HIS 335: Texas History

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Office Hours: 9:00-10 MWF; 11-12, MF, or by appointment

Text:

*Lone Star Reader, 2nd Edition* by Bane, Swanlund, and Sosebee (note that you *must* obtain a copy of the 2nd Edition; the reader was extensively changed from the 1st edition)

**Course Description:** The course is designed as a comprehensive survey course in Texas history beginning with pre-Columbian contact and continuing until the contemporary era. The primary focus of the course will be the various political, social, and cultural themes that have played key roles in the development of Texas and Texans. The emphasized themes will be the ones the instructor feels most essential in gaining an understanding of Texas in a historical perspective. Because this is an upper level history course, a key element of the course will be the growth of critical thinking among the students concerning the examination of historical themes and paradigms. Students will also be asked to read historical articles outside of class and be able to provide a critical analysis of each work within the constraints of an historical response paper.

**Course Requirements:** All students are required to complete all exams, readings, assignments, and papers of the course. The assigned readings are designed to give further background and analysis on topics that may or may not be presented in class, as well as provide the student with an understanding into the nature of current Texas historiography. Students who fail to complete or take the reading requirements of the course seriously will greatly hinder their grade.

Attendance is also a vital element in understanding the course material. Lecture material is the portal through which critical topics are discussed and disseminated; a missed lecture is a missed opportunity. But because this is an upper level course and I assume that all students now understand the importance of class attendance, you will be solely responsible for your attendance; if you choose to miss class, you will also be solely responsible for your poor grade. Also, if you are absent from class, **do not ask to “borrow” or for me to arrange to get you lecture notes. It is not my responsibility to atone for your absence from class.**
Civility in the Classroom: I expect all students to act as responsible adults; any undue disruptions or distractions during class will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

Please turn off all cell phones and personal electronic devices while in the classroom. Do not check E-mail, text message, play games, or in any other fashion use such devices. If you are concentrating on your cell phone, you are not listening or getting the full benefit of the class. Also, during an exam or quiz, all cell phones and electronic devices must be secured and completely out of sight at all times. Any student who has a cell phone or electronic device in sight during an exam or quiz will have his/her work confiscated and will receive an automatic zero on that exam or quiz. Please do not allow this to happen to you.

Additionally, I do not allow students to use laptops or tablets to record notes. The only exceptions will be for students who have a documented reason for doing so. Studies have shown that electronic devices lessen a student’s ability to assimilate information during a lecture (you may think you can multi-task, but the reality is that very few actually can). The primary reason for such a policy, however, is that my experience has shown that a vast majority of students who open a laptop or computer in class do not use it for class work. Thus, just leave them at home.

When class begins, please put down your newspapers, put away your other course work, and suspend all conversations. Class time must be put to efficient use. If you feel you must finish that newspaper, book, other class work, or talk with your neighbor instead of listening to the lecture, please stay away from class. I really do not care if you think so little of the course that you don’t want to pay attention, but such behavior distracts others who make actually wish to learn something.

Make every attempt to be on time for class. Arriving late disrupts class and demonstrates a lack of seriousness and interest about the course. Please take not of this requirement. It is a particular pet peeve of mind and I have no patience for those who have such a lack of respect that they cannot arrive to class on time. It is basic time management, a skill all should master by the time they are at least twelve years old. I simply will not tolerate it.

Grading Criteria: There will be two (2) 120-point take home exams in the course. You will be given at least ten days to complete your take-home exams and the due dates are contained within your syllabus. On these exams, you will be expected to compose at least two, but possibly three, double-spaced (with proper margins and font), word–processed essays. Length requirements will vary, and margin and format instructions will be included with the examination. You will be able to choose from among at least four essay questions for each exam; I will require everyone to answer at least one of the questions;
you will have a choice among the others. The student will be expected to write interpretative essays in which they assess and critique sources from lecture material, supplemental texts, as well as works from the bibliographic list; you will be provided with such a list in class. All sources must be appropriately cited, using the Chicago Manual of Style method. It is a requirement that you use at least three sources to answer each question. Take note—that is the minimum, and if that is all you use then you can expect a minimum grade. Because the exams will be completed outside of class, it is expected that they will be skillfully constructed, well-organized, free of errors, and grammatically correct.

In addition to the three major exams, you will also be required to write three (3) historical response papers over selections from Lone Star Reader. The papers will be require a minimum of 750 words and will be due during weeks four, nine and thirteen of the semester. Each of these papers will be worth seventy-five (75) points. You will receive a separate instruction/guide handout that will cover this assignment. Response papers are due in class on the date listed in the syllabus.

*A word on due dates for exams and response papers: I realize that life often gets in the way of your work, particularly during these times of escalating academic costs and family pressures. Such conditions do mean that perhaps there are legitimate reasons for a student not to meet a deadline. For those reasons, **my due date policy allows for some flexibility, which is as follows:** any student—for any reason—may choose to turn in ONE (1) assignment per semester up to one week late for any reason, no questions asked, without penalty. If a student chooses to utilize that one time deferment, if he/she needs extra time on any other assignments they will have to make such arrangements with the instructor at least a week prior to the due date. This is not a policy to allow you to procrastinate; it is an attempt to have compassion and understanding for those students who experience difficulties with an assignment beyond their control. I implore you to not abuse this policy.

I do not offer any sort of extra credit for any reason at any time. Do not ask.

**Grade Breakdown:**

Exams: (2) @ 125 points.................................250 points
Response: (3) @ 75 points.................................225 points
Total points.............................................475 points

Your grade will be calculated as a percentage of total points possible.

**PLAGIARISM**
Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Any student caught in such unethical activity will receive a zero for the assignment. Serious violations, such as stealing an exam or downloading a paper from the internet, will result in automatic failure of the course. I will also report cheating to your dean as described in university policy A-9.1. Under this policy, students charged with more than one violation during their academic careers will be summoned before the University Committee on Academic Integrity. If the Committee validates the charges, it may place students on probation or suspend them. You may read the policy, including your right to appeal charges of dishonesty, at: http://www.sfasu.edu/upp/pap/academic_affairs/CHEATING_AND_PLAGIARISM.html

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy (University Policy A-54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only with if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade average.

Special Arrangements: Any student who, because of a disabling condition, may require some special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make necessary accommodations. Students should present appropriate verification from Disabled Students Services, Dean of Students Office. Any arrangements made are strictly confidential.

Student Absence for Observation of Religious Holy Days: A student who is absent from classes for the observation pf a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence if, not later than the fifteenth (15) day after the first day of the semester, the student had notified the instructor of each scheduled class that the student would be absent for a religious holy day.

A Final Note: Many students make the grave error of putting away their syllabus after the first day of class and never consulting it again. Do not make this mistake. This syllabus is you instruction manual for the course. In it are the requirements and guidelines that will allow you to chart your path through this class. Most administrative questions that you may have can be answered through a careful reading of this document. Also, every student in this class receives one syllabus; if you lose your syllabus, you will not receive another copy. Make sure you keep up with it.
The standards and expectations for the course are, admittedly, high. But, I am also certain that every student has the capabilities to not only complete but also do well in the course. You have the ability and all you have to do is to tap into that potential—I know that because you are here and have advanced this far in your education. While I am not here to do your work and study for you, I am here to help you rise to your highest potential. So, if you feel that you are not understanding the material or not grasping the concepts in class, come see me as soon as you can. I am always ready, willing, and able to help students who truly want to learn.

Learning Outcomes and the Department of History

**Program Learning Outcomes:** The SFA History Department has identified the following Program Learning Outcomes for all SFA students earning a B.A. degree in History. While not all students in the class are history majors, since HIS 335 is an upper-level history course, the prescribed learning outcomes will be applicable for the course.

1. The student will evaluate the role of the historian in society.

2. The student will assess the significance of historical events/phenomena and analyze their historical contexts.

3. The student will locate, identify, and critically analyze primary and secondary sources appropriate for historical research.

4. The student will interpret evidence found within primary sources and place those sources within their appropriate historical context.

5. The student will effectively communicate historical arguments in support of a central thesis, including the proper citation of sources using the most recent edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

The course will focus on PLOs 2 through 5 through the use of essay exams, written book review assignments, and class discussion and lecture. There is, however, no research paper assigned for this course so certain aspects of PLO #5 are not applicable.
Student Learning Outcomes:
The more specific outcomes for this particular course are as follows:

1. The student will be able to cogently explain the various forces that shaped the historical progression of Texas and Texans.

2. The student will be able to understand and explain the key transformative events in Texas history that contributed to the development of the region, state, and its people.

3. The student will be able to understand, identify, describe, and analyze the diverse nature of the region and state and how that diversity has contributed to the nature of modern Texas.

4. The student will be able to explain the special problems that have helped shape the history of Texas since European contact.

Lecture, and Assignment Schedule:

Week One:
Aug. 28: Intro to Course
Aug. 30: Spanish Exploration/Initial settlements
Sept. 1: Texas in the Age of Revolution

Week Two:
Sept. 4: Texas in the Age of Revolutions, (cont.)
Sept. 6: Mexican Texas and the Beginnings of Anglo Texas
Sept. 8: The Beginnings of Anglo Texas (cont.)

Week Three:
Sept. 11: The Texas Revolution
Sept. 13: Revolution (cont.)
Sept. 15: The Republic of Texas
Week Four:
Sept. 18: The Mexican War and Early Statehood
Sept. 20: Antebellum Texas Society
Sept. 22: Antebellum Texas and the Politics of Slavery; **Response Paper #1 Due**

Week Five:
Sept. 25: Texas and the Civil War
Sept. 27: Civil War, cont.
Sept. 29: Reconstruction and Texas

Week Six:
Oct. 2: Reconstruction (cont.) **Exam #1 distributed in class**
Oct. 4: Redeemers in Charge: Texas Politics through 1890
Oct. 6: The Cattle Frontier

Week Seven:
Oct. 9: Sharecroppers and Tenants
Oct. 11: A Farmer’s Alliance and Populists in Texas
Oct. 13: **No Class ETHA Meeting in Galveston/Exam Prep Day**

Week Eight:
Oct. 16: Progressivism in Texas **Exam #1 Due**
Oct. 18: The Ferguson Years
Oct. 20: Texas and World War I

Week Nine:
Oct. 23: 1920s Texas Society Business Progressives and Conservatives
Oct. 25: 1920s Texas, cont.; **Response Paper #2 Due**
Oct. 27: Business Progressives and Conservatives
Week Ten:
Oct. 30: Texas and the Great Depression
Nov. 1: Texas and the New Deal
Nov. 3: No Class

Week Eleven:
Nov. 6: Texas and World War II
Nov. 8: World War II (cont.)
Nov. 10: No Class

Week Twelve:
Nov. 13: The Rise of Modern Texas: Economy and Society
Nov. 15: Modern Texas, cont. 1960s
Nov. 17: Factionalism and Fighting Texas Politics in the 50s and 60s

Nov. 20-24: Thanksgiving Break

Week Thirteen:
Nov. 27: Texas and Civil Rights; Exam #2 Distributed
Nov. 29: Civil Rights, cont.
Dec. 1: 1970s Texas Politics

Week Fourteen:
Dec. 4: 1960s Texas Society: Change and Tension; Response Paper #3 Due
Dec. 6: Texas Transformed: The 1980s and 1990s
Dec. 8: The Rise of a Superstate

Final Exam due Wednesday Dec. 13 by noon.