

# U.S. History Since 1876 (Fall 2023)

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 [ucdenver.instructure.com/courses/513389](https://ucdenver.instructure.com/courses/513389)

**HIST 1362: US History Since 1876**

**Professor Cameron Blevins (he/him/his) | [cameron.blevins@ucdenver.edu](mailto:cameron.blevins@ucdenver.edu)**

**M/W 9:30-10:45am | North Classroom 1403**

**Office Hours: Weds. 11:00am-12:00pm ([Sign Up Here](#)  [Links to an external site.](#))**

**Office: Student Commons Room 3108 or [over Zoom](#)  [Links to an external site.](#)**

## Course Description

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What does it mean to be an American? How has that meaning changed over the past century and a half? What does it mean to reform society and how have different groups pursued this change? How did we end up where we are today? These are just some of the questions at the heart of HIST 1362, which provides an overview of U.S. history from the 1870s to the present.

This class is in many ways not a typical introductory history course. So what makes this class different?

1. **This course will NOT attempt to “cover” everything.** That would be impossible. Instead, we will be moving chronologically through different periods of American history by focusing on one topic or theme from that period. This means that we will be skipping past major events and topics in U.S. history. That’s okay!
2. **You will NOT be evaluated on how well you can memorize a series of events, people, and dates.** History isn’t about what happened (“just one damn thing after another”); it’s about analyzing evidence and material from the past and then using that evidence to build larger interpretations, stories, and narratives. This course is focused on developing your ability to think historically rather than accumulating historical facts.
3. **You will NOT be learning *just* about the past.** Throughout the semester, we will be connecting historical events to things that are happening today. The ultimate goal of this class is to equip you with the knowledge and skills to understand how American history continues to shape the present.

**See the [Modules Page](#) for the schedule of classes and readings and the [Assignments page](#) for assignment details and due dates.**

*Note: This course fulfills 3.0 credit hours for the CU Denver Core Humanities knowledge area.*

## Student Learning Outcomes

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What will you learn by the end of the semester? This can be broken into two categories, *Skills* and *Knowledge*.

## Skills

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- **Evidence:** Analyze historical documents, materials, and other sources to understand the past and present
- **Interpretation:** Assemble evidence into interpretations, stories, or narratives about the past, taking into account things like causation, continuity and context.
- **Empathy:** Develop the ability to see the world from the perspective of other people in both the past and present.

## Knowledge

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- **Identity and Citizenship:** Understand how American identity has been defined and contested over time.
- **Protest and Reform:** Compare and contrast the priorities, strategies, and outcomes of different movements for change in U.S. history.
- **Politics and Democracy:** Understand the mechanics of U.S. democratic politics and identify key turning points and trends in that history.
- **History and Memory:** Analyze how Americans remember their collective past and the ways in which history is used in the present.

## Assignments

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*Please refer to individual assignment pages for more details and due dates.*

### **Attendance (10%)**

Regular attendance is crucial for learning in this course. You are allowed two absences and two late arrivals over the course of the semester, after which any missed classes or late arrivals will lower your grade. You can use the Roll Call tool in Canvas to check how many absences and late arrivals you have ([instructions here](#) → [Links to an external site.](#)). Note: because there is no way for me to incorporate excused absences into your Roll Call grade as the semester progresses, I will recalculate this portion of your grade upwards at the end of the semester. If you run into health, family, or other significant challenges that will keep you from attending multiple classes, please contact me directly over email or Canvas Inbox and I will do my best to accommodate you.

### **Participation (15%)**

Much of the learning in this course comes from active participation during class periods. This requires you to complete the day's readings prior to each class, pay attention and take notes during lectures, and be ready and willing to engage with your classmates during small-group discussions and hands-on activities. I will be assigning each of you a small group, which I will

then change a few times over the semester to give you the opportunity to meet and interact with different classmates. To help me evaluate your contributions, you will submit a short written reflection at the end of the semester assessing your own performance in this area of the course. Note: To accommodate students who are shy or otherwise struggle with discussions, you will also have a series of smaller "tasks" throughout the semester to complete that will contribute to your overall participation grade.

### **Perusall Annotations (20%)**

Perusall is a platform to collaboratively annotate readings. Rather than passively reading something, in Perusall you will add comments and questions linked to specific parts of a text and reply to your classmates' comments or questions.

### **Denver Newspaper Analysis (10%)**

Read a historical newspaper from the early 1900s to get a sense for life in historical Denver and create a map of local businesses that operated in the city at that time.

### **Immigration Court Hearing (10%)**

Attend a session of federal immigration court in downtown Denver and write a reflection about your experience that connects to the history of immigration in the United States.

### **Reacting to the Past (10%)**

Conduct a historical simulation over several class periods in which each of you will take on the persona of a politician, protestor, or journalist during the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

### **Unessay (15%)**

An unessay consists of a project that takes any format besides a traditional written paper. This could mean a painting, recipe book, board game, meme collage, podcast episode, series of TikTok videos, poetry, historical fiction - whatever you want! In your unessay you will research and communicate how a local/personal/present-day subject has been shaped or impacted by larger trends in US history.

### **Final Exam (10%)**

A take-home, open-notes final exam will be distributed during Finals Week and will help me evaluate what you have learned over the course of the semester. It will not involve detailed fact-recall; instead it will require you to draw on some of the larger themes, concepts, topics, and connections from the course while providing specific evidence and examples from lectures, class discussions, readings, or other material directly related to the class. You may consult your notes from class along with any of the assigned readings themselves, but you are *not allowed* to consult outside sources such as Wikipedia, talk about the exam with fellow classmates, or use any Generative AI tools such as ChatGPT. There is no specific time limit for taking the exam, other than completing and submitting it by its due date.

## **Course Policies**

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## Health and Wellness

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Every student should prioritize their physical, emotional, and mental health. Any student who is struggling to do so (lacking a safe and stable place to live, having difficulty affording sufficient food to eat every day, facing financial stresses, etc.) is urged to consult the resources [listed here](#) , and in particular the [University's Counseling Center](#) . My goal is to provide you with a valuable learning experience, and I plan to teach with as much flexibility, resilience, and compassion as I can. To that end, please contact me over email or Canvas Inbox if you are experiencing any unforeseen challenges that will keep you from learning. I will do my best to work with you to meet those challenges.

## Required Course Materials

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College is expensive enough; whenever possible, I try to keep your costs for course materials to a minimum. Nearly all of the assigned textbooks, articles, videos, podcasts, etc. are available for free and there are no required books or textbooks to purchase.

## Communication

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I will be using Canvas Announcements for class-wide reminders or instructions and [Canvas Inbox](#)  for individual messages to specific students. Please make sure that you have [set up notifications](#)  so that you know when I post an Announcement and that you check your Canvas Inbox regularly. You are welcome to send me a message directly by [using Canvas Inbox](#)  (preferred) or by email at [cameron.blevins@ucdenver.edu](mailto:cameron.blevins@ucdenver.edu).

## Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)

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There are many contexts in which Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT can be productive ways to learn. In the context of this course, however, the use of Generative AI actively undermines the course's learning goals. An athlete *could* use a machine to lift weights for them, but they would never get stronger or faster. A guitarist *could* use a computer to play a melody for them, but they would never get better at playing the instrument. Similarly, using ChatGPT or other forms of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) to help you complete assignments in this class means that you are not developing your own knowledge and thinking skills about US history. Unless explicitly noted under an individual assignment's description page, **any work that is written, developed, or created with or by Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT is not allowed in this course** and will be considered plagiarism under [CU Denver's Academic Integrity Policy](#) . [Links to an external site.](#)

## Learning Community

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My goal is to build a strong learning community for all of my students. I expect everyone to treat your fellow classmates and professor with respect: listening attentively, not interrupting, and maintaining a civil discourse. It is my intent to create an environment that respects diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religion, and culture, etc., and supports a wide array of thoughts, perspectives and experiences. If, because of religious obligations, you have conflicts with required assignments/attendance please contact me directly as soon as possible at the beginning of the semester. To maintain this learning community, bullying or personal attacks will not be tolerated. Learn each other's names and preferred pronouns, and always assume the best intentions in each other. If something was said in class (by anyone, including myself) that made you feel uncomfortable please talk to me about it either directly or through anonymous feedback forms that I will periodically administer in class.

More broadly, the University of Colorado Denver is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment. The University prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, pregnancy, creed, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, gender identity, gender expression, political philosophy or political affiliation in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities, working, and living environment. University policy prohibits sexual misconduct, including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or related retaliation. If you have experienced some sort of sexual misconduct or discrimination, please visit the Office of Equity/Title IX web site to understand the resources available to you or contact the Office of Equity/Title IX Coordinator (303-315-2567).

## Office Hours

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Office hours are a weekly block of time for students to meet with me individually. This can be a time talk about any aspect of the class: ideas and strategies for upcoming assignments, feedback you have received, or difficult themes and concepts. Or, just drop by and let me know how the rest of your classes, work, etc. are going! I truly enjoy hearing about what my students are doing outside of my class. With some exceptions, I will be available **each week on Wednesday, from 11:00am-12:00pm**, along with additional time-slots that I will post on a week-to-week basis. If none of these times work for your schedule, please contact me over Canvas Inbox or email and we will find a different time to meet.

To schedule a time to meet with me, **[use this link](#)**  **[Links to an external site.](#)** to see a list of available time-slots and then sign up for one that best fits your schedule. In order to accommodate my students who aren't on campus as frequently, I am available to meet over Zoom using this link: **<https://ucdenver.zoom.us/j/97666213219>**  **[Links to an external site.](#)** During regular Wednesday office hours, I am available to meet *either* over Zoom *or* in person at my office in Student Commons Room 3108.

## Late Assignments

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If unforeseen circumstances come up during the semester and you need an extension on a particular assignment, please contact me via email or Canvas prior to the due date. Otherwise you are expected to submit all assignments by the due date.

### **Course Content Note**

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This course will involve historical topics that you may find emotionally distressful, including episodes of violence. I have included these topics because they are foundational to understanding the major themes of the course. If you have concerns about reading and discussing particular topics, please come talk to me at the beginning of the semester. I will work with you to find alternative readings or ways for you to participate on the days in which we discuss those topics.

### **Accommodation**

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I am committed to providing everyone the support and services needed to participate in this course. If you have a learning disability please contact Disability Resources and Services at 303-315-3510 or by e-mail at [disabilityresources@ucdenver.edu](mailto:disabilityresources@ucdenver.edu) and, if you are comfortable, notify me directly as well. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, please reach out to Disability Resources and Services.

### **Students Called for Military Duty**

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Students in the military with the potential of being called to military service and /or training during the course of the semester are encouraged to notify their school/college Associate Dean or Advising Office.

### **CLAS Incomplete Policy**

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The faculty in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences passed the following policy relating to the awarding of incomplete grades. Incomplete grades (IW or IF) are meant for students with special circumstances beyond their control that preclude them from attending class and completing graded assignments. They are not granted for low academic performance, and students must have completed a majority of the course's assignments and classes in order to qualify. Incompletes cannot be awarded that stipulate: (1) a student may repeat the entire course, (2) repeat or replace existing grades, (3) allow the student an indeterminate period of time to complete a course, or (4) allow the student to repeat the course with a different instructor. The CLAS Course Completion Agreement is available from the CLAS Advising Office, NC 2024.

**▼ Introductions****M. 8/21: Introductions****W. 8/23: Stories, Memory and the Civil War****Annotate Course Syllabus**

Aug 23 | 4 pts

**Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, “The Danger of a Single Story”**

Aug 23 | 4 pts

**Also Due This Week:****Student Survey**

Aug 27 | 4 pts

**▼ Reconstruction****M. 8/28: Reconstruction I****Jourdon Anderson Writes His Former Enslaver (1865)**

Aug 28 | 2 pts

**Mildred Lewis Rutherford, “Wrongs of History Righted” (1914)**

Aug 28 | 4 pts

**W. 8/30: Reconstruction II****Part 1, Hour 2 of the PBS documentary, Reconstruction: America After the Civil War (2019)**

Aug 30 | 4 pts



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## W. 9/6: Reconstructing the West



### Reel Injun: On the Trail of the Hollywood Indian (2009)

Sep 6 | 4 pts



### Denver History Check-In

Sep 6 | 10 pts

## ▼ Reform Movements

## M. 9/11: Capital and Labor



### American Yawp, Chapter 16: Capital and Labor (Part I, II, III)

Sep 11 | 2 pts



### Newspaper Packet on 1892 Homestead Strike

Sep 11 | 2 pts

## W. 9/13: The Progressive Era



### American Yawp, Chapter 20: The Progressive Era (Part I, II, III, IV)

Sep 13 | 4 pts



### Notes on Progressive Era Reform Movements

Sep 18 | 5 pts

## Due Sunday before class



### Denver Newspaper Analysis

Sep 17 | 100 pts

## M. 9/18: Interlude: Local History



### Colorado Experience: Auraria

Sep 18 | 4 pts



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**W. 9/20: Suffrage****Margaret Sanger on "Free Motherhood" (1920)**

Sep 20 | 2 pts

**Emma Green, "The Epic Political Battle Over the Legacy of the Suffragettes"**

Sep 20 | 2 pts

**▼ Colonialism and Empire****M. 9/25: Colonialism****American Imperialism: Crash Course US History #28**

Sep 25 | 2 pts

**Primary Source Packet on Philippine-American War**

Sep 25 | 4 pts

**W. 9/27: World War I****America in World War I: Crash Course US History #30**

Sep 27 | 2 pts

**Also due this week:****Meet with Professor Blevins during first month of the semester**

Sep 29 | 5 pts

**▼ The Melting Pot****M. 10/2: Immigration****Kathryn Schulz, "Citizen Khan: The Old West's Muslim Tamale King"**

Oct 2 | 4 pts



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**W. 10/4: Jim Crow****Isabel Wilkerson, The Warmth of Other Suns (selections)**

Oct 4 | 4 pts

**Also Due This Week:****Immigration Court Hearing**

Oct 8 | 100 pts

**▼ The American Century****M. 10/9: The New Deal****Interpreting the New Deal**

Oct 9 | 4 pts

**If you have a laptop please bring it to class****W. 10/11: World War II****World War II Part 1: Crash Course US History #35**

Oct 11 | 2 pts

**World War II and American Identity**

Oct 11 | 4 pts

**M. 10/16: The Cold War****American Yawp, Chapter 25: The Cold War (Part I, II)**

Oct 16 | 2 pts

**Gamebook for Reacting to the Past: Chicago, 1968 (Part 1)**

Oct 16 | 2 pts

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▼ **Politics and Protest**

**W. 10/18: The Civil Rights Era I**



**Sandra Dickson and Churchill Roberts, Negroes with Guns (2005)**

Oct 18 | 4 pts



**Gamebook for Reacting to the Past: Chicago, 1968 (Part 2)**

Oct 18 | 2 pts



**Role Allocation Survey for Chicago, 1968 (in-class)**

Oct 18 | 2 pts

**M. 10/23: The Civil Rights Era II / Chicago, 1968 Set-Up Session**

**Read your Role Sheet carefully - look in particular at your victory conditions and the Core Texts you need to read**



**Gamebook for Reacting to the Past: Chicago, 1968 (Part 3)**

Oct 23 | 4 pts



**Delegates and protestors: make sure you know the topic of your speech and what session you will be giving it. Note: if you are giving a speech on Session 1, begin preparing over the weekend.** [↗\(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AN6-bwJG\\_8YIQ3ol2kS2qDu8P082caB-FFS0BEQAt-8/edit?usp=sharing\)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AN6-bwJG_8YIQ3ol2kS2qDu8P082caB-FFS0BEQAt-8/edit?usp=sharing)



**Journalists: make sure you know the topic of your stories and note that most of them are due the day BEFORE a main session. Plan ahead, especially if you have a story due on Tuesday.** [↗\(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AN6-bwJG\\_8YIQ3ol2kS2qDu8P082caB-FFS0BEQAt-8/edit?usp=sharing\)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AN6-bwJG_8YIQ3ol2kS2qDu8P082caB-FFS0BEQAt-8/edit?usp=sharing)



**Link to Full Gamebook for Chicago, 1968 (including Core Texts).** [↗\(https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RHg6\\_3B0rgjKLxIWsb34b1h6RbPtbjwPmqDaiTZAgg/edit?usp=sharing\)](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RHg6_3B0rgjKLxIWsb34b1h6RbPtbjwPmqDaiTZAgg/edit?usp=sharing)

**W. 10/25: Chicago, 1968 Session 1: Domestic Policy**

**Journalists: Submit your story (if due) on Canvas Discussions by 11:59PM the day before session**



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**M. 10/30: Chicago, 1968 Session 2: Vietnam Policy**

**Journalists: Submit your story (if due) on Canvas Discussions by 11:59PM the day before session**

**W. 11/1: Chicago, 1968 Session 3: Presidential Nomination**

**Journalists: Submit your story (if due) on Canvas Discussion by 11:59PM the day before session**

**M. 11/6: Debrief Session | The Civil Rights Era III****La Raza de Colorado - El Movimiento (PBS Documentary)**

Nov 6 | 4 pts

**▼ Backlash****W. 11/8: The 1970s****Roman Mars interview with Marcia Chatelain, "A Side of Franchise" 99% Invisible podcast**

Nov 8 | 4 pts

**M. 11/13: The Triumph of the Right****Season 1, Episode 1 of FX series Mrs. America (2020)**

Nov 13 | 4 pts

**W. 11/15: The 1990s****Ava Duvernay, 13th**

Nov 15 | 4 pts



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**▼ Thanksgiving Break****No Class on 11/20****No Class on 11/22****▼ The Roots of Today****M. 11/27: The 2000s****Unessay Check-In**

Nov 26 | 5 pts

**W. 11/29: Obama vs. Trump****Obama Inaugural Address (2009) vs. Trump Presidential Campaign Announcement (2015)**

Nov 29 | 4 pts

**M. 12/4: Unessay Presentations****Did you fill out the FCQ for HIST 1362?**

Dec 4 | 2 pts

**Unessay**

Dec 4 | 100 pts

**W. 12/6: Semester Review**

**Come to class with your notes from the semester in preparation for a review session for the final exam**

**▼ Finals Week**

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### In-Class Participation

Dec 11 | 100 pts



### Final Exam

Dec 13 | 100 pts



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