



AFAM 400: Advanced Research in AFAM Studies

COURSE SYLLABUS: Spring 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Derrick McKisick

Office Location: Ferguson Social Sciences #119

Office Hours: T/R - 8:00 – 9:30 am/ T -2:00 -3:30 pm – or by appointment

Office Fax: 903.468.3230

Zoom: [Derrick McKisick Personal Meeting Room](#)

University Email Address: derrick.mckisick@etamu.edu

Preferred Form of Communication: **email**

Communication Response Time: 24- hours except Friday to Sunday

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required

Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (NY: Norton, 2011)

ISBN: 978-0393340662.

James Green, *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, The First Labor Movement, and the Bombing that Divided the Gilded Age*, (NY: Pantheon Books, 2006) -- ISBN:978-1-4000-3322-5).

Michelle Kuhl, *A Progressive Era for Whom? African American in an Age of Reform, 1890-1920* (NY: OUP, 2024) -- ISBN:9780197519196.

Software Required

Optional Texts and/or Materials

Mary L. Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, Eleventh ed. New York: Bedford/St. Martins's, 2025.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Course Description

This course traces the development of African American history and the development of modern America from the turbulent 1850s through the end of WWI. Within these critical years, the United States emerged from a nation severely divided by issues connected to race, rebellion, reconstruction, and finally, reform to one that had been transformed thorough immigration, urbanization, and industrialization into a leading world power. Over the course of the semester, this class will examine the events and historical interpretations that are at the heart of the historical understanding of this critical period in the transformation of the United States.

Student Learning Outcomes (Should be measurable; observable; use action verbs)

1. Students can locate appropriate secondary source materials to complete a semester project.
2. Students can identify a historical argument.
3. Students can analyze a secondary source.
4. Students can compare secondary sources
5. Students can demonstrate an understanding of historiographical developments from Mexican War through World War I.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

This course requires students to have a working knowledge of D2L (Learning Management System), university email, Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, and Adobe Express.

Instructional Methods

The course requires a combination of writing assignments and discussion boards. ALL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE submitted by 11:59 pm each Saturday of the term (No Late Assignment will be accepted for full credit). The instructional week will be from Sunday to Saturday. Late assignments will receive a full grade penalty for each day it is late. Students are expected to read the required readings to participate fully in the class discussions.

Required Reading: All students are required to read and discuss the assigned books. The books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore, internet websites (Amazon or publisher) and at a variety of regional retailers.

Turnitin: All typed assignments, exams, papers, and reviews must be uploaded to the appropriate listing of the course's dropbox. Each assignment dropbox automatically uploads the student's work to turnitin.com for plagiarism and AI checking. This is a requirement for the course, and the students will not receive a grade until they have completed this process.

Writing Assignments: All writing assignments must be typed in 12 pt. New Times Roman font, doubled spaced with a 1" margin. Additionally, all assignments must include, on the first page, your name, assignment, my name, course number, and date. Students must submit an electronic copy to a dropbox that turnitin.com can analyze. Book reviews and reception report due dates are listed in the course outline.

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Student Presentations: All students are required to create and deliver a presentation with the instructor's approval to the class based on historically relevant person or event that directly connects to African American history. The presentation should include: a brief statement regarding their topic's historical relevance, research question, an analysis of the relevant historical interpretations, and relevant secondary sources. Additionally, all presentations must be created using Adobe Express to receive credit and last between 7 to 10 minutes. Please review presentation instructions posted in D2L.

Participation: All students must be prepared to participate in class discussions based on the assigned readings or other course contents. Students cannot earn participation credit if they do not attend class. If students have more than three unexcused absences, they will not earn all the participation. Excused absences include university athletes for scheduled events, sickness – with doctor's note – or family emergency. Students are responsible for communicating with the instructor regarding their class absences.

Proposal and Final Paper Guidelines will be posted in D2L.

Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course

Students should check their D2L each day and complete the assigned reading to ensure that they are prepared for class.

GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Total points corresponding to the final letter grades

A = 400 - 359 Points

B = 358- 319 Points

C = 318- 278 Points

D = 277- 238 Points

F = 237 & > Points

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Weights of the assessments in the calculation of the final letter grade.

Assignments	10%
Final Paper	25%
Presentation	5%
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	25%
Proposal	5%
Participation	5%
TOTAL	100%

The grading criteria of all written work will be based on the following descriptions:

A = Superior mastery of content and reading material; clear organization and factual accuracy; innovative interpretation or argument that responds to the specific directions of the assignment, test, or essay; clearly written and great use of sources.

B = Excellent command of the content and reading material; factual accuracy, a generally solid historical argument backed with specific relevant evidence and sufficient use of sources.

C = Average command of content material; reasonable factual accuracy; ability to produce a specific argument that may not correctly reflect the argument of the selected sources.

D = Poor command of content and failure to follow directions; historical errors of fact; no real argument driving the essay.

Assessments

Writing Assignments	40 pts.
Final Paper	100 pts.
Presentation	20 pts.
Midterm	100 pts.
Final	100 pts.
Proposal	20 pts.
Participation	20 pts.

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Course Outline/Calendar

Module 1	Topic	Assigned Reading	Written Work Due	Learning Outcome
1/13-15	Course Overview/ Historical Context	Jack P. Maddex, Jr., "Proslavery Millennialism: Social Eschatology in Antebellum Calvinism," <i>American Quarterly</i> , 31, (1979): 46-62; Foner, <i>Fiery Trial</i> , 3-62.		SLO #2/#3
1/20-22	American Reform	Thomas L. Haskell, "Capitalism and the Origins of the Humanitarian Sensibility, Part I," <i>AHR</i> , 90, (1985): 339-361; Foner, <i>Fiery Trial</i> , 63-91.		SLO #2/#3
1/27-29	Market Revolution	Douglas R. Egerton, "Markets without a Market Revolution: Southern Planters and Capitalism," <i>JER</i> , 16,(1996): 207-221; Foner, <i>Fiery Trial</i> , 92-132.		SLO #2/#3
2/3-5	Antebellum Politics	James L. Huston, "Abolitionists, Political Economists, and Capitalism," <i>JER</i> , 20, (2000): 487-521; Foner, <i>Fiery Trial</i> , 132-205.	Proposal Due by 1/31/2026	SLO #1/#4
2/10-12	Labor and Sectionalism	Lacy Ford, "Reconfiguring the Old South: 'Solving' the Problem of Slavery, 1787-1838," <i>JAH</i> , Vol. 95, No. 1 (2008): 95-122; Foner, <i>Fiery Trial</i> , 206-289.		SLO #2/#3
2/17-19	Labor and the New Republic	Steven Hahn, "Class and State in Post emancipation Societies: Southern Planters in Comparative Perspective," <i>AHR</i> , 95, (1990): 75-98; Sven Beckert, "Emancipation and Empire: Reconstruction the Worldwide Web of Cotton Production in the Age of the American Civil War," <i>AHR</i> 109, (2004): 1405-1436; Green, <i>Haymarket</i> , 3-52.	Reception Report - Foner, <i>Fiery Trial</i> by 2/21/2026	SLO #2/#3
Module 2				
2/24-26	New South	Harold Woodman, "The Political Economy of the New South: Retrospect and Prospects," <i>JSH</i> , 67, (2001): 789-810; Jacqueline Jones, "Labor and the Idea of		SLO #2/#3

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		Race in the American South," JSH, 75, (2009): 613-626; Green, <i>Death in the Haymarket</i> , 53-101.		
3/3-5	Review - 3/3/2026	Midterm – 3/5/2026 Green, 102- 159		
3/9-13		Spring Break		
3/17-19		West, Reconsidering Race Green, <i>Death in the Haymarket</i> , 160-208		SLO #2-#3
3/24-26	Industry and Gilded Age	Richard Schneirov, "Thoughts on Periodizing the Gilded Age," <i>Jornal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era</i> 5, no.3 (2006). Green, <i>Death in the Haymarket</i> , 209-301 Kuhl, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4		SLO #2-#3
3/31-4-2	Atlanta Compromise and Race	Position #1: The Nadir Position #2: Laying the Foundation – Atlanta Compromise Speech Dubois, On Washington	Book Review – Green, <i>Death in the Haymarket</i> by 4/4/2026	
4/7-9	Progressivism	Kuhl, 3.1-3.7		SLO #2
4/14-16	Reform	Kuhl 4.1-4.8	Presentations	SLO #4/#5
4/21-23		Kuhl, 5.1-5.7	Presentations	SLO #4/#5
4/28-30	Migration and the Great War	Kuhl, 6.1-6.6	Final Paper Due by 5/2/2026	SLO #4/#5
5/7	Final Exam	10:30 am -12:30 pm		

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TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

Zoom Video Conferencing Tool

https://inside.tamuc.edu/campuslife/CampusServices/CITESupportCenter/Zoom_Account.aspx?source=universalmenu

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

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STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COURSE

CWID and Password

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@etamu.edu.

Technology-Related Issues

Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a ETAMU campus open computer lab, etc.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS AND SUPPORT

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need reliable computer and internet access for this course. Students must be able to effectively use myLeo email, myLeo Online D2L, and Microsoft Office.

Learning Management System (LMS) – D2L

All course sections offered by East Texas A&M University have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are the technical requirements:

- View the [Learning Management System Requirements Webpage](#).
- Learn more on the [LMS Browser Support Webpage](#).

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found on the [Brightspace Support Webpage](#).

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COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your instructor. Correspondence will always be through university email (your “myLeo” mail) and announcements in myLeo online (D2L). You will not RECEIVE email through D2L, so be sure to check your ETAMU email for communication. Students are encouraged to check university email daily.

Include the Following in Emails with Instructor:

- Course name and subject in the subject line
 - Salutation (Good afternoon, Dr. Jackson)
 - Proper email etiquette (no “text” emails – use proper grammar and punctuation)
 - Student name and CWID after the body of the email (possibly add to student signature on email)
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COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The [Code of Student Conduct](#) is described in detail online in the [Student Guidebook](#).

Students should also consult the [Rules of Netiquette Webpage](#) for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum.

ETAMU Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please view the [Attendance Webpage](#) and the [Class Attendance Policy](#)

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Academic Integrity

Students at East Texas A&M University are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty University Procedure 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

Use of Artificial Intelligence

East Texas A&M University acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

East Texas A&M University

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@etamu.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Services](#)

Nondiscrimination Notice

East Texas A&M University will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in East Texas A&M University buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and ETAMU Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

East Texas A&M Supports Students' Mental Health – Counseling Services

The Counseling Center at East Texas A&M University, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

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Mental Health and Well-Being

The university aims to provide students with essential knowledge and tools to understand and support mental health. As part of our commitment to your well-being, we offer access to Telus Health, a service available 24/7/365 via chat, phone, or webinar. Scan the QR code to download the app and explore the resources available to you for guidance and support whenever you need it.



As an Institutional Member of the National Association of Schools of Music, East Texas State A&M University supports the Association's commitment to student health and wellness. The following web address provides links to information for resources related to physical and mental well-being, as well as assists in offering preventative measures that students can take to avoid serious and/or chronic conditions: [Musician Health and Safety - East Texas A&M University](#)

Department and Accrediting Agency Statement:

School of Music Mission Statement:

The School of Music at East Texas A&M University promotes excellence in music through the rigorous study of music history, literature, theory, composition, pedagogy, and the preparation of music performance in applied study and ensembles to meet the highest standards of aesthetic expression.

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