

HIST 2112: U.S. History since 1877, Maymester 2018

Table of Contents

[Course Information: What is HIST 2112?](#)

[Required Materials: What do I need to have?](#)

[Grades and Assignments: How will I be assessed?](#)

[Policies and exhortations: What else will affect my success in the course?](#)

[Course schedule: What should I be doing to keep up with the course?](#)

Course Information: What is HIST 2112?

First, let me tell you about this *document*. A syllabus, according to Webster's 1913 dictionary is "A compendium containing the heads of a discourse, and the like; an abstract." This document, in other words, is the course in a nutshell. I expect you to read it at the start and refer to it throughout the term.

Navigating this document

Blue text denotes a link, either internal to this document, or external to the web. But you may need to **right-click** on those links in order to go to them. Let's start with the basics.

Who is my professor?

I'm Tom Okie, assistant professor of history and history education. (You can call me Professor Okie, or Dr. Okie.) This is my fifth year at Kennesaw State, where I teach American history, food history, and methods courses for future teachers of middle and high school social studies. I earned my Ph.D. from the University of Georgia, and my expertise is in American environmental and agricultural history: my first book, [The Georgia Peach: Culture, Agriculture, and Environment in the American South](#), a history of the cultural and economic career of the Georgia peach industry since the 1850s, was published in November 2016.

I love history. Perhaps I should be a little embarrassed to admit this in an era obsessed with the future, but I do. I love the way learning the history of a place or a people or a time period changes the way I think about life, the way I experience the landscape, the way I interact with others.

How do I get in touch with my professor?

- Office: 4093 Social Sciences Building
- Office Phone: 470-578-7731
- Office Hours: M-F after class; and by appointment
- Email: wokie1@kennesaw.edu

The best way to communicate with me is by phone, dropping by the office, or by email. Please allow me 24 hours to respond during the week, and 48 hours on the weekend. I will be on campus for at least some time every day after class. Don't hesitate to stop by and chat. Of course, outside of office hours, it's always best to set up an appointment.

Please note: The University provides all KSU students with an "official" email account with the address *netID@students.kennesaw.edu*. As a result of federal laws protecting educational information and other data, this is the sole email account you should use to communicate with your instructor or other University officials.

Where and when will we meet?

In Social Sciences Room 3007, Monday through Friday, May 14 through 25, from 8:00 AM to 12:30 PM.

That seems like a really long time.

Yes, four-and-a-half-hours is quite a stretch. We'll take two to four breaks every day. Keep in mind, though, that you are taking fifteen weeks of classes, forty-five hours of class time plus twenty-five to forty hours of homework time, in only ten days. It's a slightly-more-than-full-time job.

What is the point of this course?

According to the KSU catalog, "This course examines the major themes in the social, cultural, political, and economic history of the United States since 1877, the multicultural nature of contemporary U.S. civilization, and the nation's role in the global arena."

My hope is that you'll finish the course not only more knowledgeable about the American past, but also more flexible and reflective in your thinking, more effective in your speaking and writing, and more attentive and empathetic in your reading and listening. To put it in the language of learning outcomes, you should be able to:

1. narrate a story of US history since 1877, including major historical, political, social, and institutional developments
2. summarize, analyze, and interpret texts and artifacts (historical *traces*)
3. summarize, evaluate, and construct historical arguments and narratives (historical *accounts*)

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Required Materials: What do I need to have?

1. Gary Gerstle, *American Crucible: Race and Nation in the Twentieth Century*, Updated with a new chapter 10 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017), ISBN 978-0-691-17327-6.

Gary Gerstle is the Paul Mellon Professor of American History at the University of Cambridge, UK. His graduate training was at Harvard University, where he specialized in immigration and labor history of the twentieth century, though he has since broadened his interests considerably, as *American Crucible* makes clear.

This is what you might call the textbook for the course, although it is not really a "textbook" but rather an interpretation of US history since 1890 that places racial and national imaginations at the center of the story. While most history textbooks pretend to tell an "objective" story about American history and attempt to be more comprehensive in their thematic coverage, this book is an argument, originally published in 2001 and updated with a new chapter on "The Age of Obama."

Please note: because the only difference in the 2017 and the 2001 (hardback) / 2002 (paperback) edition is Chapter 10, and some prefatory material, you are welcome to use either edition for the course. However, because Kindle and other ebooks use "locations" rather than page numbers, and because you'll need to bring the book to class, please purchase or check out from a library the physical book. I have also put the KSU Sturgis Library's copy on reserve at the front desk, so that you can check it out for two hours at a time. I encourage you to purchase the book, so that you can mark it up and annotate it as you read.

2. Additional Documents (posted to D2L)

In addition to Gerstle, we will be reading primary source documents—*traces* of the past from the time period under study—which will be posted to D2L with instructions for how to read them. Some days I will ask you to print these documents and bring them to class.

3. Other materials

- two exam blue or green books, one each for the midterm and final exams
- access to an internet-connected computer
- access to a working printer, for printing your RREs and primary source documents
- pen/pencil and paper/notebooks for taking notes

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Grades and Assignments: How will I be assessed?

I will give you your final grade based on the following scale:

- A = 90+
- B = 80–89
- C = 70–79
- D = 60–69
- F = 60 and below
- I = Indicates an incomplete grade for the course, and will be awarded only when you have done satisfactory work up to the last two weeks of the semester, but for nonacademic reasons beyond your control are unable to meet the full requirements of the course. Incomplete grades are only valid after submission of the Incomplete Grade form (signed by both the instructor and student) to the Department Chair's office.

The grades are further broken down into the following categories:

- [Attendance: 10%](#)
- [Reading Response Essays \(RREs\): 40%](#)
- [Daily Sheets: 10%](#)
- [Midterm and Final Exams: 40%](#)
- [Extra Credit: 2%](#)

Now, let's unpack the composite parts of your overall grade.

Attendance: 10%

There's a grade for attendance?

Yes. There's an aphorism often attributed to Woody Allen that "Eighty percent of success is just showing up." As in life, so in this class: if you want to do well on the exams and writing assignments, showing up is the first step. As a kind of incentive, just showing up is worth 10% of your grade: there will be 10 class meetings, and I will hold you accountable for 9 of them.

- 9 days present and engaged = 100%
- 8 days present and engaged = 50%
- 7 days present and engaged = 0%
- 6 days (or fewer) present and engaged = F in the course

What does it mean to be engaged?

Engagement is that period in a relationship between friendship and lifelong partnership, usually denoted by a diamond ring ...

Wait. What?

Sorry, wrong context. (As you'll learn in this course, *context* is very, very important.)

Being engaged means:

- wakefulness
- showing with eye contact and body language that you are *listening* to your instructor and your classmates.
- *contributing* to the conversation with questions and comments
- taking notes
- *not* using your phone/tablet/laptop unless instructed to do so

Reading Response Essays (RREs): 40%

"Thought does emerge from writing," the historian Lynn Hunt [wrote in 2010](#). "Something ineffable happens when you write down a thought. You think something you did not know you could or would think and it leads you to another thought almost unbidden."

You might be in college for any number of reasons—my friends are doing it! KSU has a football team! I need to make more money!—but at least one of those reasons is (or ought to be) to improve your ability to reason through problems and communicate effectively. Which means ... *writing papers*. Unfortunately—or perhaps, from your perspective, fortunately—I can't grade your writing for every class meeting. So I have placed you into groups. At least twice this term, according to the schedule posted below, you will write two-page reading responses that, to quote a historian friend of mine, [Andrew C. Baker](#) – from whom I've adapted this assignment – do two things: "show me that you've read; show me that you've thought."

Here are some guidelines for reading and writing RREs

- [Before you read](#)
- [While you read](#)
- [After you read](#)

- [Reading Response Essay Specifications](#)
- [Reading Response Essay Grading Guidelines](#)

Before you read

- Remember: Restate to yourself the author's overall argument in the book.
- Predict: Looking at the title of the chapter, what do you think this chapter is going to be about?
- Skim: Read the first few paragraphs and the last few paragraphs to get the overall argument of the chapter, and paraphrase it to yourself, thinking about how it fits with the argument of the book. Take a look at the endnotes for the chapter, too. What major sources of evidence does the author seem to be using?

While you read

- Read: Now read the chapter straight through, paying attention to topic sentences, section breaks.
- Annotate: Underline the most important sentence of each paragraph as you read it. Put question marks beside arguments you're not sure about, or words you aren't familiar with. Avoid highlighters. Instead, each time you are tempted to highlight something, think: why does this line/paragraph seem important? And write a note to yourself instead.
- Think about the overall argument of the book, the argument(s) of this chapter, and the evidence presented in this chapter in support of those arguments.
- Note connections to other course content (lectures, textbook, other documents)

After you read

- Reread the underlined sentences.
- Sketch out the basic outline of the argument on a different piece of paper or digital document
- Review the argument and evidence of this chapter (it may have changed since your initial prediction) and consider how compelling it was as you outline your RRE.

Reading Response Essay Specifications

Every reading response essay should:

- Show you read:
 - Summarize the chapter. Using your notes and underlines, briefly *summarize* the chapter in your own words, being careful to
 - 1. state the argument(s) of the chapter and explain how it fits with the book's argument,
 - 2. describe the body of evidence used to make that argument, and
 - 3. narrate the story of the chapter by pointing out major people, places, events and themes addressed in the chapter.
 - Please note that *summary is harder than it looks*. Going line by line (First he says ... then he

says ...) can be excellent when note-taking, but not when writing. You have to determine what is most important.

- Use one or two well-chosen quotations as evidence (cited with page numbers) either parenthetically or with footnotes, but do NOT quote large sections of text (no block quotes).
- Show your thought by doing one or both of the following:
 - *Evaluate* the chapter. How successful are the author's arguments and his/her use of evidence? Is the author ignoring anything important, and if so, how would including that change his/her argument or narrative?
 - *Analyze* the chapter. Though "analyze" is a word we throw around a lot in education, it's *not* a synonym for "evaluate" or "describe." Webster's 1913 dictionary defines "analyze" as: "to resolve (anything complex) into its elements; to separate into the constituent parts, for the purpose of an examination of each separately; to examine in such a manner as to ascertain the elements or nature of the thing examined." Picture an ecologist determining what an animal ate by picking apart its stool. When you analyze a piece of writing, you pick it apart. You can do this either thematically or structurally. How does the piece's narrative or argument fit together? How does the author's evidence support the argument? To what extent do the sections of the chapter or book build on or contradict one another?
- Demonstrate appropriate academic courtesy using the following checklist:
 - Two Paper Copies: Bring 2 paper copies of your RRE to class. You'll turn one in to me and keep one for reference during the discussion.
 - Bound Appropriately: Please make sure your RRE is either stapled or printed on front and back, so that pages don't get separated.
 - Length: Your reading response essay should be between 350 and 500 words: 2 pages of double-spaced, 12 point font.
 - Formatting:
 - Use 12 point font, double spaced lines, and 1 inch margins
 - Write your name and the date at the top right corner of the page.
 - Title your response with the chapter you are addressing
 - Use paragraphs to separate your summary and your analysis/interpretation. In other words, you should have at least two paragraphs, one for summary, and one for analysis/evaluation.
 - Use proper punctuation, spelling, and grammar
 - First person pronouns (I, me, my) are fine
 - Cite quotations with page numbers (parenthetically or with footnotes)

While you are required to turn in 2 RREs according to your group schedule, you can turn in up to 8 RREs if you wish to have feedback and/or improve your RRE grade.

Reading Response Essay Grading Guidelines

Your RREs will be graded based on whether it fails to meet, needs improvement to meet, meets, or exceeds the specifications for the assignment.

- Not attempted (on a required RRE) = 0
- Fails to Meet = 50
- Needs Improvement = 70
- Meets = 85
- Exceeds = 100

Daily Sheets: 10%

Each day near the end of class, you will complete a "Daily Sheet" based on the day's content, comprising:

- term identifications (IDs)
- document interpretations
- a timeline
- a self-assessment

This is a low-stakes, formative assessment that will allow you to practice the kind of writing and thinking you'll do on the midterm and final exams. Generally speaking, I will take up two groups' daily sheets (half the class) each day.

Midterm and Final Exams: 40%

The midterm exam (Friday 5/18) and the final exam (Friday 5/25) are opportunities for you to demonstrate your growth in the historical thinking skills and comprehension that we practice each day in class. They will consist of term identifications (IDs), document interpretations, and a timeline, and will last between one and two hours. We will build the study guide on a daily basis, as we go. There will be no surprise IDs or documents on the exam.

Extra Credit: 2%

To encourage your attentiveness, I will offer up to 2% extra credit for simply leaving your phone at the front of the room during class. At the beginning of class, students who choose to participate will leave their phone at a designated table in the front of the room and initial a cell-phone sign-in sheet for that day. At the end of class, I will remind students to take their phones. In the event that a student does forget, I will bring it to the front desk secretary in the History Department (4th floor of Social Sciences building).

Back to [Table of Contents](#)

Policies and exhortations: What else will affect my success in the course?

Quite a few things.

As a student at Kennesaw State University, you are first of all under the jurisdiction of the Student Handbook: <http://catalog.kennesaw.edu/content.php?navoid=2247&catoid=27>

Especially pertinent to this course are [Academic Integrity](#) and [ADA Compliance](#). But first, here's my exhortation on [How to make an A \(or at least a B\)](#)

How to make an A (or at least a B)

As a general rule of thumb, you should expect to spend 2–3 hours studying *outside of class* for every hour *in class* during your university career. For this class, that would mean 9–14 hours *per day* outside of class, which would basically be every hour you're not sleeping or eating. However, that formula assumes that you can just continue to take in information indefinitely. You can't. But you should expect to spend 3–4 hours per day doing the homework for our daily class meetings.

1. Before class,
 - read the assigned content for the day (roughly 50 pages of Gerstle), marking it up with questions, discussion points, etc.
 - write your RRE (if it's your group's turn, or if you want to for other reasons)
 - print any primary sources posted to D2L for that day;
2. Come to class.
3. Once there, pay attention. (Drop off your phone at the front!)
4. Take good notes on lectures *and* discussions. This does *not* mean trying to write down everything that is said. That's called "transcription." Note-taking involves doing some preliminary processing of the information as you take it in, filtering what's most important, making connections to what has already been said. Notes are for reciting to yourself later. So evaluate your [note-taking system](#); use abbreviations and symbols. Try [Cornell Notes](#).
5. After class, review your notes. What were the important topics discussed? What muddy points do you still have that you can raise in class next time or discuss with classmates?
6. Read and make sure you understand feedback on reading responses and other assignments so you can improve.
7. Make friends in the course. Study collaboratively for exams, share drafts of reading responses, ask questions about assignments and readings.

Academic Integrity

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section 5. C of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the university's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to university materials, misrepresentation/ falsification of university records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional

misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI), which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement. See also <https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/content/ksu-student-code-conduct>.

Please note:

- Students who violate any provision of this code will receive zero points on the assignment.
- Students with two violations will receive a final grade of F.

If you have any questions about plagiarism, please ask before turning in the assignment. You may also wish to consult the following websites.

- Plagiarism.org <http://plagiarism.org/>
- Indiana University’s Plagiarism Pamphlet <http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml>

ADA Compliance

Students with qualifying disabilities under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act who require “reasonable accommodation(s)” to complete the course may request those from Department of Student Success Services. Students requiring such accommodations are required to work with the University’s Department of Student Success Services rather than engaging in this discussion with individual faculty members or academic departments. If, after reviewing the course syllabus, a student anticipates or should have anticipated a need for accommodation, he or she must submit documentation requesting an accommodation and permitting time for a determination prior to submitting assignments or taking course quizzes or exams. Students may not request retroactive accommodation for needs that were or should have been foreseeable. Students should contact the office as soon as possible in the term for which they are seeking accommodations. Student Disability Services is located in the *Carmichael Student Center in Suite 267*. Please visit the Student Disabilities Services website at http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/sds for more information, or call the office at (470)578-6443, or email them at sds@kennesaw.edu

Late Work and Makeup Policy

Because of the condensed nature of this course, I will not accept late work.

As noted above, I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. If you have a legitimate excuse (serious illness, death in the family, etc.), you may be allowed to make up a missed midterm or final exam. If you anticipate missing an exam, you must contact me *prior* to the scheduled date and time of this

assignment (e-mail is preferable in this case). Failure to do so will result in an automatic grade of zero for that assignment. Make-up exams will only be given to those students who can document a serious medical emergency or personal crisis.

Technology Policy

Do you care if I use my laptop/tablet/phone in class?

Yes, I do. These ubiquitous computers seem to get more powerful and tinier all the time, but there is an increasing amount of evidence that they are debilitatingly distracting. See, for example:

- Cindi May, "A Learning Secret: Don't Take Notes with a Laptop" *Scientific American* (3 June 2014) <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>.
- Nicholas Carr, "Is Google Making us Stupid?" *The Atlantic* (July/August 2008), <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2008/07/is-google-making-us-stupid/306868/>. See the video version here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKaWJ72x1rI>
- Audrey Watters, "Ed-Tech Might Make Things Worse ... So Now What?" *Hack Education* (17 Sept. 2015) <http://hackeducation.com/2015/09/17/oecd-ed-tech>

You'll need paper, pen or pencil, the readings for the day, and a willingness to interact with others face to face. *Unless otherwise noted*, you will not need laptops, tablets, smartphones, smartwatches, etc. Please keep tablets and laptops turned off and put away – you can think of it as your 270-minute [digital detox](#), if you wish.

To encourage your attentiveness, I will offer extra credit for each day you choose to turn in your cell phone at the beginning of class. See above under [Extra Credit: 2%](#) for more details.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Course schedule: What should I be doing to keep up with the course?

The following schedule is subject to alteration, especially in-class content. Please pay careful attention to D2L announcements, where I will post any changes in a timely fashion.

1. Mon 5/14 Industrial Nation

- Before class:
 - Get a copy of the *American Crucible* and read the Introduction and Chapter 1, if you have time
 - Read the syllabus

- In class:
 - Introductions: To history, to the course, to each other
 - Workshop: Columbus Day
 - Lecture: Making an Industrial Nation
 - Reading Discussion: Gerstle, *American Crucible* Introduction and Ch. 1 (pp. 3–43)
 - Preview Lecture: The Road to Imperialism

2. Tue 5/15 Imperial Nation

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 2 (pp. 44–80)
 - Group 1: Write Reading Response Essay
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Lecture: Progressivism
 - Workshop: Philippine American War Cartoons
 - Daily Sheet
 - Preview Lecture: The 1920s

3. Wed 5/16 White Nation?

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 3 (pp. 81–127)
 - Group 2: Write Reading Response Essay
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Film: Prohibition
 - Workshop: World War I
 - Daily Sheet
 - Preview Lecture: The Great Depression

4. Thu 5/17 Rooseveltian Nation

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 4 (pp. 128–86)
 - Group 3: Write Reading Response Essay
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion

- Workshop: Solving the Great Depression
- Daily Sheet
- Preview Lecture: World War II

5. Fri 5/18 Nation at War

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 5 (pp. 187–237)
 - Group 4: Write Reading Response Essay
 - Bring Blue/Green Exam Booklet to class!
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Workshop: Japanese American Internment
 - Midterm Exam
 - Preview Lecture: Road to Cold War

6. Mon 5/21 Anti-Communist Nation

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 6 (pp. 238–267)
 - Group 1: Write Reading Response Essay
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Lecture: Cold War
 - Workshop: Cuban Missile Crisis
 - Daily Sheet
 - Preview Lecture: The Long Civil Rights Movement

7. Tue 5/22 Nation of Equals

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 7 (pp. 268–310)
 - Group 2: Write Reading Response Essay
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Lecture: Rights Movements
 - Workshop: Montgomery Bus Boycott
 - Daily Sheet

- Preview Lecture: Road to Vietnam

8. Wed 5/23 Nation at Odds

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 8 (pp. 311–46)
 - Group 3: Write Reading Response Essay
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Lecture: Vietnam and the 1970s
 - Workshop: Vietnam
 - Daily Sheet
 - Preview Lecture: Reagan Revolution

9. Thu 5/24 Reaganation

- Before class:
 - Read Gerstle, Ch. 9 (pp. 347–74)
 - Group 4: Write Reading Response Essay
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Lecture: Conservative Consensus?
 - Workshop: Born in the U.S.A
 - Daily Sheet

10. Fri 5/25 Wrapping Up

- Before class:
 - Prepare for final exam
 - Bring Blue/Green Exam Booklet to class!
- In class:
 - Daily Sheet Review
 - Reading Discussion
 - Final Exam
 - Student Evaluations