

Course Syllabus

Course: U.S. History I, 3 credits

Days and Times: Online, Distance Learning

Semester: Fall 2019

Department: Social Science

Instructor: Victor A. Triay

On-campus Office: Snow Hall, 508

Contact: The best and fastest way to contact me is via Blackboard (see "Messages"). I prefer Blackboard messages to emails sent to my regular college email.

WELCOME

I would like to welcome all of you to HIS 201. My name is Victor A. Triay, and it is my pleasure to be your professor for this course.

As I have always done in my courses, I will begin by giving you a brief glimpse into my background and experience. As some of you may know, I was born and raised in Miami, Florida. I graduated from high school in 1984, and subsequently attended Miami-Dade Community College. From there, I went on to the University of Florida, where I received my B.A. in history in 1988. During my undergraduate years, I also spent some time abroad, studying in Italy and Spain, and visiting Europe on a few other occasions. Upon receiving my bachelor's degree, I taught high school history with the Dade County Public Schools in Miami for one year. I then began working on my graduate degrees at Florida State University in Tallahassee, from where I eventually received both my M.A. (1991) and Ph.D. (1995) in history. During my time in Tallahassee, I also taught (history and Spanish) and coached football at a local private academy.

I joined the faculty at MxCC in 1992, a few years before completing my studies. Even though I was far from home, receiving a position at Middlesex was "a dream come true" for me, since it was my ambition to become a community college professor ever since I was a student at Miami-Dade. After completing my Ph.D. in 1995, in addition to teaching at Middlesex and raising a family, I devoted a great deal of time to research and writing. As a result, I have published a few books, all dealing with Cuban and Cuban exile history.

After twenty-seven years at Middlesex, I am as happy and enthusiastic as I was on my first day. Every year, every semester, and every class is a new and exciting experience for me. Therefore, I look forward to working with each and every one of you during the present semester. I know this going to be a fantastic course.

I sincerely hope you come away from this course a better-informed and more enlightened student. Whether you are a recent high school graduate or a returning student, I applaud your decision to enroll in college since the monumental shift we are

experiencing in our economy has made a sound educational base an indispensable asset.

But, in addition to the practical reasons for receiving an education, there are others. Allowing ourselves to become educated is one of the most exciting opportunities available, for it opens our minds and allows us to experience and enjoy so much of the world that would otherwise be closed to us.

At one time, the chance to become educated was limited to very few people. Our society, however, has created mechanisms such as the community college system so that every person could have such an opportunity. So, now that you have the chance, use it to the fullest.

COURSE STRUCTURE

As in all courses, it is imperative that the professor and the students are clear on the requirements and expectations. Please read the following carefully.

1) Weekly readings

On the schedule, you will see the readings you are expected to complete on a week-by-week basis. You are expected to read the assigned chapters thoroughly and to understand them fully.

2) Weekly discussion questions

a. Each Sunday at 11:59 pm, you will be given a question related to the material you are studying that week. You will have until 11:59 pm the following

Sunday--exactly one week--to complete and post it.

b. It is expected that you will provide answers that are complete and thoughtful. If you include any outside information, make sure it is

clearly

cited.

c. The discussion questions will be graded on scale of 0 (the lowest) to 10 (the highest).

d. If a response is late, the final score will be penalized one point per day. After three days (Wednesday at 11:59pm), you will receive a zero. Please

notify me immediately if you have technological or other issues that prevent

you from completing the assignment on time. These situations should be very

rare (given that you have an entire week to complete the assignment).

PLEASE READ THE LATE POLICY BELOW.

e. And, please, use proper English spelling and grammar in your responses and not codes, abbreviations, or language used in instant messaging!

3) Tests

a. The tests will be posted on the dates indicated on the Coverage Schedule.

b. You may sign on to take the test any time during the week it is posted, but once you open the test, you will have exactly five hours to complete it. **You may NOT open it, close it, and go back to it later.**

When the time is up, or after you have submitted the test, you will not be able to go

back to it.

c. The tests will be made up of multiple choice questions.

d. You may use class materials on the test, but you are strongly advised to study, read, and outline the chapters during the weeks assigned to ensure success, for the test questions are not easy despite the format. You will also notice the

chapters are quite intricate and require careful reading.

e. Tests must be completed individually, i.e., no collaboration.

f. Please note that TESTS CLOSE AT 11:59PM ON THE DUE DATE

AND

MAY NOT BE REOPENED WITHOUT MY PERMISSION. If you request

and receive an extension from me, the final grade will be penalized ten points each

day it is late. After three days, the test will not be accepted and you will receive a

zero. Please notify me immediately if you have technological or other

issues that prevent you from completing the test on time. These situations should

be rare (given that you have a full week). PLEASE SEE LATE POLICY BELOW.

5) Final evaluation

The test average will count as 60 percent of your grade. The average of your discussions

will account for the remaining 40 percent.

Final Averages/Letter Grades:

A: 93-100

A-:90-92

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86

B-: 80-82

C+: 77-79

C: 73-76

C-: 70-72

D+: 67-69

D: 63-66

D-: 60-62

F: 0-59

6) **Reminder:** Students **MUST** have Internet access with broadband connection throughout the course.

LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW IS 11/11

LATE POLICY (EXTREMELY IMPORTANT!!!)

In recent semesters, I have had more than a few problems with late and missing work from students. Please be aware of the course's late policy outlined below. **READ IT CAREFULLY.**

Discussion Questions:

1. As stated above, discussion questions are released on Sunday nights at 11:59 p.m. and due by the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m. If the answer is one day late, you will be penalized one point; if it is two days late, two points; three days late, three points—**NO MATTER THE REASON**. After three days, **it will become a ZERO**.
2. If you cannot turn your answer in within the three-day late window (Wednesday at 11:59 p.m.) because of circumstances you cannot control

(illness, illness of a family member, computer problems, etc.), **you must nevertheless contact me *within* the three-day window—that is, by the Wednesday after the due date—if you wish to seek an extension. In order for me to grant an extension, you must have an excusable reason (illness, etc.) and DOCUMENTATION to back it up.**

You may contact me through Blackboard to request an extension. **If you are unable to do any of the above because of illness, etc., you may do so through a third party (spouse, family member).** If I hear nothing from you or a third party within the three days, it will be averaged as a ZERO.

Checking Your Post:

It is your responsibility to make sure your answer posted correctly. I have had cases in which students were convinced they posted their answers, yet there was no answer there. The rule is: no answer, no grade (that is, a **zero**).

Tests:

1. Like the discussion questions, tests are posted at 11:59 p.m. on Sundays and due by the following Sunday at 11:59 p.m. **UNLIKE** the discussions, the TESTS CLOSE and you cannot access them yourself after the due date. **You must contact me within three days to reopen the test for you.** If you complete it within one day, there will be a ten-point penalty; two days, a twenty-point penalty; three days, a thirty-point penalty—**NO MATTER THE REASON.**
2. **If you cannot complete a test within the three-day late window because of circumstances you cannot control (illness, illness of a family member, hospitalization, etc.), you must nevertheless contact me *within* the three-day late window—THAT IS, BY THE WEDNESDAY AFTER THE DUE DATE—if you wish to seek an extension. In order for me to grant an extension, you must have an excusable reason (illness, etc.) and DOCUMENTATION to back it up.**

You may contact me through Blackboard to request an extension. If you are unable to do any of the above within the three-day window because of illness, etc., **you may do so through a third party (spouse, family member).** If I hear nothing from you or a third party within the three-day window, the test will be averaged as a **ZERO**.

Checking Your Grade:

At the end of several semesters, I have had students contact me wondering why there were no grades for one or more of their tests. They claim to have taken the tests, but there are no grades for the tests or any record of them ever having accessed them. Clearly, many of them simply forgot to take the tests or did not notice them on the Coverage Schedule. If you forget to take a test, it will be averaged **as a ZERO** if it is not completed within the three-day late window or if you did not contact me within the three-day late window. In order avoid confusion over whether or not you forgot to take a test or if for some reason you took it and it did not post, **you are responsible for checking that your test grade posted upon submission.** Grades are immediately available upon submission; therefore, unlike the discussion answers (which I need to grade one-by-one) you can check right away if the grade posted. Keep in mind that the Distance Learning office can run a search to determine whether or not the test was ever accessed.

If you take a test and see that the grade did not post right away, you must contact me within 24 hours.

ALSO: Make sure to submit your tests correctly. I have had students who completed their tests but forgot to hit the “submit” button.

Final Thoughts on Late Tests and Assignments:

I think it is safe to say that the issue of late/missing tests and assignments is, by far, what has had the greatest negative impact on student grades in my distance learning courses. All of the above can be avoided simply by following the coverage schedule, logging in to Blackboard every week to access your assignments/tests, and completing them before the following Sunday night. It is best to do so early in the week. YES, IT IS THAT EASY. You should also log-in to Blackboard daily in order to check for new announcements.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students will study the development of British North America from the establishment of the first colonies to the founding of the United States with an emphasis on the nature of immigration, slavery, and overall themes of colonialism. Likewise, students will explore United States development from the early days of the republic through the Civil War with a focus on regional development and Western migration.

COURSE RATIONALE-WHY WE TAKE THIS COURSE

In general, we study history for many reasons. Most importantly, studying history satisfies our natural human desire to establish a link with our past. On a more

pragmatic level, a sound understanding of how our institutions, beliefs, and society originated and grew gives us an accurate perspective on the present and helps our decision making for the future. Although history does not literally "repeat itself," there are certain patterns in every human society that, with our knowledge of them, makes the present more comprehensible.

COURSE GOALS

You shall be expected to demonstrate a working knowledge of the patterns, trends, individuals, and various facts concerning U.S. History to 1865. The learning objectives are listed below. This course also adheres to the learning objectives for the Historical Knowledge general education core competency. These competencies are found on the college website at: <https://mxcc.edu/catalog/general-education/historical-knowledge/>

REQUIRED TEXT

Brinkley, Alan, *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People*, Vol. 1, Seventh Edition

DIVERSITY COMPONENT

Students will study the development of British North America from the establishment of the first colonies to the founding of the United States with an emphasis on the nature of immigration, slavery, and overall themes of colonialism. Likewise, students will explore United States development from the early days of the republic through the Civil War with a focus on regional development and Westward migration.

ADA Accommodations Statement: Students with physical or learning disabilities who may require accommodations are encouraged to contact the Counseling Office. After disclosing the nature of the disability, students are urged to discuss their needs with individual instructors. This should be done at the beginning of each semester. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide assistance and/or accommodations only to those students who have completed this process.

Additional Information:

Please visit the following link for additional information. <http://mxcc.edu/catalog/academic-policies>

Please pay special attention to the section on **Academic Honesty**. Under that section, you will find an additional link to the Board of Regents **Student Code of Conduct** (which should also be read carefully).

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

Middlesex Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious creed, age, sex, national origin, marital status, ancestry, present or past history of mental disorder, learning disability or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or genetic information in its programs and activities. In addition, the College does not discriminate in employment on the additional basis of veteran status or criminal record.

The following people have been designated to handle inquiries or complaints regarding non-discrimination policies and practices:

Primary Title IX Coordinator

Ricardo Barrett, Counselor, Career Development & Counseling Center
rbarrett@mxcc.edu; 860-343-5823; Founders Hall Room 121

Below, please find the course's Learning Objectives:

U.S. History I, Learning Objectives

1. **Native Americans**: Discuss the major cultural accomplishments of pre-Columbian native groups in the Americas.
2. **Spain's Empire**: Identify the major trends that brought about the changes in Western Europe's economy and how they led to Spain's discovery and conquest of the Americas. Also, discuss how the Spanish crown managed its American empire.

3. English Colonies: Explain the economic, political, and religious reasons behind England's quest for colonies in the Americas. Also, discuss the founding of all the original colonies that eventually became the United States.

4. Colonial Life: Outline the various features that characterized colonial life, with a focus on the diversity in regional economic, social, and religious development. Also, discuss the origins of slavery in different parts of the colonies.

5. Era of Revolution: Beginning with the end of the Seven Years' War, students will trace the development of colonial rebellion through the outbreak of the War of Independence.

6. The Constitution: Discuss the ideals that inspired the Articles of Confederation and their shortcomings; explain the formulation of the Constitution.

7. Federalist Era: Understand the origins of the schism that developed between those who ultimately became known as Federalists and Republicans; also understand the ideologies and goals of the two schools of thought. Know the political and economic importance of the Washington and Adams presidencies.

8. Republican Era: Comprehend the ideals that characterized the Republicans, their significance, and long range impact; also, the presidencies of Jefferson, Monroe, Madison, and Adams.

9. National Life to 1820: Trace the major social, diplomatic, political, technological, and economic developments in national life to 1820, including the Second Great Awakening, the Transportation Revolution, the West, Nationalism, and early industry.

10. National and Political Life to 1840: Trace the major developments in national life to 1840, with a focus on the spirit of the Jacksonian Era, anti-nationalist sentiment and efforts, Indian removal, and the consequences of financial decentralization.

11. The North, 1840-1860: Discuss the evolution of northern society between 1840-1860, with a focus on trade, technology, industry, labor, immigration, nativism, and western farming.

12. The South, 1840-1860: Discuss the evolution of Southern society between 1840-1860, with a focus on cash crop agriculture (especially cotton), the expansion of the plantation system, the class system, and slavery.

13. Reformism, 1840-1860: Understand the new idealism of the 1840s, especially transcendentalism, the period utopian experiments, new religious movements, feminism, temperance, and abolition.

14. Western Expansion: Discuss the expansion of the U.S., especially the results of the Mexican War, the annexation of Texas, and the agreement over Oregon.

15. Regional Tension: Discuss the tensions that developed over the status of the new territories, especially those related to slavery. Discuss developments such as the 1850 Compromise, filibustering, abolitionism versus anti-abolitionism, the Kansas Nebraska Act, John Brown, the importance of the Republican Party, and the secession crisis.

16. Civil War: Discuss the outbreak and development of the Civil War, with a focus on political developments such as the Homestead Act, the Morrill Act, and abolition.