

USHIST102 | United States History II

Course Text

No need to track down a textbook; this text is provided digitally as part of the course enrollment:

Brinkley, Alan. *The Unfinished Nation: A Concise History of the American People*, 10th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2022.

Course Description

This course provides an overview of the history of the United States and its effects on American society from Reconstruction to the post-9/11 era. Students examine major themes in American history and evaluate the successes and failures of Reconstruction policy. In addition, students analyze important periods during the turn of the nineteenth century ranging from the rise of Populism, American expansionist policy, and the development of the Progressive movement during the early twentieth century. Students investigate the causes of World War I and analyze the social and economic changes between World War I and the Great Depression. In this vein, students analyze the major themes of the twentieth century including the Great Depression, World War II, the Korean War, the Cold War, and the Vietnam War. In turn, the course follows the development and evolution of the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s. The major domestic and international developments of the Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, and the first Bush administrations are analyzed and assessed, as is the significance of major domestic and international developments since 1990.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Apply historical research skills to major themes in American history since the end of the Civil War
2. Evaluate how certain components of Reconstruction policy succeeded or failed
3. Describe and assess the growth and evolution of the South and West following the Civil War
4. Analyze the factors involved in the rise of big industry during the late nineteenth and assess its impact on American labor
5. Explain the growth of cities in the last quarter of the nineteenth century and assess the impact of this growth on urban life
6. Identify the factors that led to the rise of Populism in the 1880s and 1890s and assess the impact of Populism on American society and politics
7. Explain the development of the Progressive movement and assess the impact of the movement at the local, state, and national levels
8. Investigate the causes of World War I, examine U.S. reasons for intervention, and evaluate the consequences of the war and the subsequent peace
9. Explain the causes of the Great depression and evaluate the economic successes and failures of the New Deal as a response to the Great Depression
10. Examine the causes and global impact of World War II

11. Explain the causes, events, and consequences of the Cold War, including the Korean War and the Vietnam War
12. Explain the causes, events, and consequences of the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s
13. Deduce and evaluate the significance of the major domestic and international developments and the rise of global terrorism since 1990
14. Examine activism and the development of counterculture during the 1960s and 1970s
15. Analyze a primary source historical artifact and apply critical thinking to answer questions about its historical relevance

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for U.S. History II, but it is recommended that students complete U.S. History I first.

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an honest, truthful and responsible manner. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and academic misconduct. Failure to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy can result in a failure and/or zero on the attempted assignment/examination, a removal from the course, disqualification to enroll in future courses, and/or revocation of an academic transcript.

Course Completion Policy

In order for a course to be considered complete, **all required coursework must be attempted, submitted, and graded.** Required coursework consists of graded assignments. Any Academic Integrity Policy violations may prevent a course from being considered complete.

Assessment Types

StraighterLine courses may include any combination of the assessment types described below. Review the descriptions to learn about each type, then review the Course Evaluation Criteria to understand how your learning will be measured in this course.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks test your mastery of course concepts. You have 3 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Note: Cumulative Benchmarks (final exams) only allow 1 attempt.

Capstones

Capstones are project-based assessments that help you apply concepts to real-world scenarios. You have 2 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Checkpoints

Checkpoints are quick knowledge checks on important course concepts. All are open-book, and most have 1-3 attempts.

AI Use-Case Policies

StraighterLine Capstone assessments operate under one of three AI Use-Case Policies. These designations are selected intentionally to support learners in developing digital literacy, ethical reasoning, and authentic communication skills. Each model requires students to engage meaningfully with the course outcomes while adhering to academic standards.

Independent Work Requirement: Capstones with this designation must be completed independently without using AI tools. The goal is for learners to showcase their own understanding and skills without AI assistance. Students are expected to generate and submit original work developed solely through their own reasoning and effort.

AI-Assisted Planning Option: Capstones with this designation may allow AI tools to support brainstorming and assessment planning. If allowed, students will be asked to document any AI assistance by noting how it informed their work. Documentation must be included within the assignment or in a designated reflection field. Examples include describing how an AI tool helped organize an outline, generate ideas, or surface sources for further exploration.

AI-Integration Requirement: Capstones with this designation require AI tools as part of the learning process. Students will be asked to reflect upon their AI interactions and AI contributions to the assessment. Reflections must include which tools were used, how they were used, and what insights students gained from the process. This promotes transparency, ethical use, and metacognitive skill-building.

Course Evaluation Criteria

Your score provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. A passing percentage is 70% or higher.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Assessment	Points	Learning Outcomes
Checkpoint 1: Reconstruction and the New South	0	N/a
Benchmark 1: Favorite Historical Topic	10	1
Checkpoint 2: The Conquest of the Far West	0	N/a
Checkpoint 3: Industrial Supremacy	0	N/a
Checkpoint 4: The Age of the City	0	N/a
Benchmark 2: Checkpoints 1-4	150	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Checkpoint 5: From Crisis to Empire	0	N/a
Benchmark 3: Historical Change	10	1
Checkpoint 6: The Progressives	0	N/a
Capstone 1: Primary Source Analysis	150	1, 7, 14, 15
Checkpoint 7: America and the Great War	0	N/a
Checkpoint 8: The New Era	0	N/a
Benchmark 4: Checkpoints 5-8	150	4, 5, 7, 8
Checkpoint 9: The Great Depression	0	N/a
Checkpoint 10: The New Deal Era	0	N/a

Assessment	Points	Learning Outcomes
Benchmark 5: The Early 1900s	10	1
Checkpoint 11: America in a World at War	0	N/a
Checkpoint 12: The Cold War	0	N/a
Benchmark 6: Checkpoints 9-12	150	9, 10
Checkpoint 13: The Affluent Society	0	N/a
Checkpoint 14: The Turbulent Sixties	0	N/a
Benchmark 7: Globalized Conflict	10	1, 8, 10, 11, 13
Checkpoint 15: The Crisis of Authority	0	N/a
Capstone 2: Historical Presentation	200	1, 2, 7, 8, 10, 11
Checkpoint 16: From "The Age of Limits" to Reaganism	0	N/a
Checkpoint 17: The Age of Globalization	0	N/a
Benchmark 8: Checkpoints 13-17	150	11, 12, 13, 14
Benchmark 9: Looking Back and Looking Forward	10	1
Total	1000	

Course Roadmap

This roadmap provides an overview of the checkpoints and lessons covered in this course.

Checkpoint 1: Reconstruction and the New South

- Chapter 15 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 15

Checkpoint 2: The Conquest of the Far West

- Chapter 16 Presentation
- Textbook Reading

Checkpoint 3: Industrial Supremacy

- Chapter 17 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 17
- Pathfinder: American Capitalism and Industrial Supremacy

Checkpoint 4: The Age of the City

- Chapter 18 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 18

Checkpoint 5: From Crisis to Empire

- Chapter 19 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 19

Checkpoint 6: The Progressives

- Chapter 20 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 20

Checkpoint 7: America and the Great War

- Chapter 21 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 21

Checkpoint 8: The New Era

- Chapter 22 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 22

Checkpoint 9: The Great Depression

- Chapter 23 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 23
- Pathfinder: The Great Depression

Checkpoint 10: The New Deal Era

- Chapter 24 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 24

Checkpoint 11: America in a World at War

- Chapter 25 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 25
- Pathfinder: America in a World at War

Checkpoint 12: The Cold War

- Chapter 26 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 26

Checkpoint 13: The Affluent Society

- Chapter 27 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 27

Checkpoint 14: The Turbulent Sixties

- Chapter 28 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 28

Checkpoint 15: The Crisis of Authority

- Chapter 29 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 29

Checkpoint 16: From the "Age of Limits" to Reaganism

- Chapter 30 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 30

Checkpoint 17: The Age of Globalization

- Chapter 31 Presentation
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 31

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