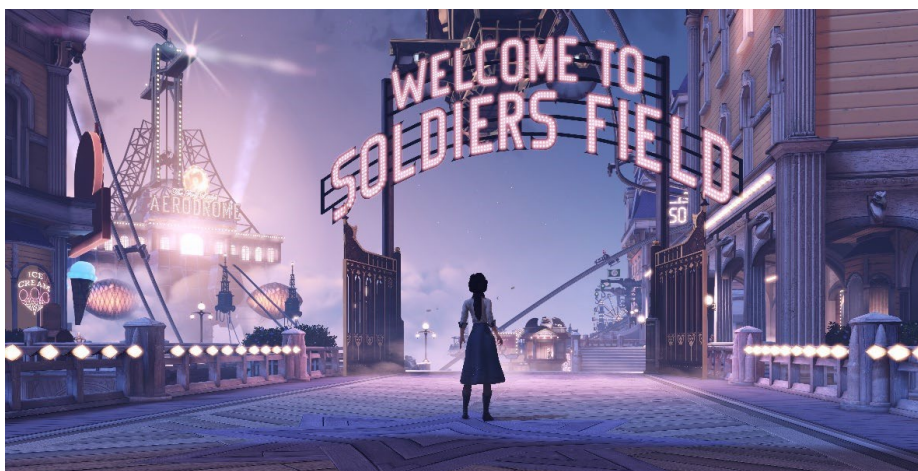


HISTORY 2685.001: The United States Since 1865 (Honors)



Fall 2026

Class Location: Wooten Hall, Room 210

Class Days: Monday/Wednesday/Friday 12:20pm to 1:10pm

Instructor:	Dr. Manny A. Grajales
Office Location:	Wooten Hall, 266
Office Hours:	Monday/Wednesday, 11am to 12pm, 2:30 to 3:30pm; or by appointment
Instructor's University Email:	Manuel.Grajales@unt.edu

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.)

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. 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.

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.

Prerequisite:

Acceptance into the Honors College.

Class Theme: Teaching U.S. History through Gaming (Video Games/Table top Games)

This semester we will explore U.S. History since 1865 with a particular focus on how to make history accessible and interactive. Whether the audience is students in K-12 education, college, community members, developers, etc, what are creative ways we can make historical stories (both the popular big names and the perspectives of everyday people) understandable, engaging, and interactive. We can also ponder how to create a game that makes you think without it automatically being coded as an "educational" game, which comes with its own stigmas.

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

Attendance/Participation (15%)

Your attendance is necessary for this class to understand the material. Additionally, the class will be conversational with an emphasis on group discussion and activities on Fridays that will mean your participation is required. Participation will include opportunities for you all to ask questions, bring up a point you found interesting, hands on work with your peers looking over materials and more. If you have a university excused absence, let me know with as much advanced notice as possible.

Attendance will be graded as follows:

- A-Active participation in class. Consistently attend class (no more than 3 unexcused absences)
- B-Generally participates in class. Generally attend class (no more than 6 unexcused absences)
- C-Shows up, doesn't really talk or interact with peers. Sometimes attend class (9 unexcused absences)
- D-Shows up but doesn't talk or interact with peers. Only attends class half the time (up to 10 unexcused absences)
- F-Shows up but doesn't talk or interact with peers. Absent more than half of the time (13 unexcused absences or more).

Introductory Essay (5%)

Write a short essay (300 to 400 word) introducing yourself. Tell me a little bit about your journey here, your preferred name (if different from class roster), what your major is and your interest in that subject, your own personal interest in history, and what you hope to learn in this class. When telling me about yourself, give me a little insight into you. What are your favorite hobbies? Where have you lived? Or whatever you feel like sharing.

Reflection Essays: (5 discussions, 30% total)

Throughout the semester, you will complete six reflection essays. These will allow you to reflect on and analyze a particular part of historical content that personally intrigued your curiosity or made you think deeply about history. In 500 to 700 words, you will answer a set of guiding questions, making sure to use course materials or materials found through your own research in UNT Library databases. Reflect on the content you've learned in this unit. Then, consider your position/experience and how you relate to this material (yes--you can use first-person). Though there is an overall informal tone to these posts, your answers should employ critical thinking (as opposed to regurgitating material) and effectively apply reading and media sources from the unit's module within your overall analysis.

There are no limits on what you want to focus your reflection on. For example, if you were impacted by the construction feats of the engineers in charge of the building of the Panama Canal when we discuss Geographies of Empire, write about that. **There are six discussion posts open. You are responsible for completing five of these.** More instruction will be given first week of class.

Chapter Quizzes: (5 quizzes, 20% 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 3 on Chapters 15 and 16). You will answer ten 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.

- The quizzes will be set with opportunities to retry the quiz (up to 4 attempts) if you are not satisfied with the grade on your first attempt.
- There will be seven quizzes available. You are responsible for completing five of them.

Primary Source Analysis: (10%)

For your midterm, 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.

Semester Project – Teaching US History through Gaming Lesson/Presentation Plan (two components, 20%)

The class will design a lesson plan, using video games or tabletop games as a central element to teach an audience about US History. The lesson plan has to focus on the content we are discussing in class (US History since 1865). You can all choose a specific Video Game/tabletop game that represents the era or pitch creating your own video game idea (theme, era, genre) and how that would be used to teach the public (K-12; College; Gaming investors; museum; other).

The proposal (worth 5%) will need the following: Your historical era and focus, style of game or real game you will incorporate, what themes of history that game will cover, and a bibliography with at least five sources (due Week 5).

After the proposal is graded, you will individually create a lesson plan for a specific section, which will include a presentation component, an interactive component, and a justification of why this game (one already on the market or one you have created) would effectively teach the history you are focusing on. The project will be worth 15% of your total grade. More project details will be provided on Canvas and during the first week of classes.

Grading

Grades for the semester will be determined according to the following breakdown. There will not The left has the grading percentage; the right the grading scale breakdown:

Attendance/Participation	15%	90% or more	A
Reflection Essays (5 total)	30%	80-89%	B
Quizzes (5 total)	20%	70-79%	C
Primary Source Analysis	10%	60-69%	D
Final Project – Proposal	5%	59 or less	F
Final Project	15%		

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 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).
- Assignments will be locked 72 hours after the assignment due date.
- 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!**

Attendance Policy: Your attendance and attention in class is expected. I urge you to arrive on time, pay careful attention to the lecture/discussion, and remain in class until you are dismissed. Attendance will be taken each day. If you arrive late, check with me after class to ensure that you are not charged with absence. I follow the university policy regarding absences and will discuss this further on the first day. Appointments to see me regarding absences should be made outside of class, whether in person or through email. Please be aware of important dates on the Academic Calendar: Q-drop, Holidays/Reading Days, and final exam schedule.

Late Work Policy: 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 and the options that pop into your head include a sleepless night to finish (which might not be your best work), not submitting anything, or plagiarizing, **all assignments have a 12-hour grace period after the set due date to still be submitted and counted as on-time.**

I ask you to let me know if you need for an extension outside of the grace period well in advance of the due date. However, I understand emergencies happen and will take that into account.

***Note on Citing for 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, if you do not cite or your citations are blatantly incorrect, that will be 20 points off the assignment starting off.**

Communication with Instructor:

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, ensure the following:

- 1) Properly address your professor appropriately (Professor Grajales, for example)
- 2) Use UNT emails only- other emails often go into spam/junk
- 3) Identify the course you are in by listing the course number in the subject line of the email...I teach multiple classes, including multiple classes of this section. I want to make sure I am answering you directly.
- 4) Identify yourself by giving me your entire name and your specific question or request
- 5) Ensure your email is professional in approach and language, especially if asking about grades, assignments, or something else
- 6) Ensure you respond 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

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.
- I will answer within 24 to 48 hours.
- 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 the both of us to find a solution to the problem. Please do not wait until Week 14 or 15 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. Monday and Wednesday will focus on content through discussion. Most Fridays will be dedicated to analyzing text, video, primary sources, and more. There will be some days where we meet in other locations or have guest speakers.

Week 1 – Welcome to the Course (Week of August 17th)

Introduction and expectations; Writing Tips/Learn about campus resources; What is History?

Wednesday – Visit from Doug Campbell, Subject Librarian

Due: Introduction Essay, August 23rd by 11:59pm

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

Due: Reflection #1, Sunday, August 30th (11:59pm)

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

Due: Quiz 1 (Chapters 15 and 16), due Sunday, September 6th (11:59pm)

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

September 7th, Labor Day. No Class

Due: Reflection #2 Discussion Post, Sunday, September 13th (11:59 pm)

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

Due: Quiz #2 (Chapter 17 and 18), Sunday, September 20th (11:59pm)

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

Due: Reflection #3, due Sunday, September 27th (11:59pm)

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

Due: Quiz #3 (Chapters 19 and 20), Sunday, October 4th (11:59 pm)

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

Due: Quiz #4 (Chapters 21 and 22), Sunday, October 11th (11:59pm)

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

Due: Signature Assignment, Sunday, October 18th (11:59pm)

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

Monday – Guest talk by Grant Hanson (UNT Alum), Living History Coordinator,
National Museum of the Pacific War

Due: Reflection #4, due Sunday October 25th (11:59pm)

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

October 30th -Meet in the Media Library (Willis Library, 2nd Floor, 250H or ELL 236)

Due: Quiz #5, Sunday, November 1st (11:59pm)

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

Friday, November 6th – Visit the Texas Fashion Collection Archive (directions available
on Canvas. Dr. Annette Becker will give us a tour.

Due: Reflection #5, Sunday, November 8th (11:59pm)

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

Due: Quiz #6, Sunday, November 15th (11:59pm)

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

Due: Reflection #6, Sunday November 22nd (11:59pm)

THANKSGIVING BREAK, NOVEMBER 23rd through 29th

**Week 15 [Week of November 30th] - The Triumph of the Right, Chapter 29. Finish with The
Nineties and the Turn of the Century**

Due: Quiz #7 (Chapters 28 and 29), due Wednesday, December 2nd (11:59pm)

Due: Final Project, December 4th (11:59pm)

Final Exams Week: December 7th through 11th

Gathering to celebrate semester project – TBD on date

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
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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.
- 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!”
- 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.