

Course Syllabus

 [Edit](#)



History V53

Welcome to Modern U.S. Women's History.

Dear Students: Thank you for enrolling in my class. I'm so glad you're here. What follows is our course syllabus. It contains:

- Information about me and my teaching philosophy;
- How to reach me;
- Links to student resources you may want to access;
- Class policies;
- How grading is determined.

I know it is a lot of information. Think of it as a resource page. You can search by keyword too. Like me, it's here for you when you need it.

Thanks again for choosing my class. Most students call me "Coffey" or "Professor"--I'm fine with either of those.



How to reach Coffey directly:

As a general rule, more communication is better is less. So let's please keep the lines of communication open.

When we are not in class together, the best way to reach me quickly is by Canvas email because I'm almost always logged in. Most weekdays you can receive a reply within a few minutes.

One caveat: I do take nights and Saturday & Sunday off from my job. So, if you email me after about 3:00 on Fridays, you most likely will receive a reply first thing on Monday morning when I check back in.

Student Hours:

I'm required to set "official" office hours so mine are 10:30-11:30 am every Tuesday/Thursday. But the reality is, Monday-Friday during the workday, I'm basically *always* in Canvas. So you can count on me being available to you whenever you need to reach me. You're not restricted by my "official" hours. Those are just for my boss. Before or after our class meetings each week are also a good time to chat.

My Teaching Philosophy:

I teach because I want to help others and feel useful in my work. I teach history because it is a broad-based and welcoming discipline that makes room for many diverse voices to be heard. I want to help empower you to put forth your own interpretations of the past and have your voice be heard also. I want to support you in developing ideas and projects that you are passionate and curious about. I want your experience in my class to energize you and propel you forward toward your personal and educational goals.

Our Pact

What you can expect from me.

1. I will be supportive and provide a safe environment for you to develop your ideas and share them with me and your peers.
2. I will reach out to you regularly, especially when/if I sense that you might need support.
3. I will provide you with the best-organized course I am capable of designing.
4. When I make mistakes, I will promptly acknowledge and learn from them.
5. I will treat you with kindness and support your individual needs.

What I will expect from you.

1. You strive to be an active participant in our class and strive to meet due dates.
 2. You will keep the line of communication with me open so that I can best support you.
 3. You will treat your classmates and me with dignity and respect.
 4. You will be kind to yourself, expect the unexpected, and like a shark, always strive to swim forward.
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All About Our Class

About this Course:

- Our class begins on August 16, 2022.
 - There is one required book. From your preferred textbook seller, please rent the book [Women's America \(9th edition\)](https://www.amazon.com/Womens-America-Refocusing-Linda-Kerber/dp/0190945753) [_\(https://www.amazon.com/Womens-America-Refocusing-Linda-Kerber/dp/0190945753\)_](https://www.amazon.com/Womens-America-Refocusing-Linda-Kerber/dp/0190945753).
 - Our class is 18 weeks long. Our last class day is Thursday, December 8th. College-wide finals week follows.
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What is the subject of this class?

My division requires me to use the class description from the VC catalog in my syllabus so here it is: *This course surveys the history of the United States from the Reconstruction era to the present. Emphasis will be placed on the history of the country with a focus on the participation and contributions made by women to the social, political, and economic development of American society. Attention will be paid to the development of the feminist movement and the role of women in contemporary America.*

What about books?

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From your preferred textbook seller, please rent the book [Women's America \(9th edition\)](https://www.amazon.com/Womens-America-Refocusing-Linda-Kerber/dp/0190945753) [_\(https://www.amazon.com/Womens-America-Refocusing-Linda-Kerber/dp/0190945753\)_](https://www.amazon.com/Womens-America-Refocusing-Linda-Kerber/dp/0190945753).

Grading:

Our class uses a form of contract grading. The benefit of a contract system is that it gives each of you a much more straightforward path to the grade you want to receive. Here is how your final grade gets determined:

60% Pre-Class Work ("homework") & In-Class Work

- Our class uses a form of contract grading. With contract grading, there are no A, B, C, D, or F grades given to each assignment.
- Each pre-class assignment or in-class assignment will be marked either “complete” or “incomplete”.
- If your assignment does everything the directions ask for, it will be marked “complete”.
- If your assignment does not follow the directions, it will be marked “incomplete”.

20% Midterm assignment

20% Final assignment

- Your midterm and final assignments will include specific rubrics of required elements.
- Unlike pre-class and in-class assignments, however, your midterm and final will receive numeric scores based on the quality of your submission as determined by the rubric.

Two important grading caveats:

- Students have to pass (with a D or higher) both the midterm and final in order to pass the class.

My job when it comes to grading:

My job this semester is to help each of you earn the grade you want to receive. Yes, we will definitely *talk* about the work you're doing and how to make it the best work it can be and maximize your learning. What we won't do is assign letters or numbers to every single thing you do. With contract grading, if you do what the assignment asks for, you will receive those points. If you don't, you won't.

Feeling wonky? Here's a link to find out more about the increasing use [contract grading in higher education](https://writingcommons.org/article/so-your-instructor-is-using-contract-grading/) [\(https://writingcommons.org/article/so-your-instructor-is-using-contract-grading/\)](https://writingcommons.org/article/so-your-instructor-is-using-contract-grading/).

What about late work?

Pre-class work will be due the night before class meets at 8:59pm. That gives me time to look through them before I see you the following day. Please try to meet that deadline. But if something should come up and you miss that deadline, you have until 10:30am the following day (i.e. the day our class meets in person) to get your submission in. That is the hard close date. Once that deadline passes, no more submissions are accepted.

In-class work cannot usually be made-up or otherwise turned in late because it is usually group work (kind of hard to replicate that at home by yourself). Given that covid is still with us, I will drop the five (5) lowest scores in each student's "Pre-Class Work ("homework") & In-Class Work" grade category. So if something happens and you have to miss class, no worries, that zero can just be one of your dropped scores.

Does this course have any pre-requisites?

No, but English VO1A is recommended preparation.

What are the expectations about class attendance and participation?

Everyone is expected to attend class every class day. That said, 18 weeks is a long time and covid is still with us. So we all hope for perfect attendance, and accept that life happens.

If you are sick, PLEASE STAY HOME. Whether it's covid or the stomach flu, if you're sick, you're sick. PLEASE STAY HOME. The Earth will not stop rotating if you miss class.

The best practice is to always come to class unless/if something (like illness) authentically prevents you from coming. That way, when/if you do get sick (or your child gets sick), you're not chipping away at your course grade.

I designed the course with some breathing room in case of sickness, but that breathing room has a limit. And if you miss too many classes, you risk being dropped from your classes. Remember, in college there is no such thing as an "excused" or "unexcused" absence. They're all just absences (see below for the college policy).

How much time should I plan on spending on this class?

We'll spend almost three (3) hours per week together in class. You'll need six (6) hours per week outside of class to read/write/prepare for the next class. Fewer perhaps if history is really your jam and you already know this skill set; more if history is really out of your wheelhouse.

Learning outcomes for this class:

The following 3 student learning outcomes ("SLOs") were developed by the VC History Department and apply to all VC History classes. Each of the assignments you do in this class connects to one or more of these outcomes. The assignment's directions will tell you which outcome(s) go with that assignment.

#1: Students will demonstrate an understanding of the effects of time and place on the human experience in American history to the period of Reconstruction;

#2: Students will assess the causes and effects of historical developments in American history to the period of Reconstruction;

#3: Students will appraise the significance of people, places, and events to the larger themes of history in American history to the period of Reconstruction.

Is this course a safe space to disagree with ideas and engage in reasoned debate? Am I going to be attacked if I voice an unpopular perspective?

This course is absolutely a safe space. I have had *many* complex conversations with students over the years but never once have those turned ugly. I sincerely *hope* you will have strong feelings and opinions

about the subjects we cover. We want to hear those. And at the same time, we all have to be intellectually open to ideas that may conflict with our world views.

Our class is not cable television or a carefully curated social media feed. Here, everyone has the right to be heard and taken seriously, and all positions have the right to be defended or challenged in intellectually reasoned ways. I have never had any problem with this in the past and I have no doubt that will remain true going forward. If you should ever feel otherwise, please reach out to me right away.

Student Resources You May Want to Access

We are here to help! Don't see what you need here? Please just ask me!

[Disabled Students Programs & Services](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/disabled-students-programs-services-dspseac) [_\(https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/disabled-students-programs-services-dspseac\)](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/disabled-students-programs-services-dspseac)

[Tutoring Services](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/tutoring) [_\(https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/tutoring\)](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/tutoring)

[Free Counseling and Mental Health Support](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/student-health-center/personal-counseling) [_\(https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/student-health-center/personal-counseling\)](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/student-health-center/personal-counseling)

[Library Services](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/library) [_\(https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/library\)](https://www.venturacollege.edu/departments/student-services/library)

[Canvas Tech Support](https://www.venturacollege.edu/online-services/distance-education/prospective-students/distance-ed-help) [_\(https://www.venturacollege.edu/online-services/distance-education/prospective-students/distance-ed-help\)](https://www.venturacollege.edu/online-services/distance-education/prospective-students/distance-ed-help)

College Policies You Should Know About

My division requires me to include a number of policies in my syllabus using the exact language that appears in the VC catalog. I wish I didn't have to do this and here is why. The tone these are written in is not the voice I would use with my students.

So I apologize for the formal and negative tone of what follows. If I could re-word these, I would. So here are some important things to know, just not in the friendly, conversational language I would prefer to use.

Academic Dishonesty:

Because History is a reading/writing discipline, the main concern in terms of academic dishonesty is *plagiarism*--that is, the act of presenting someone else's work as one's own. Examples include:

- Copying and pasting text from websites or other electronic sources and presenting it in an assignment as your own original

- Copying and pasting text from printed sources (including books, magazines, encyclopedias, or newspapers) and presenting it in an assignment as your own original
- Using another student's work and claiming it as your own original work (even if you have the permission of the other student).
- Using/recycling your own work from a previous attempt at this class, or another class and representing it as your work product for this class.

Other forms of academic dishonesty include *cheating*--the act of pretending (or helping others to pretend) to have mastered course material through misrepresentation. Examples include:

- Copying in whole or in part from another student's test or
- Allowing another student to copy from your test or
- Using the textbook, course handouts, or notes during a test without instructor
- Stealing, buying or otherwise obtaining all or part of a test before it is
- Selling or giving away all or part of a test before it is
- Having someone else attend a course or take a test in your
- Attending a course or taking a test for someone
- Failing to follow test-taking procedures, including talking during the test, ignoring starting and stopping times, or other disruptive

And also *fabrication*--the intentional use of invented information. Examples include:

- Signing a roll sheet for another
- Giving false information to college
- Answering verbal or written questions in an untruthful
- Inventing data or sources of information for research papers or other

My experience is that most instances of plagiarism are simply caused by confusion about how to *not plagiarize* so please feel free to reach out and ask me questions about using quotes and citing sources.

Disability Accommodations:

Students with disabilities, who may need accommodations in this class, are encouraged to contact the EAC as soon as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. Authorization, based on verification of disability, is required before any accommodation can be provided. The EAC can be contacted at 805-289-6300 or by email, [vceac@vcccd.edu \(mailto:vceac@vcccd.edu\)](mailto:vceac@vcccd.edu).

Attendance:

All Students, both registered and on the waitlist, are expected to attend the first class meeting. Instructors may drop all registered and waitlisted students who do not attend the first day of class, and they are required to drop those who quit attending prior to the census date for each class. They may, but

are not required to, drop registered students who quit attending after census but before the final drop deadline for each class. Students are responsible for dropping their classes and withdrawing from the college, and should initiate the drop themselves.

All students admitted to the colleges of the Ventura County Community College District are expected to attend classes regularly, both because continuity of attendance is necessary to both individual and group progress in any class, and because financial support of the college is dependent upon student attendance. Absence for any reason does not relieve the student from the responsibility of completing all class requirements.

It is also the responsibility of students, at the beginning of the semester, to become aware of the attendance and absence policies of the instructor for each class in which they are enrolled. When a student's absence exceeds in number $1/9$ of the total class contact hours for the session (e.g. absence from a semester-long class equal to twice the number of hours the class meets in one week), the instructor may drop such student from the class and record a grade in accordance with the policy for dropping a course.

Thanks for Reading

To thank you for reading all the way to the end, here are my cats, Daisy (left) and Burger (right).

