History 201: American History, 1492-1876

Fall 2026
Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:45 pm
Burkhardt Building 104

Canvas site: https://myballstate.bsu.edu/dashboard

Description

Survey of the political, diplomatic, military, economic, cultural, and sociological forces and developments that have affected the history of the United States to 1876.

Prerequisites: None

Cardinal Core: This course fulfills part of Ball State's Undergraduate Core Curriculum for Ways of Knowing (Humanistic & Artistic).

Required Course Texts (available at campus bookstores and on reserve at the main library):

- Victoria Bissell Brown and Timothy Shannon, *Going to the Source: The Bedford Reader in American History, **vol. 1:** To 1877*, **5th edition** (Bedford/St. Martin's, 2019, **ISBN 978-1-319-10597-6**). Source on course schedule.
- (Online/Free on Canvas) Joseph Locke and Ben Wright, eds., *American Yawp (*A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook) (Stanford University Press, 2019). "Yawp" on syllabus.

*To access *Going to the Source* on reserve simply go to https://www.bsu.edu/academics/libraries and type in the book's title. The textbooks can be picked up at the main library's circulation desk and used for 4-hours at a time.
* Please note the ISBN—that is a unique identifier that you should use if ordering online or off campus to ensure you have the correct book.
*Be certain that you have the proper books in hand by the end of the first week of classes. You can purchase them from any vendor—or use my copy at the main library—but you will need to have access to *Going to the Source.*

HIST 201: Skills that Translate to the Workplace
201 will also serve as an introduction to the discipline of history, highlighting the use of sources from the period under study and the debates among historians that continue to shape our understanding of the past. As students engage the course material through lectures, discussions, quizzes, and essay responses, they will improve their critical thinking skills, their ability to argue persuasively, and their knowledge of the nation's past.

Course Outcomes	**Workplace Competencies** (NACE terms)
Evaluate primary sources for their strengths and weaknesses	Critical Thinking

Craft persuasive explanations of past events	Communication
Exercise historical empathy (the ability to see the past from multiple perspectives)	Inclusiveness

Course Requirements

Students are required to complete the assigned reading for each week by class time every Tuesday throughout the term. Questions related to each week's assigned reading appear at the end of each chapter of *Going to the Source* (see "Analyzing the Source"). The reading will form the starting point of class discussions, in-class responses, and essays. Students are also required to attend class, take three essay exams (in person), and complete ten response papers in class (two will be dropped).

Total possible points for term:
In-class responses (8 of 10—*lowest score dropped*): 20 points each (160 points total for 8 scored quizzes)
Exams 1, 2, and 3 (non-cumulative/in class): 190 points each (570 points total)
Participation: 70 points
Total points possible: 800

Assignment of Letter Grades: Each student's letter grade will be determined by percentage of points possible they received at the end of the term:

Letter Grade	Range
A	100% - 94%
A-	<94% - 90%
B+	<90% - 87%
B	<87% - 84%
B-	<84% - 80%
C+	<80% - 77%
C	<77% - 74%
C-	<74% - 70%
D+	<70% - 67%
D	<67% - 64%
D-	<64% - 61%
F	<61% - 0%

Students should obtain regular updates on their course grade through Canvas's Grade Center.

In-class responses and Assessment Format:
In-class responses will be brief written responses that stem from our workshops on primary sources.

Exams: The three exams will consist of 2-3 brief identification prompts and an essay response inspired by each section's study guide and our discussions. The essay will include at least two options. It will be closed note, closed book, and closed laptop/phone/tablet or any other electronic device. Students will aid their preparation immensely by attending class regularly, taking advantage of the content review guides on Canvas, and responding to the questions at the end of the assigned chapters in the textbooks. *Most importantly, I strongly encourage students to prepare responses to the study guide questions as we cover the material in class.*

Extra Credit: A written extra credit assignment worth no more than 15 points will be offered late in the semester. More to come.

Make-up policy for response papers and essays: *Because students can drop two of the responses, there are no excused absences or make-ups on this work and late assignments will not be accepted. Again, there are no-make-ups on quizzes.* A missed essay may only be excused with appropriate documentation to verify the extenuating circumstance (e.g., medical documentation).

Weekly Schedule

A note on the course schedule: 1) Reading assignments must be completed by the time we meet every Tuesday (I will specify assignments by date as we move through the term). 2) Please put exam dates in your calendar at the start of the term. Students will be notified of any changes in class and on the course's Canvas site.
Key: Yawp=American Yawp; Source=Going to the Source; Canvas=primary source document on Canvas

COURSE SCHEDULE

UNIT I: Columbus to Seven Years War (1492-1763)

Week 1: **Aug. 25, 27** Introduction/The First Americans and the Columbian Exchange
Yawp, ch. 1 (New World) and start of ch. 2 (Colliding Cultures, pp. 28-32); *Source,* chapter 1; Canvas Primary Source document (Columbus Announces Discovery)

Week 2: **Sept. 1, 3** Cultural Encounters and European Settlement
Yawp, ch. 2 (Colliding Cultures) and pp. 71-75 (Bacon's Rebellion); Source, ch. 2; Canvas Primary Source document (Father LeJeune/Jesuit Relations)

Week 3: **Sept. 8, 10** British Colonies Compared
Yawp, ch. 3 (British North America); *Source,* ch. 3; Canvas Primary Source document (slavery in colonial VA)

Week 4: **Sept. 15, 17** British Colonies Compared contd./American Awakenings
Yawp, ch. 4 (Colonial Society) to p. 98; *Source,* ch. 4; Canvas Primary Source document (Harvard v. George Whitefield)

Week 5: **Sept. 22** Politics and Imperial Struggles & review for first exam
Yawp, rest of ch. 4 (98-105); Canvas Primary Source document (Mary Jemison's captivity narrative excerpt)

Thursday, Sept. 24 EXAM 1 (in class).

UNIT 2: Seven Years War to Antebellum Reform Movements (1763-1840s)

Week 6: **Sept. 29, Oct. 1** American Revolution
Yawp, ch. 5 (American Revolution); *Source,* chs. 5, 7; Canvas Primary Source document (*Common Sense*);

Week 7: **Oct. 6, 8** Creating a New Republic
Yawp, ch. 6 (New Nation), and the and Articles of Confederation and the Constitution; *Source,* ch. 6; Canvas Primary Source document (Pres. Washington's Farewell Address)

[Fall Break, Oct. 12-13; no class Oct. 13]

Week 8: **Oct. 15** Sustaining the New Republic and the War of 1812
Yawp ch. 7 (Early Republic) and ch. 8 (Market Revolution); *Source,* ch. 8

Week 9: **Oct. 20, 22** War of 1812 & The Age of Revivals
Yawp, ch. 10 (Religion and Reform), pp. 253-61

Week 10**: Oct. 27** Age of Reform & Prep for Exam 2
Yawp, finish ch. 10 (pp. 261-78); Excerpt from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (on Canvas)

[Note: Oct. 28 course withdrawal period ends; after this date all enrolled students will receive a letter grade, A-F]

Week 11**: Thursday, Oct. 29, EXAM 2 (in class).**

UNIT 3: Andrew Jackson to Reconstruction (1824-1877)

Week 11 **Nov. 3, Nov. 5** Andrew Jackson's America & the Slave South
Yawp, ch. 9 (Democracy in America) and pp. 320-23 (Cherokee Removal); *Source,* ch. 9; Canvas Primary Source (Excerpt from *Planter's Northern Bride* (on Canvas)

Week 12: **Nov. 10, 12** Westward Expansion & Republic in Crisis
Yawp, ch. 11 & 13 (Cotton Revolution & Sectional Crisis), ch. 12 (Manifest Destiny); *Source,* ch. 10

Week 13: **Nov. 17, 19** Secession & Civil War
Source, ch. 11; *Yawp,* ch. 14 (Civil War)

Week 14: **Nov. 24** US Civil War: Battlefields & Home Fronts
Source, ch. 12; Canvas Primary Source (Sherman's March & Emancipation Proclamation)
[No Class Nov. 26—Thanksgiving Recess]

Week 15: **Dec. 1, 3** From the Home Front to Reconstruction
Yawp, ch. 15 (Reconstruction), *Source,* ch. 13 (Reconstruction)

EXAM 3: **In person, Tuesday, Dec. 8, 12-2 pm (usual classroom)**

Classes do not meet at their regular times during Final Exam week.

Student Support Services

The Learning Center

The Learning Center offers free Tutoring and Academic Coaching for many courses at Ball State. Students can make appointments for online (Zoom) or in-person (NQ 350) appointments. To make an appointment, visit myballstate.bsu.edu and click on "Navigate" in the Academic Tools section, or just go directly to bsu.navigate.eab.com.

Testing accommodations for students with disabilities are available for students who have received the appropriate documentation from Disability Services. Tests may be administered in the Learning Center.

CSH (College of Sciences and Humanities) Success Hub North Quad, 160. A great starting point for connection to resources ranging from tutoring and writing to career preparation. https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/csh/csh-success-hub

Student Success Coaching: North Quad 339. A great starting point for assistance on how to develop skills critical to learning (organization, meeting deadlines, and cultivating your strengths). https://www.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/universitycollege/student-success-coaching

The Writing Center

All writers improve with practice and feedback, so as a student in this course, you are encouraged to use the Writing Center (in Robert Bell 295 during weekdays, Bracken Library First Floor West in the evenings, or online during any of our regularly scheduled hours) to get additional feedback on your writing.

The Counseling Center

The Ball State University Counseling Center offers free and confidential services to all students. The Counseling Center is located in Lucina Hall, Room 320. To schedule an appointment, you can contact us at 765-285-1736. Ball State also offers a 24/7 Crisis Line, which can be reached at 765-285-HOPE (4673). The Crisis Line is a mental health resource for those who are struggling with any mental health concerns, including thoughts of self-harm and/or suicide.

The Basic Needs Hub

If you are having difficulty affording enough food, do not have a safe and reliable place to sleep, and/or experiencing an emergency or crisis, help is available through the Basic Needs Hub. The Basic Needs Hub has information, resources, and provides individualized support to students. To talk with a supportive staff member about your experience, receive one on one assistance, or learn more about resources, you can submit a Basic Needs Assistance Form.

Course Expectations and Policies

Attendance & Participation

Students are expected to check Canvas regularly (3-4 times per week) and attend classes except for recognized absences for university-approved travel, bereavement, illness, military absences, or genuine emergencies. Ball State requires all instructors to verify student attendance.

- Students are responsible for informing the instructor in a timely manner of the reason for any absence. Notification is crucial, particularly for any absence extending longer than one meeting. Students who are sick should contact their instructor and follow coursework on the Canvas site if they are able to do so.
- Active participation will be essential to the course and your success (this is not an attendance grade, though attendance is essential to participation). It will also involve extensive discussion in small groups. Students will be assessed on the quality and quantity of their participation.

Feedback Policy

- I will respond to email from your official Ball State email address within 24 hours during week days (Monday-Friday) and within 48 hours on the weekend.
- I will evaluate your response papers no later than within 5 school days of submission. Essay exams will be evaluated within 10 school days of submission.
- Contact me directly if you have questions or concerns about your performance in class.

Late Assignment Policy

- All assignments have a clear due date and time on Canvas.
- Any assignments submitted late and without a valid excuse will be penalized 10% upon being late, with an additional 5% for every day thereafter.
- Please note that any extension will only be granted when a student encounters an extenuating circumstance and notifies the instructor in a timely fashion. If you know you will have a busy schedule, please use the course schedule to work ahead as needed.
- Canvas will not accept assignments for grading after 11:59 pm EST/EDT on the final day of class.

Student Academic Ethics Policy

Honesty, trust, and personal responsibility are fundamental attributes of the university community. Academic dishonesty and other forms of academic misconduct threaten the foundation of an institution dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and will not be tolerated. To maintain its credibility and reputation, and to equitably assign evaluations of scholastic and creative performance, Ball State University is committed to maintaining a climate that upholds and values the highest standards of academic integrity. Visit the VPAA's academic integrity website (Students tab) for resources on understanding academic integrity, citing sources properly, and avoiding inadvertent academic dishonesty. To learn about BSU's academic integrity expectations and students' rights, please read the University Student Academic Ethics Policy.

Academic integrity violations include giving or receiving an unfair academic advantage (cheating), presenting someone else's ideas or work as your own (plagiarism), and falsifying academic records.

Unless otherwise indicated, you must work independently by yourself. Check with me if you are unsure whether something constitutes academic dishonesty. Examples of academic integrity violations include but are not limited to:

- Using resources not authorized by the faculty member (including devices, AI tools, hidden notes, and open books)
- Using commercial study websites to find answers to graded assignments (Chegg, Course Hero, StudyPool, OneClass, etc.).
- Without the instructor's written permission, giving away, buying, or selling graded assignments class notes, exams, study guides, or other course materials to other students or to third-party vendors (Course Hero, Chegg, 24HourAnswers, etc.).
- Working with another person on any assignment other than authorized group projects.
- Sharing or allowing others to access your files, whether done with permission or not.
- Reusing your own work from another semester, course, or section.
- Sharing answers with others during exams (passing notes, texting, whispering, gesturing)
- Discussing exam questions and answers with students who have not taken the exam.
- Soliciting others to complete work for you.
- The campus subscribes to Turnitin, a plagiarism prevention service, through Canvas. You may need to submit written assignments to Turnitin. Student work will be used for plagiarism detection and for no other purpose.

Penalties for academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, taking a 0 on that assignment.

Generative AI Statement

All work conducted and/or submitted in this course must be your own, completed in accordance with the Ball State University's Student Academic Ethics Policy. You may not collaborate with or make use of ChatGPT or any other generative AI applications at any time to develop materials submitted in this course.

Engagement Expectations

To support a respectful and engaging academic community that encourages the free exchange of ideas and civil discourse, we will follow these ground rules:

- **Respect different perspectives.** Share your ideas and let others share theirs.
- **Challenge ideas, not people.** Disagree respectfully. No personal attacks or put-downs. Focus on exploring ideas critically and constructively.
- **Listen to understand.** Stay curious, ask questions to understand, and give others space to speak.
- **Assume good intentions.** Approach discussions with curiosity and compassion.
- **Keep it private.** What is shared in class stays in class. Do not share others' words or work without permission.
- **Be respectful.** Avoid hurtful language, stereotypes, or content that may demean others. Keep feedback constructive.

Course Objectives: Cardinal Core/UCC Ways of Knowing

Upon completion of HIST 201, students are expected to be able to

- demonstrate knowledge of major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical patterns, or historical contexts relative to this period of U.S. history.
- analyze historical works and patterns (i.e., primary and secondary sources) in order to

understand and articulate historical concepts and principles (e.g., continuity and change over time, cause and effect, historiography, etc.) and methodologies (e.g., archival, digital, statistical, etc.), and lenses for viewing the past (e.g., race and ethnicity, class, gender, globalization, sustainability, etc.).
- use historical knowledge to analyze, corroborate, and evaluate evidence in order to construct a narrative about the complexity of the human experience.

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes
Student learning outcomes will be based on application-based response papers and essay responses that will ask students to assess and contextualize primary sources and/or secondary arguments.

University Policies and Statements

University Statement

We are committed to ensuring that all members of the community are welcome, through valuing the various experiences and worldviews represented at Ball State and among those we serve. We promote a culture of respect and civil discourse. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact the instructor of record as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services Office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

Freedom of Expression

In this course, we are committed to fostering a learning environment that values intellectual diversity, encourages free expression, and promotes open inquiry. As members of the Ball State Community, we treat each person in the Ball State community with civility, courtesy, compassion, and dignity and respect and learn from differences in people, ideas, and opinions. Please review Ball State University's Statement on Freedom of Expression, the resources on Ball State's Freedom of Expression webpage, and Ball State's Beneficence Pledge.

Title IX

Ball State University is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students. If you or someone you know has experienced sexual harassment—including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, please know that you are not alone. The University offers support services and resources. For more information or to report an incident, please visit bsu.edu/titleix or contact the Title IX Coordinator at 765-285-1545 or at titleix@bsu.edu

As your instructor, I am a mandatory reporter under the Title IX policy and required to report any information I receive about possible sexual harassment. This includes information shared in class discussions, assignments, or private conversations.

FERPA and Privacy

As a student, your educational records are considered confidential. Under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), your records are confidential and protected. Under most circumstances, your records will not be released without your written and signed consent. However,

some directory information may be released to third parties without your prior consent unless a written request to restrict this is on file. You can learn more about student rights to privacy by reading **Ball State's FERPA and Privacy and Protection.**