THEME: Inventing America

As part of a learning community with a large lecture of HIST 1301, students in UNIV 1301 Inventing America will examine the cultural dynamics, social relations, technological innovations, health conditions, and political structures that shaped the lives of ordinary Americans through the eyes of the participants. The course will emphasize written and oral communication skills as well as critical thinking skills within the framework of “thinking historically.” In addition, students will learn the fundamentals of research and writing for an academic setting.

DESCRIPTION:

This class is part of a Learning Community along with Honors HIST 1301 and several of the readings and assignments in this class will be integrated with the work you do for the other courses as we explore this LC’s common theme Thinking Historically; Researching and Writing Academically.

In this class, you will learn to think like historians by analyzing and interpreting primary sources (evidence from the past) and secondary sources (interpretive accounts written by historians). In this way, you will see that history is not merely a series of facts neatly tied together to form fixed conclusions. Instead, history is an interpretative enterprise which continually evolves as a result of new evidence, changing perspectives, and individual and societal values.

By the end of this course, students will be able to
- Think like historians through the analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of historical sources by examining motivation, viewpoint, context, and cultural perspective.
- Evaluate different interpretations of American history and develop their own interpretations about the past in order to understand themselves and the times in which they live.
- Communicate their thoughts about the social history of America orally and in writing.
- Develop the critical thinking and analytical skills necessary to integrate and apply a variety of information.
- Work with others and apply self-assessment and self-regulatory skills.

METHODS FOR ADDRESSING UNIV GOALS:

Goal 1. Students will develop and apply elements of leadership through effective individual participation and meaningful team collaboration to empower them to be agents of change.
1.1 Students will assess and reflect on their strengths and leadership skill development.
1.2 Students will engage in active learning through individual, team, and class activities that develop their leadership skills.
1.3 Students will learn more about collaboration, roles, and facilitation skills through faculty instruction and student practice.
1.4 Students will develop effective interpersonal communication skills to include listening, sharing diverse perspectives, and soliciting others’ viewpoints.
1.5 Students will improve their interpersonal conflict management strategies.

**Students will:**
- Write multiple journal entries assessing and reflecting on personal assets, strengths and leadership skill development as well as abilities, interests, goals, and values. Journal 1 will have prompts on leadership in the past, their definition of leadership, personal assets and strengths. Journals 5, 9, 10 require reflection on course progress, leadership, group participation.
- Be part of a permanently assigned peer team to evaluate paper drafts, collaborate on research, practice study skills, and participate in classroom discussion. Students will also evaluate their performance in these groups at least 2 times during the semester (journals 5 and 9).
- Participate in a “Mystery Who Done It” exercise at the beginning of the semester to practice and model proper group collaboration behavior. Follow-up discussion on who took leadership role and what was effective ways of communication.
- Be assigned as Daily Expert and be responsible for their group’s responses to discussion questions.
- Participate in a JigSaw assignment as part of the scaffolding for the mid-term paper where they will first work in small groups to understand a primary document. During the following class, the students will switch groups and the “experts” on each primary document will explain it to the rest of the small group before they individually write their papers. This gives each student the chance to “lead” a discussion from the viewpoint of their “expertise.” Students will evaluate their group participation at the end of the first day.
- Be directed to discuss leadership roles in a historical context when appropriate (e.g. female boycotts in Revolutionary War, participation in strikes at Lowell Mills).
- Write several short papers during the semester. These papers give the students an opportunity to assess their knowledge as well as their progress in terms of group and class participation and dynamics.
- Work with others and apply self-assessment and self-regulatory skills.
- Create sample accomplishment statements while working on a résumé with STAR statements.
- **Résumé Worksheet, Résumé with STAR Statements**

**Goal 2. Students will examine the roles and responsibilities crucial for their success in college and beyond.**
2.1 Students will examine personal and social transition issues affecting college success.
2.2 Students will become familiar with the importance of participating in high-impact practices identified in the UTEP Edge.
2.3 Students will engage in at least one academic and one professional goal-setting activity or exercise.
2.4 Students will develop a plan of study by participating in appropriate academic advising.
2.5 Students will demonstrate knowledge of the rules of academic integrity and will practice acceptable academic behavior.
2.6 Students will become familiar with major UTEP academic policies and requirements in order to remain in good academic standing and graduate in a timely manner
2.7 Students will demonstrate regular use of university communication systems, such as email, bulletin broadcasts, websites, and Mobile Campus.

**Students will**

- Become familiar with high-impact practices through readings in Borders and guest speakers.
- Become familiar with MineTracker leadership dimensions co-curriculum and reports.
- Examine transition issues using Borders, and reflect on those issues through multiple journal entries assessing and reflecting on personal and social transition issues affecting college success.
- Complete an in-class activity with Choices 360 and turn in exercise (Journal 8).
- Complete a résumé worksheet and a résumé with STAR statements.
- Participate in class or group discussion covering what constitutes academic integrity and the penalties for breaking UTEP rules regarding same.
- Learn about advising procedures from an AAC advisor during a class session.
- Access and interpret their specific degree plan; prepare a list of possible course options for the upcoming semester; and learn how to look up, interpret and print transcripts.
- Calculate GPA as an in-class activity.
- Be required to use the UTEP email system, the library website/databases, and Blackboard.
- Participate in electronic and face-to-face communication with their peers and with the instructor and peer leader.
- Respond to discussion questions on Blackboard.
- Communicate by email if they need to be absent.

**Goal 3. Students will identify, assess, and build on their strengths and experiences to develop academic and transitional strategies necessary for success in their academic, career, and life goals.**

3.1 Students will reflect on their responsibility for and contribution to their own learning.
3.2 Students will work to improve their oral, written, and electronic communication skills.
3.3 Students will work to improve their academic success strategies such as note-taking, annotation, active reading, test taking, time management, and stress management.
3.4 Students will become familiar with learning management systems such as Blackboard.
3.5 Students will examine their academic, career, and life goals by participating in at least one self-assessment activity about their interests, abilities, and values.
3.6 Students will participate in at least one activity, exercise, or information session to become familiar with the steps, including post-graduate education, required to prepare for a career.

Students will

- Use Choices 360 to clarify career goals and write journal entry reflecting on career goals (Journal 8).
- Complete a résumé worksheet and a résumé with STAR statements.
- Discuss and analyze strategies for time management, motivation, critical thinking, note-taking, active reading, test-taking, research and writing, and working in groups through in-class exercises, group and class discussions, journal reflections, and exercises in the Borders: crossing into your future. (Journals 3 and 4)
- Learn time-management skills through in-class exercises, discussion with PL one-on-one, and journal entries (Reflection submitted in Journal 2 and 6).
- Complete an in-class priority exercise for what is due within the next two weeks in the LC classes at least 2 times during the semester.
- Complete 2 post-test and post-paper submission reflection sheets to judge effort, expected grade, and concrete plan for improving effort/grade.
- Reflect on their university experience at mid-term (Journal 7).
- Learn study skills such as note-taking in exercises based on lectures, readings, discussions, and presentations (in class and submitted in Journal 4).
- Take quizzes on learning skills and on class content and self-assess those skills.
- Present their research to the class at the end of the semester as a poster or a PowerPoint presentation.
- Have their papers reviewed by the writing center or the history tutoring center for extra credit.
- Communicate their thoughts about the social history of America orally and in writing.

Goal 4. Students will engage in research and critical thinking activities that demonstrate their ability to effectively integrate their learning within, across, and beyond academic settings.

4.1 Students will engage in critical thinking and problem-solving through individual, team, and class activities.

4.2 Students will demonstrate the ability to develop an effective research strategy based on the specifications of the research assignment.

4.3 Students will engage in library and database research.

4.4 Students will locate and critically evaluate the reliability, validity, and accuracy of sources.

4.5 Students will develop a project that involves critical evaluation and effective integration of sources.

4.6 Students will demonstrate the ethical use of sources such as accurate paraphrasing, quotations, and citations.

4.7 Students will reflect on how the research process applies to their learning within, across, and beyond academic settings.
Students will

- Read and analyze (through discussion and written assignments) a variety of primary source historical documents from American history.
- Think like historians through the analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of historical sources by examining motivation, viewpoint, context, and cultural perspective.
- Evaluate different interpretations of American history and develop their own interpretations about the past in order to understand themselves and the times in which they live.
- Develop the critical thinking and analytical skills as well as information literacy skills (need, find, evaluate and incorporate, use, and use correctly) necessary to integrate and apply a variety of information.
- Complete multiple assignments combining critical reading, critical thinking, and critical writing in order to learn the skills necessary to perform satisfactorily in any college level course.
- Learn basic library skills and use those skills to complete a short research assignment on a historical topic.
- Be required to use electronic and library research on assignments, utilizing the class Lib Guide for guidance.
- Address critical thinking and problem solving through short analytical papers and a short focused research paper on a historical topic.
- Complete a semester long scaffolded final research project that will include a research essay should be between 4-6 pages (8-10 pages for honors credit) and must be based on primary and secondary sources; create one history- based narrative (two history-based narratives for honors credit) in the context of an “eyewitness character”; present the research to the class as a poster or PowerPoint presentation and possibly at the ESP Showcase; and write a reflection on the research process including how it applies to their learning within, across, and beyond academic settings. Steps will also include outlining, thesis sentence peer review, Topic/Question/Significance statements, annotated bibliography.
- Attend two library based research sessions conducted by the class librarian, complete a library activity exercise, and have "show and tell" where they bring a book and article on their topic to class for review by the instructor and peer leader.
- Complete the Online Library Modules before the library sessions.
- Complete the Library Interactive Scavenger Hunt.
- Complete a paraphrase/summarize/quotation worksheet which includes bibliographic references.
- Turn in assignments through SafeAssign but allow students to see reports and correct any missteps.
- Be participate in a class discussion on plagiarism and complete an online quiz on Blackboard.

Goal 5. Students will engage in campus and community activities to increase their sense of academic and social belonging.
5.1 Students will begin to build networks of faculty, staff, and peers to create a supportive and positive learning environment.

5.2 Students will attend/participate in a minimum of two social, cultural, and intellectual events at UTEP.

5.3 Students will become aware of and use selected academic and student support resources.

5.4 Students will meet one-on-one in person or virtually at least twice with the instructional team to discuss and receive feedback about their academic progress and transition to UTEP.

5.5 Students will meet in person or virtually with at least two other faculty or staff members important to their academic progress such as their academic advisor, their other professors, teaching assistants and/or tutors.

5.6 Students will become familiar with the university’s student organizations.

**Students will**

- Meet at least twice with the instructional team (instructor and peer leader) to discuss academic progress and transition to UTEP and to explore options for improvement.
- Meet with the Peer leader once within the first three weeks of the semester to discuss transitions to UTEP and success strategies including time-management.
- Meet at least once with the Instructor to discuss the individual projects.
- Meet with the librarian at least once to discuss library literacy and work on a semester project.
- Meet with the instructors of the LC sections at least once to discuss progress.
- Communicate through email and personally with the Peer leader and Instructor to discuss progress in the course, progress on assignments, and transition into college life.
- Communicate with their peers, the peer leader, and the instructor in a variety of electronic formats during the semester.
- Engage in routine small group/team work in the classroom.
- Be encouraged to become involved with at least one UTEP organization or resource.
- Attend two UTEP event (cultural, sports, or academic) and write a short summary of the event including the relevance of the event to the student.
- Participate in a group scavenger hunt to find various academic and student support resources on campus.
  - Attend presentations by representatives of various UTEP resources and organizations including academics, advocacy, service, honor societies, professional, religious, recreational, international, government, and special interest groups.
  - Take an end of the semester on-line survey to evaluate their integration into the UTEP community.