History of the American People

HIST 20B

Spring 2026   Section 80   Fully Online   3 Unit(s)   01/22/2026 to 05/11/2026   Modified 01/31/2026

👤 Contact Information

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Office Hours: Monday 4:30-5:30 pm

Class Days/Time: Online

💻 Course Description and Requisites

Survey of continuity and change in society, culture, institutions and environment. Emergence of modern society and world power status.

Satisfies American Institutions US1: US History.

Grading: Letter Graded

✳ Classroom Protocols

How We Work Together in HIST 20B

This course is an online learning community grounded in inquiry, respect, and intellectual honesty. The following protocols are designed to support meaningful engagement and a manageable learning environment for everyone.

Engage as a Historian

Students are expected to approach course materials and discussions with curiosity and care.

This means:

- reading closely
- asking questions when things are unclear
- acknowledging uncertainty or complexity
- supporting claims with evidence

You are not expected to have all the answers. You are expected to engage thoughtfully with the questions.

Discussion Norms

Discussions in this course are spaces for shared inquiry, not performance.

- When participating:
- respond to ideas, not people
- disagree respectfully and explain your reasoning
- avoid dismissive or sarcastic language
- assume good faith

You are encouraged to build on classmates' ideas and offer alternative interpretations, especially when supported by evidence.

Original Thinking & AI Use

AI tools may be used as learning supports, but your submissions should reflect **your own thinking and decision-making**.

If AI is used:

- acknowledge it when asked
- verify accuracy
- revise outputs in your own voice

Submitting work you did not meaningfully engage with undermines both your learning and the community.

Timeliness & Responsibility

Assignments are due on the posted dates. Late submissions are not accepted.

This policy:

- supports timely feedback
- keeps the course manageable
- ensures fairness across the class

If you fall behind, focus on the next assignment and make use of Side Quests or revision opportunities rather than requesting individual exceptions.

Revision Is Part of Learning

Revision is expected and encouraged.

If an assignment is marked **Revise**:

- read the feedback carefully
- address the specific issue identified
- resubmit within the revision window
- Revision is not a penalty; it is a normal part of historical thinking and writing.
- You will have 7 days after the instructor gives you feedback to revise an assignment. After 7 days, you will not be able to complete the assignment for XPs.

Optional Work & Boundaries

Optional Side Quests and Easter Eggs are available for students who want to explore further or recover points.

These opportunities:

- are never required
- should not add stress
- are meant to reward curiosity, not volume
- Completing required work at the Complete level is sufficient to succeed in the course.
- Easter eggs, if found, must be submitted to the proper Canvas assignment by the due date for the moduleEaster eggs if found must be submitted to proper Canvas assigment by the due date for the module.

Communication Expectations

Questions about content, assignments, or expectations are welcome.

Before reaching out:

- check the relevant module
- review assignment instructions
- consult feedback provided

When emailing or messaging, please do so through Canvas Messages as this helps me stay on top of your requests:

- include the assignment name that you are discussing
- be clear and concise
- allow reasonable response time, 48-72 hours
- For immediate and quick questions, please text me at

Respectful Learning Environment

This course covers complex and sometimes difficult histories.

All participants are expected to:

- engage respectfully with diverse perspectives
- avoid harmful or demeaning language
- contribute to a learning environment where others feel safe to participate

Disrespectful behavior may result in removal from discussions or further action as outlined by university policy.

Final Note

This course is designed to be challenging but doable, structured but flexible, and focused on learning rather than point accumulation.

Engage honestly. Revise when needed. Ask questions.
That is how this course works.

Program Information

Welcome to this General Education course.

SJSU's General Education Program establishes a strong foundation of versatile skills, fosters curiosity about the world, promotes ethical judgment, and prepares students to engage and contribute responsibly and cooperatively in a multicultural, information-rich society. General education classes integrate areas of study and encourage progressively more complex and creative analysis, expression, and problem solving.

The General Education Program has three goals:

Goal 1: To develop students' core competencies for academic, personal, creative, and professional pursuits.
Goal 2: To enact the university's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and justice by ensuring that students have the knowledge and skills to serve and contribute to the well-being of local and global communities and the environment.
Goal 3: To offer students integrated, multidisciplinary, and innovative study in which they pose challenging questions, address complex issues, and develop cooperative and creative responses.

More information about the General Education Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) can be found on the GE website (https://sjsu.edu/general-education/ge-requirements/overview/learning-outcomes.php).

📊 Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

American Institutions US1: US History

The American Institutions (AI) requirement is based on the premise that any student graduating from the CSU should have an understanding of the history and governmental institutions of the United States and the State of California. This requirement, which was put in place by the State of California, is laid out in California State University Executive Order 1061. The original mandate appears in the State Education Code Title 5, Section 40404.

US1 Learning Outcomes

To fulfill the requirements for U.S. History, students should be able to explain and evaluate the principal events, developments, and ideas covering a minimum time span of approximately one hundred years in all the territories now in the United States (including external regions and powers as appropriate).

As students explore the historical development of the United States, they should be able to evaluate and synthesize different positions, support analysis with relevant evidence, and create evidence-based interpretations of:

A. major subtopics in United States history, such as Native Americans and their interactions with the U.S. government; slavery and its legacies; the foundational ideals of the American Republic; colonization and territorial expansion; economic development; political reform and reaction; immigration to the United States and the experiences of immigrants; foreign relations; wars and conflicts; and movements including religious, labor, civil rights, feminist, and environmental.
B. multiple perspectives related to, for example, diverse cultures, communities, and environments; age, gender, and sexuality; the history and experience of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities; the experiences of people with disabilities; and patterns of race and class relations.

📘 Course Materials

Course Platforms

This course uses two platforms, each with a specific role:

Canvas (Course Home)

Canvas is the primary course platform. It is where you will find:

- weekly modules
- instructions and context
- discussions and reflections
- due dates
- grades and feedback

Always begin each week in Modules.

Globalyceum (Training Ground)

Globalyceum is used as a training space for:

- reading historical scholarship
- practicing primary source analysis
- receiving automated feedback

Globalyceum activities are practice, not performance.
Your graded work and feedback happen in Canvas.

Textbook information

Findlen, Paula, et al. "American History." In Globalyceum. www.globalyceum.com.

One of the texts for this course is Globalyceum American History. Go to:

https://www.globalyceum.com/, register and subscribe to the course with the unique section code: **JBLJ9U4M (this code is case sensitive).** The cost of this subscription is $39.99. You can also purchase a print copy of the essays or text chapters on the site. The print copy will be sent to your home or the shipping address you provide. Your purchase options are debit/credit or check/money order.

Please verify your browser and update it on the Sign In page if necessary. Globalyceum recommends the Chrome browser. If you have any technical problems during the term, please contact support@globalyceum.com. You can CC me on the email, but your first contact should be with Globalyceum.

Library Liaison

Nyle Monday is the History department's library liaison. Contact him for help with your library needs in History classes. His email is <nyle.Monday@sjsu.edu>.

Inclusion and Diversity

SJSU makes diversity, equity, and inclusion a priority in planning and decision making for all projects, procedures, and services, and is dedicated to creating an inclusive, welcoming, and respectful organizational course that appreciates, celebrates, and supports individual differences.

☰ Course Requirements and Assignments

Course Structure & Learning Model

This course is organized around a Field Journal model of learning. Each unit functions as a historical investigation in which students:

- gather background knowledge
- practice working with primary sources
- reflect on their thinking
- synthesize evidence into historical arguments

- The course emphasizes historical problem-solving, not memorization.

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- reading historical scholarship
- practicing primary source analysis
- receiving automated feedback
- Globalyceum activities are practice, and will earn minimal points.

Grading System & XP

This course uses an **XP (experience points) system** combined with **Complete / Revise grading**.

Required Work (per unit)

- **Core Mission** — 10 XP
- **Skill Builder** — 5 XP
  - Complete two primary source practice activities (usually in Globalyceum)
  - Plus one Canvas reflection
- **Side Quests** — 1–3 XP
  - Curiosity, practice, Easter Eggs, exploration, optional
- **Badges** — 0 XP
  - Recognize skill and participation; no grade impact

Completing all required work earns an A.
An A+ reflects consistent engagement plus optional XP.

Complete / Revise

Most assignments are graded Complete / Revise.

- Complete
  Work meets the goals of the assignment. Full XP awarded.
- Revise
  Work is on the right track but needs clarification, alignment, or deeper engagement.

Revision is part of learning and is encouraged.

Revision Policy

- Assignments marked Revise may be revised and resubmitted within 7 days of receiving instructor feedback.
- Revisions focus on the specific feedback provided.
- Once goals are met, work is marked Complete and full XP is awarded.
- Revision is available only for assignments submitted on time.

Late Work Policy

To keep the course manageable and equitable:

- **Late submissions are not accepted.**

This policy allows for timely feedback and prevents grading backlogs.

However, missing an assignment does not automatically harm your final grade.

Each unit includes optional Side Quests and Easter Eggs that allow students to:

- regain missed XP
- support learning and recovery
- work toward an A+

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

AI tools (such as ChatGPT) are allowed and encouraged as learning supports.

Appropriate uses include:

- brainstorming ideas
- drafting outlines
- clarifying concepts
- experimenting with structure or phrasing

AI should not replace your historical reasoning or evidence use.

You are responsible for:

- verifying accuracy
- using only provided sources for document-based work
- acknowledging AI use when required

Some assignments will ask you to reflect briefly on how AI helped or where you disagreed with it.

AI is treated as a **collaborative tool**, not a shortcut.

Writing Assignments: Field Investigations

Students complete two major writing projects:

Field Investigation 1: Document-Based Essay

Field Investigation 2: Document-Based Essay

Each Field Investigation is worth **24 XP**, broken into three stages:

- **Thesis Checkpoint** — 6 XP
- **Evidence & Outline Alignment** — 8 XP
- **Final Essay** — 10 XP

All writing is document-based using the provided sources.
No open-ended research is required.

During writing weeks, other assignments are reduced so writing itself becomes the Core Mission.

✔ Grading Information

Assignments	Points	Percentage of Grade	Learning Outcomes
Core Missions	10x 10 pts+=100	45.8%	US1 A&B
Skill Builders	12x 5pts=60	27.4%	US1 A&B
Side Quests	x1pts=Extra Credit	5%	US1 A&B

Field Investigations (Document-Based Question Essay)	2x 24pts=48	21.8%	US1 A&B
	Total Points= 220		

FINAL DETERMINATION OF COURSE GRADES

Grade in Course	Total Points Required	Percentage of Total Points Required
A plus	214-220	97 to 100%
A	205-213	93 to 96%
A minus	198-204	90 to 92%
B plus	191-197	87 to 89%
B	183-190	83 to 86%
B minus	176-182	80 to 82%
C plus	169--175	77 to 79%
C	161-168	73 to 76%
C minus	154-160	70 to 72%
D plus	147-153	67 to 69%
D	139-146	63 to 66%
D minus	132-138	60 to 62%

How Grades Are Determined

All **required course work** (Core Missions, Skill Builders, and Field Investigations) totals **208 points**. Completing all required assignments at a high level places you solidly in the **A range**.

Opportunities to earn an **A+** are built into the course through **optional Side Quests and Easter Eggs**, which award **bonus XP**. These activities are never required and do not penalize you if skipped, but they allow students who go beyond the required work to earn additional points.

In short:

- Completing required assignments well can earn you an **A**.

- Earning an **A+** requires completing some optional Side Quests and/or Easter Eggs.

- Bonus XP is capped and used only to elevate grades, not lower them.

Final letter grades are assigned using the SJSU grading scale applied to the total points earned.

🏛 University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9 (PDF) (http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf)](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on the [Syllabus Information (https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php)](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) web page. Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

📅 Course Schedule

Week	Start of Week	Assignments- All assignments will be due Sunday before 11:59 pm of that week unless noted.
1	1/22	**Opening the Field Journal** • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
2	1/26	**Module 2, Gilded Age & Progressive Era** • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)

3	2/2	Module 3, Gilded Age & Progressive Era • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
4	2/9	## Module 4, WWI and the 1920s • Field Investigations: Document-Based Essay- Thesis (6 XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
5	2/16	## Module 5, WWI and the 1920s • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
6	2/23	Module 6, The Great Depression • Field Investigations: Document-Based Essay- Evidence and Outline (8 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP) *No Skill Builders this week, focus on your Field Investigation: Evidence and Outline*
7	3/2	Module 7, The Great Depression • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
8	3/9	Field Investigations: Document-Based Essay- Final Draft (10 XP) *No additional assignments this week*
9	3/16	Module 9, WWII and the Cold War • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)

10	3/23	Module 10, Post War America • Field Investigations: Document-Based Essay- Thesis (6 XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
	3/30	No Assignments: Spring Break
11	4/6	Module 11, Post War America • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
12	4/13	Module 12, The Conservative Turn • Field Investigations: Document-Based Essay- Evidence and Outline (8 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP) *No Skill Builders this week, focus on your Field Investigation: Evidence and Outline*
13	4/20	Module 12, The Conservative Turn • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
14	4/27	Module 14, The Changing American Economy • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
15	5/4	Module 14, The Changing American Economy • Core Mission (10XP) • Skill Builder (5 XP) • Side Quests (Optional, 1-3 XP)
FINAL EXAM	5/17	Field Investigations: Document-Based Essay- Final Draft (10 XP)