	
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Course Materials:

My intention is for materials to be cost-efficient for students. Required and recommended readings will be available online or through e-campus. **NOTE:** You do **NOT** have to buy American YAWP. The book is FREE online through Canvas or the website provided below.

Required:

- *The American Yawp*, Edited by Joseph Locke and Ben Wright: Stanford University Press. This book is free, available online at <http://www.americanyawp.com/>
 - *Containing Multitudes: A Documentary Reader of the American Past*, Edited by Wesley G. Phelps and Jennifer Jensen Wallach. Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 2022. (E-Reader: Can be found at UNT Bookstore, Amazon, etc.)
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Why History?

History is the sum total of human experience in all its complexity. It is also the only guide we have to the decisions that will shape our future. The study of history allows us to see parallels, analogies, and recurrent patterns, detect long-term trends and forces, and understand what is really different about the present. History shows us how past decisions shape and limit future options and how every facet of life is socially and culturally constructed. Equally important, history exposes us to the full richness of human experience and introduces us to fascinating individuals and events and to long-term processes that gradually transform our lives.

Course Description

This course is designed to explore major issues in US History since 1865. We will trace several themes from the past century and a half to understand the political, social, economic, and cultural development of the United States since 1865. In this class, our focus is not just learning what happened but analyzing why things happened. Several basic questions will arise throughout the course: What major historical events impacted America's development as a nation during the last 150+ years? How does race, class, and region shape ideas of citizenship and identity? What events/figures contributed to the development of the United States' national self-image? In the process, students will learn to think critically about the past, and to evaluate and synthesize information from a variety of historical sources and incorporate it into a coherent argument.

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

1. Define key historical terms, individuals, ideas, events, and the significance of each in American history.
2. Draw direct connections between historical events and the consequential impact.
3. Critically analyze historical primary sources.
4. Apply the foundational knowledge of history to understanding present circumstances.
5. Identify the significance of why we study history.

Course Assignments/Grading Breakdown

***Note on Citing for Discussion posts, Exams, other written assignments:**

I want you all to do outside research using UNT Libraries and other avenues. If you incorporate a source from outside of course materials, make sure to create bibliography at the end of your assignment listing those outside sources. However, if it is painfully obvious you used AI sources, it will be graded harshly based on the information offered or a **Zero** if confirmed. *Also, no citations or blatantly incorrect citing will mean a **15 points deduction off the assignment.**

Discussion Posts: (5 discussions, 25% total)

Throughout the semester, you will complete five discussion posts. Each discussion post will answer prompt questions in a blog-style post. The discussion responses you submit should all follow the same format and style. These should be 250-350 words and are meant to be written in

a "blog style," as opposed to more formal writing. You must show your work (Citations) to demonstrate how you formed your idea or opinion. The intention behind this is to map the *process* of learning and analyzing history--**therefore it should have a tone of personal reflection in addition to analysis** to reflect on the content you've learned in this unit. More instruction will be available on Canvas.

Chapter Quizzes: (6 quizzes, 30% total) Five quizzes will be assigned at different points of the semester in Canvas that focus on the materials you read for that specific chapter (for example, you will have a quiz assigned for Week 4 on Chapter 3). You will answer five questions that focus on the materials you read in American YAWP. The questions will not be about names and dates. Instead, questions will focus on concepts. More instructions will be available on Canvas.

Primary Source Analysis: (15%)

At the end of week 11, you will submit an essay that is between 700-800 words in length that answers the question asked using one or more primary sources from the relevant portion of the reader or the source(s) provided by your instructor. Your essay should contain a thesis or argument that answers the question and should use evidence from the source to support that argument. You may use your textbook, the additional reader, and resources in the module to complete this assignment. Further directions about this assignment will be provided in the Canvas course shell. **Note: This is an assignment you can start and work on throughout the semester. Please don't try to Speed run this (ex: wait until 90 minutes before the due date).**

Exams: (3 exams, 10% each exam, 30% total) Students will have three exams throughout the semester, as indicated in the syllabus. Each exam will cover assigned readings, lectures, class discussions, etc. Exams will consist of a short answer identification section and an essay. The written component affords students opportunities to discuss and analyze the historical context and significance of the themes discussed in class. Exams will be available on Canvas. After we finish the last lecture of the unit, I will open the exam that day. From there, you will have five days to complete the exam online. **NOTE: The final exam will be optional**, based on content from Chapters 25-29 instead of cumulative. More details on opting out of the final will be discussed during week 1.

Grading

Semester grades will be determined by the following breakdown (tabulated on Canvas). Left column is the assignment breakdown and percentage. Right is the Grading scale for the course:

Discussion Posts (5 total)	25%	90% or more	A
Quizzes (6 total)	30%	80-89%	B
Primary Source Analysis	15%	70-79%	C
Exam 1	10%	60-69%	D
Exam 2	10%	59 or less	F
Final Exam	10%		

Course Expectations

The following are the basic expectations for success in this course.

- **Come to class prepared.** You must keep up with the assignments to perform well in this course. Do not hesitate to ask questions during lecture or after class.
- Quizzes, exams, and writing assignments must be completed on the scheduled due date, unless the student provides a valid, documented excuse. Absence on exam days will only be excused with appropriate documentation (e.g., doctor's note, letter from coach/Academic Advisor).
- All assignments can be discussed with the instructor by email or in person during office hours.
- **To pass this class, all assignments must be completed!**

Completing Assignments and Late Work: Although this is an asynchronous online class with no attendance policy, it is critical for you to complete your assignments to pass the class. This class is self-paced: You can go week by week or get a few weeks done if you are trying to get ahead. A few things I would suggest the following if you are considering to work ahead:

1. Do not try getting everything done in the modules by week 3 (as an example) and instead go by each unit. That way you will be able to get grades back and understand the materials and the structure/format of the assignment. Trying to work on stuff for Unit 13 during Week 4 when you have not received feedback on a discussion post will save you from scrambling to redo the Unit 3 assignment.
2. The due dates will be in your Canvas calendar and in the syllabus. Keep that in mind when you are managing your assignment priorities for other classes and professional/personal engagements. Assignments are due when stated on Canvas. Although Canvas will provide reminders, it is your responsibility to know when assignments are due (through Canvas, the syllabus, etc).
3. When you submit a written assignment, that is final. I encourage getting stuff done early if that works for your schedule. However, if you submit something, it is final. You will have to discuss with me about any reason for resubmitting an assignment.
4. I understand life happens: Work, family, other assignments, the realization that an assignment might have needed more time, etc. If you reach a point where you are freaking out about a deadline, all assignments (except the final) have a **12-hour grace period** after the set due date to still be submitted and counted as on-time.
5. If you require an extension to submit the assignment late, email me and we can discuss the timeline and any late penalty that will be attached (if applicable). **I am the only one that can grant extensions.** If you reach out to the TAs, they will just forward the email to me. I ask you to let me know about the need for an extension well in advance of the due date. However, I do understand that emergencies happen suddenly, and I will take that into account.

Communication with Instructor/Graduate Teaching Assistants:

Please come to talk to me about any concerns, confusion, or issues that arise during the semester. If you are struggling with the class, need to talk out an idea about your paper, or need to talk about something, the times listed for office hours, making an appointment for office hours, or email are the best ways to communicate with me.

When emailing me or the TAs, ensure the following:

- 1) Properly address your professor/TA (Professor Grajales, Mr/Ms, for example)
- 2) Use UNT emails only- other emails often go into spam/junk
- 3) Identify yourself with your entire name, the course you are in by listing the course number in the subject line of the email (I teach multiple classes...this will help me know who you are and how to answer your question), and your specific question/request
- 4) Ensure your email is professional in approach and language, especially if asking about grades, assignments, or something else
- 5) Ensure you address your professors appropriately (Hello, Professor Grajales, for example)
- 6) Ensure you respond/acknowledge that you have received the information you needed
- 7) If you need some help with writing emails to professors, UNT provides this handy Online Communication Tips page
- 8) Disrespectful language or action in emails/messages will not be tolerated, ESPECIALLY if directed at Teaching Assistants. I will handle any disrespect, abuse, etc to the letter of university policy.

A few notes, guidelines, and suggestions:

- Any discussion of grades must be done in person/Zoom during my office hours (or by appointment), as FERPA protocol dictates grades cannot be discussed over email.
- Myself and the TAs will answer within 24 to 48 hours.
- Questions that can be found on the syllabus will receive lower response priority.
- Will there be extra credit? That depends on if there are events on campus that qualify.
- If I hear nothing from you, I assume everything is fine... Letting me know concerns early allows us to find a solution to the problem.
- Don't wait until Week 13 when options are limited. If you're struggling, reach out! I want you to succeed!
- **NOTE on grading protocol for Written assignments:** After I return written assignments to you, there is a **mandatory 24-hour reflection** period before requesting a meeting. This allows you to read through and understand the comments made.

Course Schedule

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is subject to change at the professor's discretion. However, any changes made will be communicated fully, with ample time to adjust.

Unit 1: End of Gilded Age to the Progressive Era (American YAWP Ch 15 through 18)

Week 1 [Week of August 17th]

Introduction to class/expectations; Writing Tips/Campus resources; What is History?

Due: Establishing Community post, Sunday, August 23rd (11:59pm)

Week 2 [Week of August 24th] - Reconstruction, Chapter 15

Due: Chapter 15 quiz, Sunday, August 30th (11:59pm)

Week 3 [Week of August 31st] - Capital and Labor, Chapter 16

Due: Chapter 16 Quiz, due Sunday, September 6th (11:59pm)

Week 4 [Week of September 7th] - The West, Chapter 17

Labor Day, September 7th

Due: Chapter 17 Discussion Post, Sunday, September 13th (11:59 pm)

Week 5 [Week of September 14th] - Life in Industrial America, Chapter 18

Due: Exam 1. Exam is due by Sunday, September 20th (11:59 pm)

Unit 2: World War I to End of World War II: (American YAWP, Ch. 19-23)

Week 6 [Week of September 21st] - American Empire Chapter 19 and The Progressive Era, Chapter 20

Due: Chapter 20 Quiz, Sunday, September 27th (11:59pm)

Week 7 [Week of September 28th] - World War I, Chapter 21

Due: Chapter 21 Discussion post, Sunday, October 4th (11:59 pm)

Week 8 [Week of October 5th] - The New Era, Chapter 22

Due: Chapter 22 Quiz, October 11th (11:59pm)

Week 9 [Week of October 12th] - Chapter 23, The Great Depression

Due: Chapter 23 discussion post, October 18th (11:59pm)

Week 10 [Week of October 19th] - Chapter 24, World War II

Due: Exam 2. Submit, October 25th (11:59pm)

Unit 3: Post-War America to Current: (American YAWP Ch 24-28)

Week 11 [Week of October 26th] - Chapter 25, The Cold War

Due: Chapter 25 quiz, November 1st (11:59pm)

Continue to work on Primary Source Analysis-Due next week

Week 12 [Week of November 2nd] - Chapter 26, An Affluent Society

Due: Primary Source Analysis, November 8th (11:59pm)

Week 13 [Week of November 9th] - Chapter 27, The Sixties

Due: Chapter 27 quiz, November 15th (11:59pm)

Week 14 [Week of November 16th] - Chapter 28, The Unraveling

Due: Chapter 28 discussion post due Sunday, November 22nd (11:59 pm)

Thanksgiving Break November 23rd to 29th

NO CLASS! NO ASSIGNMENTS DUE! REST!

Week 15 [Week of November 30th] - Chapter 29, Triumph of the Right

No assignment-Finish up and prepare for [Optional] Final

Finals Week: December 7th to December 11th

Final is Optional. For those taking it, the Final will be due December 8th.

Course Technology & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

Provide a list of the minimum technology requirements for students, such as:

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

Provide a list of course-specific technical skills learners must have to succeed in the course, such as:

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software
- Using spreadsheet programs
- Using presentation and graphics programs

Campus Resources

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment 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 \(Links to an external site.\)](http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)

(<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

Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language on the basis of race, color, national origin,

religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law will not be tolerated.

- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual’s experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!” Or being a boomer...your choice.
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type. See these [Engagement Guidelines \(Links to an external site.\)](https://clear.unt.edu/onlinecommunication-tips) (https://clear.unt.edu/onlinecommunication-tips) for more information.

ADA Accommodation Statement: The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of the student. For additional information, refer to the [Office of Disability Access](http://www.unt.edu/oda) website (http://www.unt.edu/oda). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.