

Summer 2019

Pedagogical Strategies for Student Success in US History Survey Course, Q2S Enhancing Pedagogy Report

Marc A. Robinson

California State University, San Bernadino, marc.robinson@csusb.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/q2sep>



Part of the [United States History Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Robinson, Marc A., "Pedagogical Strategies for Student Success in US History Survey Course, Q2S Enhancing Pedagogy Report" (2019). *Q2S Enhancing Pedagogy*. 25.
<https://scholarworks.lib.csusb.edu/q2sep/25>

This Lesson/Unit Plans and Activities is brought to you for free and open access by CSUSB ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Q2S Enhancing Pedagogy by an authorized administrator of CSUSB ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact scholarworks@csusb.edu.

Pedagogical Strategies for Student Success in US History Survey Course, Q2S Enhancing Pedagogy Report”

This report recounts methods and strategies used to maximize student success in an undergraduate, U.S. history survey, large lecture course (HI 201 - United States History 1877 to Present). These instructional measures were part of a larger effort to address student success, called the Q2S Enhancing Pedagogy project, at California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB). Moreover, this report is part of a Faculty Learning Community, “Implementing High Impact Practices to Address DFW Rates.”

As both a new faculty member at CSUSB and first-time teacher of HIST 201, my experience involved adjusting my pedagogical strategies during the term. After grading my midterm exam, I found that a significant proportion of the enrollees received a grade of C- or lower. Therefore, I implemented several new strategies to maximize the success of the students.

(1) I strongly encouraged the students to utilize the Supplemental Instruction sessions, coordinated by a History major, and reminded the students they can get help with assignments and exams at those sessions.

(2) I strategically refocused my lectures to highlight information that was most relevant for quizzes and exams. This was meant to address the problem of students not knowing what information was most important to focus on.

(3) I gave weekly, low stakes quizzes that were specifically tailored to reinforce the specific content that was highlighted in lectures.

(4) At the end of each chapter, I allowed time for a brief review session to ensure students took note of main points and could ask questions. Similarly, I set aside an entire class period toward the end of the term for students to ask questions in preparation for the final exam.

(5) I created extra credit assignments where students watched documentaries or attended campus events relevant to class content, and submitted written reports. This allowed the students to improve their grade and fostered their interest in history.

(6) I personally emailed every student with a grade at or below a C-, reminding them about the extra credit opportunities and encouraging them to meet with me if they had any concerns. Many of the students responded to my email by thanking me for the message, and a few students met me in my office.

The syllabus for the course discussed, HIST 201, is included below.

HI 201 - United States History 1877 to Present

M/W/F, 8am to 9:10am, Winter 2019

Room: SB 128

Instructor: Marc A. Robinson, PhD

Office: SB 329

Office Hours: MWF 9:30am to 10:30am or by appointment

Email: marc.robinson@csusb.edu

Phone: 909.537.5528

Course Description:

This course is a survey, or overview, of the history of the United States from 1877 to the present. This course meets the state code requirement in U.S. history. It also meets the state code requirement in the U.S. Constitution when taken in conjunction with HIST 200. (GE=D1) (4 units). In addition to examining past events, this larger aim of this course is to help students analyze the present (and future) of the United States. Currently, there are a variety of pressing social issues that have strong connections to people and events from the past century. They include controversies on war and international diplomacy, immigration and citizenship, abortion debates, racial and ethnic strife, economic inequality, environmental concerns, and more. A working knowledge of US history since 1877 can provide valuable insights into these present-day conflicts. This class aims to foster that historical familiarity, and thereby help students develop their tools to construct more informed, complex, and contextualized understandings of our modern world. To achieve this goal, the instructor will structure the class with a mix of lecture and class discussions. The lectures may also include PowerPoint slides, images, and other multimedia. However, a stimulating and effective learning environment also depends on the engagement and participation of students, be that by paying attention, taking notes, and contributing to class discussions. Thus, students are encouraged to realize that they also have an important role to play in the success of this class.

FORMAT:

This course combines lecture and discussion. Students should come prepared to discuss primary and secondary materials on the days they are assigned.

EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

I. Historical Knowledge Skills

1.1 Students will be able to articulate relevant historical facts and context

1.2 Students will be able to identify and articulate contrasting interpretations of history

II. Research Skills

- 2.1 Students will engage a range of historical sources
- 2.2 Students will evaluate and analyze primary and secondary historical sources
- 2.3 Students will demonstrate the ability to develop an historical interpretation based on evidence

III. Communication Skills

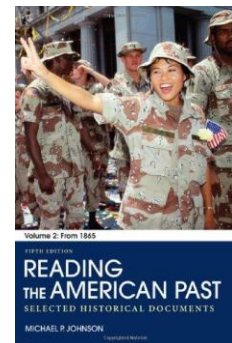
- 3.1 Students will practice their ability to write clearly

COURSE TEXTS

- 1. Roark, James, et. al., The American Promise: A History of the United States (Value Edition, 7th Edition, Volume 2), Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s/Macmillan Learning, 2017.
ISBN-13: 9781319062002 (Be sure to get the **VALUE** edition)



- 2. Johnson, Michael P., Reading the American Past (5th Edition, Volume 2), Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2012.
ISBN-13: 9780312563776



- 3. Additional articles and materials may also be assigned and distributed in class, through Blackboard, etc.

ASSIGNMENTS

- 50 points (11%) -- Attendance and Participation
- 100 points (22%) -- Quizzes
- 100 points (22%) – Historical Expository Essay
- 100 points (22% -- Midterm Exam
- 100 points (22%) -- Final Exam
- *450 points -- Total**

*Note: Point totals and percentages are approximations and may change as the quarter progresses. Grade information will be posted and updated regularly in Blackboard.

Attendance and Participation, 50 points

In general, students who attend class regularly do better on assignments and exams. Therefore, to maximize student success, and for students to get the full benefit of the class, students are required to attend class every day. Thus, your first assignment is to come to class every day, on time, and remain until class is dismissed. It is also important that you come to

class with reading assignments completed, and that you practice active listening and constructive engagement during class.

The instructor will take attendance throughout the term and students will earn **2 points each day** for being present, attentive, and engaged. Inattention, disruptiveness, arriving +15 minutes late, or leaving +15 minutes early, may result in the loss of points. The instructor will excuse absences due to participation in official, university-related activities, yet students are still responsible for any missed work. All other absences are unexcused and will result in the loss of points—including absences due to common health problems like cold and flu, out-of-town guests, work schedules, holiday travels, etc. If students have any concerns about this policy such as anticipated challenges or unexpected emergencies, students must inform the instructor as soon as possible and before the last day of class.

Quizzes, 100 points

Throughout the term, this class will have 5 quizzes (20 points each) on the readings and class content. In addition, points may be awarded for other in-class activities: notes taken, writing exercises, etc. These quizzes and in-class activities are intended to reinforce course content and reward consistent attendance. Only students with excused absences will be allowed to make up missed quizzes.

Historical Expository Essay, 100 points

What is an expository essay? Expository essays require that the writer (1) analyze a set of information, (2) construct an informed perspective, and (3) explain that viewpoint with evidence-based writing. In other words, an expository essay is a lot like an argumentative essay. For more info on Expository Essays, click [expository essay info](#).

Here, your assignment is to write an expository essay using the assigned readings of this class. No additional research is required. Early in the quarter, students will be assigned to a set of readings. And, students will write their essay based on the readings in that set. Students can select any readings and topic in their assigned set.

- #1 Historical Expository Essay, Ch., 16-18, DUE 01/23
- #2 Historical Expository Essay – Ch. 19-21, DUE 02/04
- #3 Historical Expository Essay, Ch. 22-26, DUE 02/25
- #4 Historical Expository Essay, Ch. 27-31, DUE 03/11

The essay must be 4 pages, 900-1000 words, and double-spaced. Students must incorporate AND cite the textbook (*The American Promise*) and 2 different essays from *Reading the American Past*. Therefore, **each student paper must have a minimum of 6 total citations from 3 sources**: 2 citations from the textbook, 2 from reading X, and 2 from reading Y. To format the citations, use [Chicago-style](#)¹, Author-Date. Example: (Author last name Year, page #). Since the

¹ http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html

textbook has more than two authors use “et al:” (Roark et al. 2017, 42). “Et al” means “and others.”

The essays will use the following format:

1. **Introduction** – In a paragraph, give a brief description of the essay’s central argument and the supporting evidence. Part of this paragraph is the thesis statement. The thesis statement must be specific, clearly connected to historical sources, and debatable.
 - Poor Thesis: Abraham Lincoln was a great man -- Too broad
 - Poor Thesis: Abraham Lincoln successfully preserved the Union and is therefore a great president – Not debatable
 - Good Thesis: The greatest thing about Abraham Lincoln was his efforts to compromise with the South.
 - Good Thesis: Abraham Lincoln’s efforts to compromise with the South show that he was not as great as many people think he was.
 - This essay argues that ____ (*thesis*). To support this assertion, several examples of ____ will be discussed. The first is information about _____. The second is _____ and the third is _____. Using this information, the essay will demonstrate that _____.
 - Although many ____ (*Americans, students, etc.*) do not know this, the most important event of ____ is ____ (*thesis*). To demonstrate this, this essay will examine this event and review fascinating details, such as.... Ultimately, we will see that _____.
2. **Body** – This is the bulk of your essay, probably around 3 pages. Here you present your evidence and include the citations
3. **Counter argument** – In the second to last paragraph, consider and respond to a counter argument to your essay.
 - *Although there is much evidence that Lincoln’s attempts to compromise was a strength as explained above, other historians could view it as a reason to criticize his presidency. For instance, such individuals might point to _____. While this perspective does have merit, it is not sufficiently persuasive because _____.*
4. **Conclusion** – In a paragraph, summarize and restate your argument and evidence presented

Each report must be 4 pages, 900-1000 words, double-spaced, size 12 font, proofread, include at least 6 citations as described above, and have clear and concise writing. Papers do not need a title page. **Late papers** lose 10 points per day, including weekends and holidays. Students will turn in reports on Blackboard on or before the due dates. The due dates are listed above and on the syllabus schedule. No papers accepted after March 18.

This assignment must reflect each students' individual effort and unique analysis. Any papers with highly similar thesis statements, examples, counter arguments, citations, etc., may be flagged as a case of **plagiarism, cheating, or academic dishonesty**. Even a suggestion of unauthorized collaboration may result in serious penalties. To avoid this, students are encouraged to complete the conception and writing portion of the papers without any input from others (except the instructor). Then, once the paper is written, students may have others assist in the editing and revision process.

Final and Midterm Exams (100 points each)

The midterm and final exams will evaluate student's knowledge of the concepts and information presented in class and in assigned readings. They may include multiple types of questions: long essay, true/false, multiple choice, fill in the blank, short essay, etc. More information will be provided as the exams approach.

Grading

Grading Scale			
A 100 to 93%	B 86% to 84%	C 76% to 74%	D 66% to 64%
A- 92% to 90%	B- 83% to 80%	C- 73 to 70%	D- 63% to 60%
B+ 89% to 87%	C+ 79% to 77%	D+ 69% to 67	F 59% to 0%

Additional Course and University Policies

Controversial Content:

Due to the subject matter of this class, it is likely that we will encounter controversial or mature content in assigned texts, films, etc. We may also discuss controversial or mature topics in class. Of course, everyone is welcome to take this course. However, by continuing to be enrolled, you are agreeing to engage potentially sensitive topics and use respectful student behavior.

Syllabus Amendments:

This syllabus may be amended by the instructor. If so, timely notification will be given to students.

Blackboard:

Throughout the term, the online Blackboard system will be used to distribute information, collect assignments, take attendance, etc. Thus, it is important that students access this site regularly. Go to <http://blackboard.csusb.edu> and log-in with your coyote ID and password.

Students will be required to access Blackboard in-class every day so they must bring a laptop, smartphone, or similar technology to each class.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism and cheating are violations of the STANDARDS FOR STUDENT CONDUCT Code and may be dealt with by both the instructor and the STUDENT CONDUCT ADMINISTRATOR. Questions about academic dishonesty and the policy should be addressed to the OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT AND ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT. **Plagiarism** is the act of presenting the ideas and writing of another as one's own. **Cheating** is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Plagiarism and cheating are academically dishonest and subjects the offending student to penalties up to and including expulsion. Students must make appropriate acknowledgements of the original source where material written or compiled by another is used. For more information, see the Plagiarism and Cheating section of the CSUSB Bulletin <http://bulletin.csusb.edu/academic-regulations/>

Any instances of cheating or plagiarism in this class, suspected or actual, will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct and/or other appropriate officials. And, such instances may result in a 0 grade for the assignment and/or the course.

Dropping and Adding

You are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. found in the CSUSB Bulletin, <http://bulletin.csusb.edu/academic-regulations/>.

Services to Students with Disabilities

If you are in need of an accommodation for a disability in order to participate in this class, please see the instructor and contact Services to Students with Disabilities at (909)537-5238.

If you require assistance, or in preparation for an emergency, you are advised to establish a buddy system with a buddy and an alternate buddy in the class. Individuals with disabilities should prepare for an emergency ahead of time by instructing a classmate and the instructor.

Course Schedule		
<i>This schedule, like all details of this syllabus, may be changed per the instructor's discretion, with proper notice to students.</i>		
<u>AP</u> = <i>The American Promise (Value Edition), 7th Edition, Vol 2.</i> <u>RTAP</u> = <i>Reading the American Past</i>		
Date	Readings	Misc.
<i>Week 1</i>		
Jan 7	First Day – Syllabus	

Course Schedule

This schedule, like all details of this syllabus, may be changed per the instructor's discretion, with proper notice to students.

AP = *The American Promise (Value Edition), 7th Edition, Vol 2.*

RTAP = *Reading the American Past*

Date	Readings	Misc.
Jan 9	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 16: Reconstruction, 401-425	
Jan 11	<u>RTAP</u> , 16-1 "Carl Schurz Reports on the...South" <u>RTAP</u> , 16-2 "Black Codes" <u>RTAP</u> , 16-5 "Klan Violence"	
<i>Week 2</i>		
Jan 14	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 17: The Contested West, 428-453	
Jan 16	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 18: Railroads, Business, and Politics...Gilded Age, 456-480	
Jan 18	<u>RTAP</u> , 18-1 "Marshall Kirkman Likens Railroad..." <u>RTAP</u> , 18-3 "Henry Demarest Lloyd Attacks Monopolies" <u>RTAP</u> , 18-4 "Andrew Carnegie Explains the Gospel of Wealth" <u>RTAP</u> , 18-5 "Henry George Explains why Poverty is a Crime"	
<i>Week 3</i>		
Jan 21	No Class – MLK Day	
Jan 23	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 19: The City and Its Workers, 483-508	DUE: #1 Historical Expository Essay, Ch. 16-18
Jan 25	<u>RTAP</u> , 19-2 "Domestic Servants on Household Work" <u>RTAP</u> , 19-3 "Jacob Riis Describes Abandoned Babies..." <u>RTAP</u> , 19-5 "George Washington Plunkitt Explains Politics"	
<i>Week 4</i>		
Jan 28	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 20: Dissent, Depression, and War, 511-533	
Jan 30	<u>RTAP</u> , 20-1 "Mary Elizabeth Lease Reports..." <u>RTAP</u> , 20-2 "White Supremacy in Wilmington..." <u>RTAP</u> , 20-3 "Pinkertons Defeated..."	
Feb 1	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 21: Progressivism...Grassroots to the White House, 536-561	
<i>Week 5</i>		
Feb 4	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 22: World War I, 564-589	DUE: #2 Historical Expository Essay, Ch. 19-21
Feb 6	<u>RTAP</u> , 22-2 "Eugene V. Debs Attacks..." <u>RTAP</u> , 22-3 "A Doughboy's Letter..." <u>RTAP</u> , 22-4 "Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer Defends..."	
Feb 8	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 23: From New Era to Great Depression, 592-617	
<i>Week 6</i>		
Feb 11	-----	Exam
Feb 13	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 24: The New Deal Experiment, 592-617	
Feb 15	<u>AP</u> , Ch. 25: The US and the Second World War, 648-673	

Course Schedule

This schedule, like all details of this syllabus, may be changed per the instructor's discretion, with proper notice to students.

AP = *The American Promise (Value Edition), 7th Edition, Vol 2.*

RTAP = *Reading the American Past*

Date	Readings	Misc.
Week 7		
Feb 18	RTAP, 25-4 "Solider Send Messages Home" 25-5 "Rosies the Riveter Recall Working..."	
Feb 20	AP, Ch. 26: Cold War Politics in the Truman Years, 676-697	
Feb 22	RTAP, 26-2 "George F. Kennan Outlines Containment" RTAP, 26-3 "Cold War Blue Print"	
Week 8		
Feb 25	AP, Ch. 27: The Politics and Culture of Abundance, 700-722	Due: #3 Historical Expository Essay, Ch. 22-26
Feb 27	AP, Ch. 28: Reform, Rebellion, and Reaction, 725-751	
Mar 1	RTAP, 28-3 "George C. Wallace Denounces..." RTAP, 28-4 "Black Power" RTAP, 28-5 "Equal Rights for Women"	
Week 9		
Mar 4	AP, Ch. 29: Vietnam and the End of the Cold War Consensus, 754-776	
Mar 6	AP, Ch. 30: America Moves to the Right, 401-425	
Mar 8	RTAP, 30-2 "Roe v. Wade and Abortion Rights" RTAP, 30-3 "Norma McCorvey Explains..."	
Week 10		
Mar 11	AP, Ch. 31: The Promises and Challenges of Globalization, 807-821	Due: #4 Historical Expository Essay, Ch. 27-31
Mar 13	AP, Ch. 31: The Promises and Challenges of Globalization, 821-835	
Mar 15		
Week 11		
Mar 18	Last Day of Class	
Mar 22	FINAL EXAM, Friday, 3/22, 8am	