

Course Overview: HIS 121

Course title: Making Modern America
Pre-requisites: None
Number of credits: 3
Catalog course description: Because we live in an increasingly connected world, yet one that is also increasingly disconnected, the necessity of understanding modern American history is critically important. This class will place particular emphasis on understanding the evolution of the United States from an expanding and developing nation-yet still isolated- to one of the world's most powerful nations in the 21st century. Students will learn about the significance of social, economic, diplomatic, and political movements that helped to share modern American identity, including reform movements, wars, the civil rights movement, consumerism, and the global economy. As citizens in an increasingly divided nation, understanding the country's history (and its many interpretations) is essential for responsible citizenship. Being able to make informed decisions, appreciate complexity, and learning how to think critically are skills you will develop in this class.
Required instructor qualifications: A master's degree in history is strongly preferred. Applicants with a bachelor's degree in history with a master's degree in another field that includes coursework in History will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Course's audience and role in Eastern's curriculum: This course is a part of Eastern's liberal arts core curriculum, so it is taken by students across the university in their first or second year. This course fulfills the liberal arts learning outcome of critical thinking as well as the Arts and Humanities requirement. This course is also required for History majors and fulfills requirements for the History and Social Science major and the History minor. It also satisfies the State of Connecticut Teacher Certification requirement of a survey course in American History if a C or higher is earned.
Learning outcomes: All courses in the liberal arts core that meet the critical thinking requirement focus on the following learning outcomes, which you should include on your syllabus. Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identifying and stating a problem or issue to be addressed• Analyzing and evaluating complex ideas, artifacts, information and arguments that can address the problem or issue• Stating and assessing the assumptions and limitations of ideas, artifacts, information and arguments that can address the problem or issue• Formulating well-reasoned beliefs, judgments or conclusions In addition to these ELAC learning outcomes, your syllabus should also include the following course-specific learning outcomes.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate ethical reasoning skills
- Demonstrate knowledge of modern American history
- Identify and interpret significant events in American history
- Cultivate an attitude of self-reflection

Primary modes of instruction: This course includes interactive lectures and class discussion.

Each course in Eastern's liberal arts core includes at least one high impact practice. The high impact practice you must include in this course is a collaborative project, following the [AAC&U definition](#). This project need not focus on the Great Depression, as it does on the [sample syllabus](#).

Primary modes of assessment: On campus, students' grades are calculated as follows:

- Midterm essay test: 20%
- Final exam essay test: 20%
- Collaborative project: 20%
- Self-reflection on collaborative project: 20%
- Class participation: 20%

Instructors can exercise some freedom in how they weight assignments, provided that exams and a collaborative project remain components of the course.

For details on each of these assignments, please see the [sample syllabus](#).

Other notes for instructors: On campus, instructor uses [Give Me Liberty! An American History \(Brief Volume 2\)](#). Instructors may use another text of their choosing, in consultation with the faculty liaison.

Approved by the Department of History on 05/15/2025

Signature of department chair or faculty liaison: *Caithlin Caranen*