HIST 2112: U.S. History since 1877, Spring 2017

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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 semester.

Navigating this document
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 fourth year at Kennesaw State, where I teach American history, food history, and various methods courses for middle and high school teachers. 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, just came out in November 2016. This should be a little embarrassing to admit in an era obsessed with the future, but I *love* history. 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 see 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: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2:00–4:00 pm, or by appointment
- Email: wokie1@kennesaw.edu

The best way to communicate with me is via KSU's email system, phone, or by dropping by my office. Please allow me 24 hours to respond during the week, and 48 hours on the weekend. I will be on campus on Mondays and Wednesdays, and often Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday as well – don’t hesitate to stop by and chat if you have questions or concerns, but 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?

- The 9:30 section will meet in the Social Sciences building, Room 3023, from 9:30–10:45.
- The 12:30 section will meet in the Burrus Building, Room 383, from 12:30 to 1:45

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 knowledgable 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. identify major historical, political, social, and institutional developments of the United States.
2. set people, events, documents, and artifacts in historical context
3. analyze and interpret texts and artifacts (historical traces)
4. summarize and evaluate arguments and narratives (historical accounts)

Required Materials: what do I need to have?


Charlotte Perkins Gilman was an early twentieth century writer, feminist, and social reformer who is most famous for her short story “The Yellow Wallpaper” about a housewife slowly going crazy. *Herland* is her offbeat novel about an all-female utopia in the middle of nowhere, and tells us a lot about life in the early twentieth century and the ideals of the women’s movement and progressivism more broadly at that time. *Herland* is a fictional account, of course, but it’s an excellent primary source.

This book is in the public domain and available in a variety of formats – including audio! see [https://librivox.org/herland-by-charlotte-perkins-gilman/](https://librivox.org/herland-by-charlotte-perkins-gilman/) and I don’t mind if you also use these formats for reading or listening. But for class discussion, please purchase or borrow the Signet books version – the physical book, not the e-book – so that we can (literally) be on the same page.


David Chappell is an American stand-up comedian, screenwriter, producer, and actor.

Not really. **David L. Chappell** is the Rothbaum Professor of American History at the University of Oklahoma, with expertise in twentieth century U.S. history, intellectual history, and the history of civil rights. *Stone of Hope*, his second book, addresses what at first appears to be a fundamental question about civil rights: why did the movement succeed in securing legal and political recognition for African American citizenship? Chappell’s surprising and provocative conclusion is that *religion* both strengthened the protestors and weakened the segregationist resistance. Writing in *The Atlantic*, Benjamin Schwarz called it “one of the three or four most important books on civil rights.” Jonathan Reider described it as “intricate, dazzling in its reach into so many corners of black and white Southern life and fascinating at every turn” in the *New York Times*. 
It is not an easy book – and I’ll have more to say about how to read it later – but it is a worthwhile book.

3. DIY Primary Documents Reader

In addition to the two books, we will be reading primary source documents – *traces* of the past from the time period under study – for each class meeting. I would like you to print out these readings in advance and use a notebook or filing system to keep them in order.

Some possibilities:

- a 2 inch binder with dividers. Use a three-hole punch or plastic sheet protectors to organize the readings.
- have the readings spiral-bound at an office store; use post-it notes to mark sections
- a 3–5 inch accordion file with dividers or manila folders

4. (Recommended) U.S. History Textbook

I have not assigned a textbook for this course. For background information and additional content, I recommend that you check out from the library or purchase a used copy of a US history textbook. I like Roark, et al, *The American Promise*, (here’s several on [Amazon for less than a dollar](https://www.amazon.com)), but there are many other good ones. You may also follow along at one of the following digital textbooks:

- [The American Yawp](https://www.americanyawp.org)
- [Steven Mintz's Digital History](http://digitalhistory.stevenmintz.net)
- [Independence Hall’s uhistory.org](http://www.historyinstitute.com)
- [The US Embassy's Outline of US History](http://www.history.state.gov)

5. Other required supplies:

- 3 “general scantrons” (form 106173), one for each exam
- pens, pencils, paper
- reliable access to the internet

Grades and Assignments: how will I be assessed?

Here is a table that shows how the goals of the course align with assignments and activities:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Outcome</th>
<th>Activities and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. identify major historical, political, social, and institutional developments of the United States.</td>
<td>lectures, discussions, readings, exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. set people, events, documents, and artifacts in historical context</td>
<td>lectures, discussions, reading responses, exams</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. summarize and evaluate arguments and narratives (historical accounts)</td>
<td>discussions, reading responses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

- A = 900+
- B = 800–899
- C = 700–799
- D = 600–699
- F = 600 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 1000 point total comprises 4 grade categories, as follows:

- Attendance (100 points)
- Reading Responses (250 Points)
- Group-led Discussions (100 points)
- Reading Quizzes (50 points)
- Exams (500 points)

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

**Attendance (100 points)**

*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 and being reasonably engaged in the day’s work is worth 10% of your grade.

There are 30 class meetings, not counting the final exam. Because drop/add ends on Tuesday, January 17, I am
only counting 28 days of attendance. If you have perfect attendance (present and engaged at all 28 meetings) you’ll receive a 5 point bonus. (105/100 points). If you miss more than 7 classes (i.e. more than 1/4 of the course), you will fail the course.

Attendance will be calculated on the following scale:

- 28 days present and engaged (perfect attendance!): 5 point bonus! 105 points
- 25–27 days present and engaged (3 absences or fewer): 100 points
- 24 days present and engaged (4 absences): 75 points
- 23 days present and engaged (5 absences): 60 points
- 22 days present and engaged (6 absences): 45 points
- 21 days present and engaged (7 absences): 30 points
- 20 days or fewer present and engaged (8 or more absences): F in the course.

What about tardies?

Please be on time for class, and plan to stay the whole time. Two tardies (defined as 10 minutes or less) or early departures will be equivalent to 1 absence. Tardies or early departures of more than 10 minutes will be counted as absences. You are of course welcome and encouraged to come to class that day to keep up with course content.

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.
- taking notes
- not using your phone/tablet/laptop unless instructed to do so
- at least occasionally contributing to the conversation with questions and comments

Reading Responses (250 points)

Before you read

While you read

After you read
Writing and turning in your response

Reading Response 1 Grading Guidelines (100 points)

Reading Response 2 Grading Guidelines (150 points)

“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 1 of 10 groups. 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 the documents.

Before you read

- Look up the author (textbook index, American National Biography, Wikipedia)
- Think about who audience might be (there may be multiple audiences, especially for politicians)
- Consider the reading’s geographical and chronological context.

While you read

- Avoid highlighters: every time you are tempted to highlight something, think: why does this line/paragraph seem important? And write a note to yourself instead.
- Underline and annotate the most important sentence of each paragraph as you read it.
- Pay attention to tone. Circle particularly revealing word choices that suggest the author’s perspective and/or goals.
- 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
- Think about and answer these questions, which I have borrowed from history educator Bruce Lesh.
  - **Text:** What is this document about? What was the central issue being addressed?
  - **Context:** Why now? What inspired the writing of this document? How is it a product of its time?
  - **Subtext:** Read the silences; read between the lines. What does the author not say? How does this document reflect the author’s position, experience, culture, bias? How would someone from a different position, experience, culture, etc. respond?
Writing and turning in your response

Every reading response will be turned in twice.

1. You will turn in a reading response 1 week prior to the day the reading is scheduled to be discussed, by midnight. So if the reading is scheduled for a Wednesday, you will turn in your reading response to the D2L-BS Assignment Dropbox on the previous Wednesday by 11:59 PM. I will grade and give you feedback on your reading response in time for you to make light revisions before posting to the classroom discussion board for that reading.

2. After revising your response, you will post the revised version to a classroom discussion board two business days prior to the scheduled discussion day. If the discussion takes place on a Monday, you will post to the discussion board by Thursday at 11:59 PM. If the discussion takes place on a Wednesday, you will post to the discussion board by Monday at 11:59 PM.

Every reading response should:

- Show you read:
  - Using your notes and underlines, briefly summarize the document(s) in your own words. 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 and write accordingly.
  - One or two well-chosen quotations can help, but do NOT quote large sections of text (no block quotes).

- Show you thought:
  - i. Interpret the context of the document by making connections to other documents we have read, or to other historical phenomena we have discussed.
  - ii. Analyze the subtext of the document.
    - Use this particular document to generalize about the perspective of a larger group of people

Other guidelines:

- Upload your document as a Word document (.doc or .docx, NOT .pdf or .pages)
- 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 readings and/or authors you address as well as the discussion date. For instance, if you were writing a response for Wednesday, January 11, you would title it “January 11: Edisto Island Freedman's Petition and Sherman's Special Field Order 15”
- Keep your response to 500 words or less
- Use paragraphs to separate your summary and your analysis/interpretation. In other words, you should have at least two paragraphs, one for summary and context, and one for analysis and interpretation of subtext.
- Use proper punctuation, spelling, and grammar
- First person pronouns (I, me, my) are fine
- Cite quotations parenthetically (author, page # if appropriate)

Reading Response 1 Grading Guidelines (100 points)
Each group will serve as panel discussants for the day’s readings once during the semester. You will meet with me in the last 5 minutes of class on the class period before your scheduled panel; individual responsibilities will vary somewhat depending on the kind of readings assigned. You will come to class on your group’s day prepared to summarize the readings (based on your reading responses), to pose questions for classroom discussion, and to respond thoughtfully to peers’ questions and comments.

Each panel discussion will be graded on a scale of 50 points based on the extent to which each group member:

- helps to summarize the day’s readings (20 points)
- poses thoughtful questions to stimulate class discussion (20 points)
- responds thoughtfully to questions and comments from peers (10 points)

In addition to your group-led discussion, each group will have additional responsibilities on the days we discuss the longer readings – Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s *Herland* and David L. Chappell’s *A Stone of Hope* – and will be evaluated accordingly, 25 points each time for a total of 50 points.

**Reading Quizzes (50 points)**

We have two longer readings this semester: Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s *Herland* and David L. Chappell’s *A Stone of Hope*. On the first day of discussion, you will take a reading quiz that keeps you accountable to the reading. The quizzes will be composed of short answer questions, based on the reading guide for each book, and should be
fairly straightforward, if you have attended to the readings. They will be worth 25 points each, for a total of 50 points.

**Exams (500 points)**

Exams will test your ability to perform the skills we practice in class and in other assignments. They will include both so-called “objective” items (multiple choice and matching) and so-called “subjective” short answers (a paragraph or less). A sample exam would include 9–12 multiple choice questions, 4–5 quote matching, 4–5 document-based multiple choice (where you analyze a document in the exam), and 2–3 short answer questions. The final exam will be cumulative.

The exams are worth more points as the semester goes on, in order to reward you for improvement as well as performance. The first exam will be worth 100 points, the second 150, and the final exam 250, for a total of 500 points.

**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](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)**

1. Before class
   - read the assigned content for the day;
   - read your classmates’ discussion board posts about the readings;
   - formulate questions and comments about the reading even if you’re not up for group-led discussion;
   - before lectures, skim a textbook account of the topic for the day. (See suggested textbooks above)
2. Come to class.
3. Once there, pay attention.
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[ pdf ]. 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. Follow instructions. Turn assignments in on time.
7. Read and make sure you understand feedback on reading responses and other assignments so you can improve.
8. 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.

- http://plagiarism.org/
- http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml
- http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html

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

Work is due on the day and time listed in the syllabus/instructions/D2L. Late work will be eligible for 10% fewer points for each 24 hour period it is late. For example, if an assignment is due at 11:00 am, it will be eligible for 90% of the points at 11:01 am, and 80% percent of the points the following day at 11:01 am, and so on.

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. The make-up exam day will be on Friday, April 28, 2017 from 1:00 - 4:00 pm in SO 3023.

Technology Policy

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

Yes, I do. I love my macbook, ipad, and Purple LG Rumor Touch as much as the next person, but there is an increasing amount of evidence that they are debilitatingly distracting. See, for example:


So during the class meetings, this will be a low-tech course. 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, cameras, etc. Please keep them turned off and put away – you can think of it as your 75-minute digital detox, if you wish.

If you’re using your device during class, I may ask you to leave, in which case you will be counted absent.

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

I’m glad you asked. Because the schedule will likely change over the course of the semester, I am keeping the
schedule in a separate document, also available on D2L.