

Core Course Syllabus



Course	HIST 2330 002
Course Title	Themes in American History: Modern American Thought
Professor	Daniel Wickberg
Term	Springh 2025
Meetings	TR 1:00-2:15

Professor's Contact Information

Office Phone	X6222
Other Phone	NA
Office Location	JO 5.614
Email Address	wickberg@utdallas.edu
Office Hours	TR 11:00-12:00 or by appointmen
Other Information	Use UTD email for all communication and to set appointments

General Core Area 060 American History

Description: Courses in this category focus on the consideration of past events and ideas relative to the United States, with the option of including Texas History for a portion of this component area. Courses involve the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.

Objectives:

- Critical Thinking (CT)**—to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
- Communication (COM)**—to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
- Social Responsibility (SR)**—to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
- Personal Responsibility (PR)**—to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making

General Course Information

Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, & other restrictions

No restrictions

Course Description

This is an introductory course in modern American intellectual history and the history of thought. It aims to introduce students to the main lines of philosophical, social, cultural, and political thought from the mid-19th Century to the end of the 20th Century. Topics addressed include the Darwinian revolution, philosophical pragmatism, social science, social democracy, ideas about race, culture, gender, and postmodernism.

Learning Outcomes

1. Students will be able to identify important developments in modern thought in relationship to changing historical contexts
2. Students will analyze primary documents in terms of their assumptions, logics, and contexts.

Required Texts & Materials

All required texts are listed in course readings and available through library e-reserves link on E-learning course homepage

Suggested Texts, Readings, & Materials

For students interested in pursuing background, please consult Daniel Wickberg, *A History of American Thought 1860-2000: Thinking the Modern* (Routledge, 2024).

Calendar and Assignments

Week I

January 21: Introduction

January 23: Reading: Daniel Wickberg, *A History of American Thought 1860-2000*, pp. 2-10

Week II

January 28: Darwinism

January 30: Reading: Asa Gray, "Article III: Natural Selection Not Inconsistent With Natural Theology, Part III," *Darwiniana: Essays and Reviews Pertaining to Darwinism* (D. Appleton & Co., 1876) pp. 129-177.

Week III

February 4: Pragmatism

February 6: William James, "Lecture VI: Pragmatism's Conception of Truth," in *Pragmatism: A New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking* (Longman Greens, 1907), pp. 197-236

Week IV

February 10: The Woman Movement

February 12: Reading: Elizabeth Cady Stanton, "The Other Side of the Women Question," (1879) in *Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Feminist as Thinker*, Ellen Carol DuBois and Richard Candida Smith, eds., pp. 235-242.

Anna Julia Cooper, "Womanhood A Vital Element in the Regeneration and Progress of a Race," *A Voice from the South* (Aldine Printing Press, 1892), pp. 9-47

Week V

February 17: The New Liberalism

February 19: Reading: Walter Weyl, "Chapter XI: The New Social Spirit," *The New Democracy* (MacMillan, 1913) pp. 156-168

Week VI

February 23: MIDTERM EXAM I

February 25: Turnerism and Progressive History.

Reading: Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of the Frontier in American History"

Week VII

March 4: Race and Pluralism

March 6: Reading: W.E.B. DuBois, "Chapter 3: Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others" in *The Souls of Black Folk*

Week VIII

March 11: Race vs. Culture

March 13: Reading: Madison Grant, "Chapter I: Race and Democracy," *The Passing of the Great Race, or the Racial Basis of European History*, pp. 3-12

Ruth Benedict, "Chapter I: The Science of Custom," *Patterns of Culture*, pp. 1-14

SPRING BREAK

Week IX

March 25: The Modernist/Fundamentalist Controversy

March 27: Reading: Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" *Christian Work* 102 (June 10, 1922): 716-722

J. Gresham Machen, "Chapter I: Introduction," *Christianity and Liberalism*, pp. 1-16

Week X

April 1: MIDTERM EXAM II

April 3: Cold War Liberalism and Conservatism: Reading: Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "Chapter XI: Freedom: A Fighting Faith," *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom*, pp. 243-56

Russell Kirk, "The Idea of Conservatism," *The Conservative Mind*. pp.3-10

Week XI

April 8: Feminisms

April 10: Reading: Betty Friedan, "Chapter 1: The Problem That Has No Name," *The Feminine Mystique*, pp. 15-32

Ti-Grace Atkinson, "Radical Feminism" *Notes From the Second Year*, pp. 32-37

<https://womenwhatistobedone.wordpress.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/1969-radical-feminism-ti-grace-atkinson-notes-from-second-year.pdf>

Combahee River Collective Statement

<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/combahee-river-collective-statement-1977/>

Week XII

April 15: The New Left

April 17: Reading: Students for a Democratic Society, excerpt from "Port Huron Statement," pp. 1-9

<https://images2.americanprogress.org/campus/email/PortHuronStatement.pdf>

Stokely Carmichael and Charles V. Hamilton, excerpt from "Black Power: Its Need and Substance," in *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America* (1967), pp. 44-56

Week XIII

April 22: The Era of "Post"

April 24: Reading: Christopher Lasch, "Chapter 2: The Narcissistic Personality of Our Time," *The Culture of Narcissism* (1979), pp. 31-51

Week XIV

April 29: Culture Wars

May 1: Reading Irving Kristol, "The Adversary Culture of Intellectuals," *Encounter* (October 1979), pp. 5-14

Henry Louis Gates, Jr., "Chapter 6: Integrating the American Mind," *Loose Canons: Notes on the Culture Wars* (1992) pp. 105-120

Week XV

May 6: Conclusion

May 9: FINAL EXAM

Course Policies

All students are expected to attend class, do assigned readings for the dates indicated in the calendar, and to participate in class discussion. Failure to attend and participate in class will result in grade loss. Students are permitted up to two unexcused absences before missing class will lead to grade loss. More than two unexcused absences will lead to course grade being graded down in the following way: 2+ loss of 1/3 letter grade; 4+ loss of 2/3 letter grade; 6+ loss of one letter grade; 8+ failure of class. Excused absences will be given for the following **documented** reasons only: illness, family emergency, religious holiday. There will be no makeup exams for unexcused absences. Failure to complete all three exams will result in failure of the class. Class participation is required and will be defined in terms of attendance and class discussion, including questions asked in class.

Texas Senate Bill 17, the recent law that prohibits diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and activities at public universities in Texas, does not in any way apply to academic course instruction. The free discussion of ideas is central to the mission of the university and reasoned disagreement is essential to

thinking on matters in the humanities and history. Comments that are rude and directed at the personhood of others (e.g. race, gender, ethnicity, religious identity, age, military status) are not welcome.

Unless the AccessAbility Resource Center has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved AccessAbility Resource Center accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Students are expected to do their own work and comply with all university policies regarding academic dishonesty. The use of AI apps such as ChatGPT are prohibited unless specifically permitted for any class assignment. In-class exams, quizzes and written work will be done in Blue Books and paper form; phones and all devices will be shut off during class written assignments.

Grades will be determined in the following way:

2 midterm exams	20 pts. each
1 final exam	30 pts.
1 short written primary source analysis	15 pts.
3 pop quizzes	15 pts.

The exam dates are provided in the calendar. Makeup exams will be available only for students with documented excused absences. The pop quizzes will be given at various dates at the beginning of class; they will be short multiple-choice tests based on assigned reading. There will be more than 3 quizzes given, but I will count the top three scores for your grade. The primary source analysis will be an in-class assignment based on the day's reading; you will have three opportunities to do the primary source analysis over the course of the semester. There will be no extra credit assignments. Since all assignments will be done in class, there will be no late work permitted.

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

"As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do."

This class conforms with all the requirements of the university. For university policies please consult <https://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.