

HIST 1301

History of the United States to 1865

M/W 12:30-1:45 p.m. (A-221)

M/W 2:00-3:15 p.m. (A-221)

The Instructor

Professor: Dr. Brian McKnight

Office and Hours: Academic Building 210, Monday through Thursday, 11:00-12:30 and by appointment.

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The Course

In order to effectively study and understand history, I believe that the course must be heavily based in philosophy. This is what you will get in this class. It is my duty to show you various ways in which to view the world, and I hope by doing this I can get you to “think outside of the box.” In order to accomplish this, I am going to challenge you in numerous ways.

Also, it is important to understand that American history is not about memorizing names and dates, it is about simple stories that when put together, provide us with a running account of the trials and triumphs of our nation, whose results will educate us as to our national character...an important moral issue under daily examination worldwide. In this course, we will examine the transformation of America from before the Europeans arrived through the Reconstruction era in an effort to understand the major themes, events, and individuals that guided national development. Hopefully, through our study, we will gain a greater understanding of the nation and its place in history.

The Text

Tyndall, George Brown and David E. Shi. *America: A Narrative History*. Volume I. Brief, 7th edition. New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 2007.

Also Required

Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. Revised Edition. Hill and Wang, 2003.

McKnight's customized reader.

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. 5th Edition. Bedford/St. Martins, 2006.

Sheriff, Carol. *The Artificial River: The Erie Canal and the Paradox of Progress, 1817-1862*. Hill and Wang, 1997.

Calendar

8/24—Classes begin

9/7—Labor Day holiday

9/9—Book Test 1 (*Changes in the Land*)

9/23—Test 1

10/14—Book Test 2 (*Artificial River*)

11/4—Test 2

11/26-11/27—Thanksgiving holiday

12/2—Last Day of Classes

12/7-12/11—Final Exam Week

Attendance

I don't have an attendance policy because I don't need one...I show up for work every day. You, however, should establish a policy for yourself to ensure you attend frequently. Generally speaking, those who attend, do well, those

who are often absent, tend to fail. Even though I give no credit nor take points on the basis of attendance, I do take roll every day and those with exceptional attendance may see a reward at the end of the semester.

Grades

Your final grade will be made up of your grades on two book tests (each is 50% and both will be added together to make one full test grade), two semester tests and the final exam. Each will count 25% toward your final grade.

Important Note: If you email me a paper to print for you, I will charge 25 points for my trouble...so don't do it.

Test format: Your tests will consist of equal parts objective questions and an essay. The essay must not exceed two, doublespaced, typewritten pages. In it, you must write in the traditional five paragraph essay form and develop a clearly stated thesis. There is a method to my madness: If you can write a good brief essay, you can write anything.

Make-up Policy: Make-up tests will be given on the final class meeting. Those who have missed tests will make them up on the final day and time of the last class meeting, those who have not missed tests, will have the day off.

The grading scale that I will use in this course, along with IMPORTANT definitions, is as follows:

A	90-100	Outstanding—"Prominent, excellent, distinguished"
B	80-89	Above Average—"Better than typical, usual, common"
C	70-79	Average—"Typical, usual, common"
D	60-69	Below Average—"Less than typical, usual, common"
F	less than 60	Unacceptable at this academic level

Honor Code

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding the Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the Student Handbook.

Disabilities Statement

Persons with disabilities which may warrant academic accommodations must contact the Student Life Office, Room 112 University Center, in order to request such accommodations prior to any accommodations being implemented. You are encouraged to make this request early in the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

The Law

- Attend the class. This class is not self-paced therefore if you are absent from class, you will be left behind. I do not have the luxury to teach each of you the same information individually so keep up and the best way of doing that is to attend. Also, arrive to class on time, tardiness will put you behind as quickly as absenteeism.
- If you can't keep up with the notes, buy a tape recorder.
- Do not talk while I am talking. I know it is sometimes necessary to clarify something with your neighbor, but at a point, your talking becomes a burden to me. If that happens, I WILL discuss it with you.
- I will consider it a personal affront if your cell phone rings in my class. Do not beep, ring, or vibrate or you will be asked to leave.
- Make a friend upon whom you can depend for notes if for some outstanding reason you must miss class. I will feel no pity for you if you come to class totally surprised by an impending test.
- If you have an 8:00 appointment, be there at 7:55. If your class ends at 11:00, don't start packing up at 10:55. Self-discipline is the key to success and respect follows closely behind.
- In this class, there is no 15 or 30 minute rule. If I am not here when class begins, sit tight. I seldom miss class and I really get upset when I have to stand in line for a copier, show up to class a few minutes late, and find half of the students gone. I don't leave when you are late and you shouldn't leave when I'm late.
- Never be afraid to ask a question. I know a great deal about history but I make mistakes, sometimes very simple ones. If you don't know, nobody will fault you for asking.
- Do not call me at unreasonable hours (10:00 pm-7:00am). I am old and tired and must be in bed at a decent time.
- Do not use any tobacco products in this class. I'd like to say that I abhor their existence and that they should be stricken from our society but I'll stick with "it's disgusting."

- If you need a break, take it. I will not get mad if someone quietly leaves the room however I will consider it a disruption of class if you leave the room while shouting expletives at me and questioning my relationship with my mother.
- Respect the opinions of all.
- Do not huff, puff, or roll your eyes at me after I give you back a test for which you didn't study. Studying for tests is your responsibility, not mine.
- If you need help, ask. You can call me or e-mail me with any academically related question or dilemma you have and I will give it my all. I love my students and will remain your friend long after this class ends so never agonize over something that I may be able to help with.
- Wear proper attire to class. This is an institution of higher education, not a beach, so don't show up shirtless or shoeless. Also, don't wear "distracting" or offensive clothing.
- If you have a problem with me, discuss it with me.
- Plagiarism, the copying of another's work as in copying off the internet or out of a book and handing it in as your own, will not be tolerated. If proven, you will fail the course. I can spot it a mile away.
- If you want a good grade, study. Do not try to give me a guilt trip over a hard test, etc... You are the only person who decides your grade.
- If you are having problems with the class, come see me. I will help you all I can.
- You are responsible for everything in the Student Handbook.
- Any form of cheating will earn you instant dismissal from class with an "F" for a final grade.
- **Syllabus changes are at the discretion of the instructor!!!**
- A Note on Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the copying, either intentionally or by accident, the actual text or spirit of another's work without proper attribution. If you are caught cheating in any form, including plagiarism, you will be dismissed from the class with a failing final grade and your case referred to the appropriate office. I am serious about this and will not allow transgressions to pass unpunished, so do not take chances.