Dear Prospective Fall 2017 Online History Students:

This is John Varga and I look forward to being your instructor for one or more of the online History courses I will be teaching this Fall 2017 semester. The courses I am teaching (History 111 and 112) fulfill several different requirements and are transferable to the CSU and UC systems.

The online courses I teach differ from traditional on campus courses in a number of ways. First, there are no face-to-face meetings. Second, there are no formal instructor delivered lectures. Third, classroom discussions among and between students are conducted in a largely asynchronous environment. Fourth, quizzes are conducted solely online. Fifth, the writing based assignment (a primary source analysis of which students will be provided a form to follow, a grading guide, and an example to guide students through the process) is done outside the “classroom” and submitted through Canvas’s anti-plagiarism tool: “Turnitin.”

While these are salient differences, the academic rigor expected is no more and no less than a traditionally formatted course. The expectations that students will keep pace with the readings, provide thoughtful analysis about the readings and their related discussion topics, and devote significant time each week to their academic endeavors are no different than what is expected of students who take History courses in the traditional classroom setting at the Valencia or Canyon Country campuses.

The online courses I teach require students to meet all established deadlines. This is imperative. While online classes do offer more flexibility with respect to the hours that students devote to their studies, there is one particular aspect of online learning where flexibility is virtually non-existent: meeting deadlines. My online classes will have established and consistent deadlines so that students may develop a structured pattern and predictable schedule from which to organize their efforts and manage their time. Accordingly, students must answer the following question: “Am I willing to make the effort to manage my time effectively so that I may succeed in this course and the other courses I am taking?”

Online learning requires self-discipline, self-reliance, self-sufficiency, consistency in effort, and a strong sense of commitment to the self-edification process. Online classes offer tremendous freedom, but necessitate significant personal responsibility. If you are not a self-starter, have trouble developing your own structured learning environment beyond the virtual classroom, and prefer the habit and custom of going to class then online education may not be suited to your learning style.

Online education is clearly an important academic trend. That being said, online education is not an entertaining alternative to the traditional “boring” on campus class. Online education is not
“edutainment” and does not and should not connote more relaxed or casual intellectual demands and standards. Accordingly, students should not view online courses as being “easy,” a short-cut to a degree, a license to cheat, or lacking intellectual merit. Ostensibly, online classes seem more convenient. Please do not allow this perception to distract you from the truth about what online education entails: effort and commitment. Hence, it is important that students not allow themselves to turn online education’s advantage into a disadvantage by failing to be mindful as to the effort and commitment required to achieve success in the online education environment.

***Textbook information:


The textbooks can be purchased directly from the publisher (Oxford University Press, USA) or other outlets such as Amazon. The textbook may be available as an eBook. Students may be able to rent rather than purchase the textbook. The ISBN number is crucial when ordering the required textbooks. The ISBN number assures students will order the correct textbook for the course(s) they are taking.

I anticipate an excellent class and I hope you decide to join our learning community. If you have any questions email me at john.varga@canyons.edu

Sincerely,

John Varga
The comments below are from students who have taken a sixteen week semester History 111 or 112 course in the online setting with me as their instructor. The comments are uncensored and un-edited. To protect privacy, the students’ names have not been included. Some of what the students refer to may not seem familiar to you. Some class components to which the students refer may not be components in the class you are presently taking. Nonetheless, the comments are insightful because they emphasize advice requisite to success.

Comment # 1:

I would give prospective students the usual advice when taking an online course like this one: don’t let the work pile up, don’t assume this is an “easy” class where a fantastic grade is a foregone conclusion, and establish a homework schedule. Basically, don’t trust any of the myths about online classes, particularly that they have softer material and are easier to understand than their traditional equivalents. In addition, try to engage in the material; many studies in the past have shown that if one is interested and actively involved in discussion about their learning topics, one does significantly better in school.

Comment # 2:

Like most, my advice for students taking this class is to read everything. The syllabus was extremely handy and spelled out the expectation on every assignment. Everything is spelled out for you from deadlines to format of assignments. Also reading the book is critical. And not just skimming through it, really taking the time to read it carefully. Taking your time while reading saves tons of time later on during the discussions and on the test. With it being a timed test, you shouldn’t waste time flipping through the book looking for the answers. With online classes, sometimes it is easy to forget about things and fall behind. With this class, the schedule is the same each week for when assignments are due so it is easy to stay organized as long as you put in the effort. This is a great class, the videos don’t bore you to death like some other online classes and the assignments are not hard as long as you read the chapter and follow the syllabus.

Comment # 3:

My definite advice to anyone taking this class is take time looking at chapters, and focus on details, even if they seem small. Also I would recommend people look very carefully in blackboard to make sure they don’t mess up their posts in even a slight way. This class is very detail oriented, so I think details in everything is key, in responses, readings, quizzes, and in watching the weekly videos. Small events, dates, and names are important to remember and examine more carefully. Other then that, I’d definitely say just keep up with everything and don't get behind.
Comment # 4

My advice would be to spend as much time on the assignments as you can, and do more than the minimum requirements for the discussion boards and blogs. I feel like I missed some easy points on some of the discussion boards from not going in to more detail on certain subjects. Other than that just read the entire syllabus, writing guide, and chapters. Taking notes also helped me a lot when reading or watching the videos.

In order to do well in this class I would suggest to make sure you read the syllabus in its entirety. I only read a small portion of it and missed the first couple of blogs which set my grade back quite a bit. I would also suggest finishing the discussions as they are assigned instead to waiting until the due date. My biggest problem is procrastination and it resulted in many half cocked, lated assignments. In the future if I were to retake this class I would have kept myself more focused. In all the class is very straight forward and easy if adequate time is put in to the assignments.

Comment # 5

In order to pass this class it is vital that one reads each chapter thoroughly. In order to learn from this class, doing the discussion boards and the blogs will help one comprehend the material. Take time initially to set a schedule as to how and when you will do each assignment and the routine will become normal. Procrastinate and it turns into a slippery slope of grade declination. Take each writing assignment and review the syllabus to make sure it complies with the requirements as this will help keep points that are otherwise lost. Over a period of time these small points in following writing assignment guidelines add up and can be the difference between an A or B grade. I recommend taking the first quiz with anticipation of the questions, once taken, take notes on the type of questions as these will most likely be the same style questions for each test with small variations. Following these steps will result in a passing grade and the effort put in will determine the letter grade. History is a valuable subject, so retaining it is important towards our future because "Those who do not remember the past are bound to repeat it" (George Satayana).

Comment # 6

My advice would be to set a schedule for yourself. Not only to avoid procrastination but to avoid accidentally missing deadlines. Without physically going to class and being reminded of exams or assignments, something that I struggle with in regards to online classes is just remembering what is due every week. I usually print out the syllabus' and assignment schedules and set reminders on my phone to help me out as well, but I'd also just recommend checking blackboard everyday. Just look over your classes and make sure you don't accidentally miss anything, because everything counts!

Comment # 7
My advice for students taking this course could be summed up as 'just do it'! That sentiments pertains to the bulk load of assignments, simply put, the earlier you get something completed, the better. Nearly all the points that I missed out on this semester could've been avoided if I had begun the assignment earlier and not procrastinated. Especially because of the lack of physical presence required for this class it becomes easy to distance yourself from the class mentally as well. Do not fall prey to this mentality, treat this course with the same regard as your non-on line classes and think everyday about what you could do to excel in this class. Reading the chapters to full comprehension takes at least an hour and half, and I am a strong reader. It is necessary to read every chapter to do well in this class so if reading is not your strong suit, read a little bit every day. However with the similar mantra of 'just do it', I would advise everyone to take this class because every American would benefit from it. It has helped me to gain a more complete understanding of our political systems and society's issues today. Put in the effort and you will gain invaluable knowledge.

Comment # 8

The advice I would give to students that choose to take this class online is to make sure they read the book. I find that I usually have to read it twice before taking the test in order to do well. I would also suggest they pay attention to their word count when writing the discussion board assignment. Make sure to use the “Quote” button when replying to another person’s discussion board post. Do not procrastinate, do your work on time. You do not want to be in a rush, it may cause you to forget some of the little, but important, things you have to do for each assignment. Do not put off starting the report assignment. This class has a lot of work, however, it is not too much. You can do it if you plan your time schedule and stick to it.

Comment # 9

The advice I would give future students taking this class is READ! This class takes a lot of time and reading, hard work. If you are not willing to read and do the work you will not go very far. Make sure you understand the material you are reading because you need it for all the work in the class. Time management , do not put off work because it is very easy to fall behind in this class. Read the syllabus and check it regularly so you wont miss anything important! Last thing is start your paper on time or basically every assignment.

Comment # 10

My advice for students who take this class in the future is to read everything. Read everything that you get in this class, the syllabus, the articles, and especially the textbook. I hate reading, but that is all I have done in this course, it hasn't been bad but my lack of discipline put me at a disadvantage at the beginning of the semester because of my lack of motivation to read the syllabus and book. Soon I caught on and began to read more and more, so read everything that you get in this class.

Comment # 11
My advice for futures students who take this course is simply to put in a good amount of effort. If you put in full effort, you are likely to be getting full credit on the assignments. Also, take time to read the course syllabus and schedule thoroughly, don’t be lazy. There are little parts of the assignment that will make or break your grade, and they are small mistakes that can be fixed. Take notes when reading the book and watching the video clips - those notes will make writing your discussion boards a lot easier. And finally, write down when assignments are due somewhere you will see it and don't procrastinate on finishing up work. If you do it early, you won't have the time to forget to get it done. This class also requires a good amount of time in order to complete the assignments. Just because it's online does not mean you get to do less work.

Comment # 12

For those taking this class in the future, I would highly recommend downloading the syllabus and keeping a quick guide on how to notate quotations because it is something I forgot how to do nearly every single week. I'd also suggest taking notes and making note cards to help with the tests. There are so many names and it can be really hard to remember. Also, plan ahead and don't wait till the last minute. I ended up running myself out of time several weeks underestimating the amount of work a discussion board or test would take and I payed for it. Overall, just enjoy the experience because it truly is a fun subject with a lot of value that can be gained from it.

Comment # 13

For the future students taking this class, I would recommend downloading and reading the syllabus. You want to download it because you can quickly go back to it to make sure you are doing the assignments right. I would recommend not getting behind in the reading. Trying to read the entire chapter in one day is a bit much so I try to read a little each day. Don’t procrastinate in this class, I always try to do one thing each day for this class to keep up. One day I will write my post in the discussion, the next day I will do the blog, and the day after that I will write the response, then do the quiz on Friday. Saturday I would then start the next chapter and repeat the process. The main thing is to follow the instructions in the syllabus and not get behind.

Comment # 14

For upcoming students, there are a few things i would suggest. Don't procrastinate, I know everyone says it in every class, but waiting until the last minute to do discussion board replies and a quiz will take lots of time. Read the chapters, it helps. In fact, don't just read, take notes. Writing helps memory, and you need to remember everything you can for the quizzes. Another really important thing is have fun and be interested in this. It's the history of your home, and it's great to learn about it. Also, do all the homework as soon as you can. You can never get it done too early, and it will be a reward at the end of the week to be able to relax and not worry about assignments.

Comment # 15
To students who may take this course in the future, I would advise not to procrastinate. It is easy to fall behind in an online course so it is really important to stay self motivated throughout the semester. Do not wait until the very last minute to submit discussion board posts, chapter quizzes, blog posts and the paper. I would advise future students to write the research paper in advance so they can get it revised by other students or tutors from the TLC lab. Also, do not rush when reading chapters to take the quiz because there is a lot of information to memorize and it is not easy to retain information when cramming in the readings. Overall, it is possible to do well in this course as long as you stay focused and on top of the material.

**Comment # 16**

Some advice I would give to students that take this class, is to make sure that don't procrastinate. It is very important to make sure that they read the whole chapter each week and all watch the videos that you provide for us. Also once they are done taking the quizzes they should start the reading for the next week. In doing so they will be prepared for the discussion board that follows the quizzes. It is also helpful to read other people’s discussion boards and get another perspective on the statement that you will negate or defend on the discussion boards. If they follow these tips then I think that they will breeze through this class.

**Comment # 17**

Some advice I would like to share with students who may take this course in the future is to make sure that you manage your time wisely to do the assigned readings and assignments. Also, while reading the assigned chapters, I found it useful to highlight phrases or sentences in the chapter that can help develop your argumentative paragraphs that are the discussion boards. Lastly, I would tell future students to make flashcards for every chapter that include the main points and ideas that are discussed in the chapter to help with blogs, discussion boards, and the quizzes.

**Comment # 18**

Some advice I would give to future students of this course to never fall behind on reading or doing the research paper. The due date may seem far but days go by very quickly. Another thing is reading the requirements for discussion boards, replies, and the research paper. One thing I learned is that being vague with your responses or entries will not get you full credit.

**Comment # 19**

The most important thing would probably be to stay on top of the readings. Even though some chapters may not seem as interesting as the others, to just power through and make sure you know the material. And to leave time to read the chapter throughout a couple of days instead of leaving it until the day you take the quiz. I would also recommend getting the discussion posts completed as soon as possible so that if something big pops up for another class, you won't be overwhelmed with your work load.
Another super important one: make sure you read up on the professor’s rules for the discussion posts, replies, etc. and do whatever you can to make sure you follow them every time!

Comment # 20

For future students I would tell them to highlight your book, take notes, and use flash cards to help you memorize events, also don’t leave anything to the last minute.

Comment # 21

For future students I would recommend to set a schedule so you never miss an assignment. Also read the professors instructions carefully so you may receive the most maximum points. Working on your paper as soon as possible would be a great idea. Also set a schedule for reading every day as reading all in one day is stressful. Lastly I would say don’t be afraid to ask the professor or your classmates for help if necessary. And mainly, focus.

Comment # 22

The book is very information dense, so I would recommend that students try to study in a quiet environment where they are not easily distracted. They should take a step back at some points during the chapter and consider if they can remember what they just read. If not, they should go back through and study it a little more carefully. If there is a concept or word that they don’t understand and the book doesn't explain it, Googling it is a good idea and doesn't take much time. It’s worth a couple extra minutes to grasp the material.

Rather than copying notes down as word-for-word transposition from the book, it is helpful to rephrase sentences. It will make those notes easier to remember in the future, because you had to actually digest the content and understand it in order to rephrase it.

I would also recommend that they read the syllabus thoroughly before making threads and replies for the discussion board, and double check their post against the guidelines in the syllabus until they are used to the format.

Comment # 23

The advice i would give students who take this class is to read every chapter, and pay very very close attention to your directions if he or she intends on getting a good grade. Id say it would help the student alot if he or she had a printout with the rules of the discussion board every time he or she does it.

Comment # 24
I would recommend for students taking this course to make sure to read the chapter at least twice to really understand the material; it is a lot of information to take in. Also to make sure that you are prepared for the quiz before beginning, if you try to reference the book for every question you will most definitely run out of time.

Comment # 25

The advice I would give students before taking this class is to make sure to read the book and have it by the first week. Since it is the only material needed it is very important because that is what the quizzes and discussion boards are based on. I would have advise them to do the review terms at the end of the chapters since they seemed to help me out. It also is smart to have a schedule of what you need to finish first, as for me it went... discussion board Monday night, reply Tuesday, study Wednesday and Thursday and take quiz on Friday. Then squeeze in the blog when ever best fits for you.

Comment # 26

For future students, I would recommend staying on top of the readings by reading a few pages of each chapter the previous week it's due. To read an entire chapter in one day is a little much and I would not suggest it because the information does not stick. I would also suggest starting on the term paper early as it could be overwhelming to some individuals to do it all a couple days before it is due. I would also suggest getting on a schedule of when you will do the discussion board, blog, quiz, and response.

The comments below are from students who have taken a five week intersession History 111 course in the online setting with me as their instructor. The comments are uncensored and un-edited. To protect privacy, the students’ names have not been included. Some of what the students refer to may not seem familiar to you. Some class components to which the students refer may not be components in the class you are presently taking. Nonetheless, the comments are insightful because they emphasize advice requisite to success.

Comment # 27

The best advice that I can give to future students for an online history course such as this one would be to stay engaged with the reading and the topics and to not only think about their significance within their historical context but also within our own modern society. The foundational values of this country are evident in history and when one considers how these values have been broken and healed and changed, one understands the values that we easily take for granted every single day.
Regarding the online format of the class, I recommend that future students read more discussion posts than just the one assigned to respond to. There are many views and arguments that one can understand simply by reading other students' opinions.

Comment # 28

There is a great deal of advice I have to give for a future student of an online history class. First of all, if for some reason you do not have steady access to the internet and a computer that runs canvas, a class like this is not a good choice for you. Most people do have this, and you can even do the work from a library computer if you do not have your own. Also as for the content of the class, be prepared to read the textbook that the professor has assigned weekly. Knowing the information the best to your ability will allow you to excel in later assigned content. Also be prepared to learn canvas or whatever program the class runs through. Doing the work the first day it is assigned can help you get a head start, but the course does allow for flexibility to your summer schedule. If you turn in all of your work on time with thorough and clear effort, your grade will be above passing. The best nudge I can give is to work ahead if you can, and read the content of the class to the point where you clearly understand its purpose then and today. Looking at other student's opinions and choosing to argue your side can aid your understanding of the history content. That is my advice for a future history student taking an online class similar to this.

Comment # 29

Some advice I give to future students taking this online history class would probably be to stay focused and don't slack off. There is a lot of information that needs to be processed and understood in such a short amount of time. So being focused would probably be the best piece of advice I could give.

But if you are focused, reading all the chapters and doing the quizzes and discussions on time, you should be able to pass no problem. This class is the type where if you take the time to do the work and understand it all then you should be able to pass.

I enjoyed this class a lot though, things were due at a specific time which was really convenient to work your schedule around so that you have time for this class. This class is all up to the person taking it and there was plenty of time to do the assigned tasks which made things easier in my opinion.

So focus, and do the work and take the time to understand the material would be the best advice I could give.

Comment # 30

To the future students who will be taking this class, read the syllabus! That is one of the most important resources that you have available to you in order to be successful in this class. Secondly, read the chapters, not only will you gain a refresher if you have already been taught
some of this material, but you will as well learn something new every time. Also, watch the videos it may help clarify anything you may have not completely understood in the reading.

Post your initial responses with enough time to fix any mistakes that you may have made, you don't want to be scrambling before 11:59pm. This class is actually really enjoyable, so don't stress. Respond to others posts, and remember you don't always have to agree with what they put if you feel differently. And don't forget to spell the author's name correctly when citing the textbook.

If you have questions or concerns, email the professor! He is very good about responding quickly and will answer any questions you may have. This class is one I really enjoyed, and I know you will too. Just stay up to date on your assignments, study and try your best on the quizzes, and read the material. If you do all of those things you will find yourself wanting to learn more about history.

Comment # 31

The best advice I can give to any prospective online student that is thinking about taking this class is to learn to manage your time and learn to check the website or your email everyday. The reason why I say manage your time is because if you dont learn when to check online what is to come on homework or assignments, then you will get swamped with homework. When you are swamped with homework you tend to skim the book and miss key information on certain events which can impact your grade. You can easily think the class would be easy but it wont be, because online class are not the same as on campus class because you have to have the responsibility to know that you need to check everyday to see if you have any work to do and learn to manage it with any other classes you are taking.

Comment # 32

To future students,

Online classes are typically hard if you are not motivated or have trouble teaching yourself material. It is also very important to stay organized so that you do not miss deadlines. Because you are not actually meeting in person it might become hard to remember that there are assignments to do. For this class, I would recommend staying ahead with the reading assignments. Because the course is short it really squeezes in a lot of information each week causing it to be really easy to fall behind. Also, not waiting until the last minute to do the assignments is crucial if you want to do well. You should give yourself plenty of time to take the quizzes and to do the discussion posts so that you don’t have to rush through them at the last minute. Procrastination will be the hardest part in being successful.

Comment # 33

Advice to future students:
**Read the syllabus.** I cannot emphasize how important it is to closely analyze the syllabus when it is sent to you. It gives you ALL of the information you will need for the class and is a great reference tool whenever you get lost. I would recommend downloading it to your computer so it's easy and quick to pull up. **Follow the syllabus to the T.**

Taking an online course is, as you would expect, much different than taking a lecture-based class. It is heavily based on pacing and responsibility. For this history class in specific, it is important that you keep up with the work that is assigned. If you don't start the day it's assigned, be sure to start ASAP the next day. **It is crucial that you keep a nice, smooth pace.**

Make sure you not only read, but also **annotate** your book. If not inside the book, make sure you **take notes** on a separate paper because it will help you on the quizzes. Be sure that you don't skim through the reading, it'll hurt you come quiz time. As I mentioned above, pace the reading out. You never want to wait until the last day to squeeze in a chapter or two of reading.

P.S.- If you can, be sure to download the Canvas application. It will come in handy for quick updates.

**Comment # 34**

In these past 5 weeks, I have learned so much from this class. I have honestly not enjoyed a history class in a very long time due to not being interested in the topic. Professor Varga provides amazing outlines and the videos are very informative and go along with the readings. Please keep up with your work and read the book! Make yourself a schedule and stick to it. Do not fall behind it will be very hard to catch up especially in a five week course. Do not expect this class to be easy because it is a lot of reading but the book teaches you a lot. The Primary Source Assignment is very interesting but please start it early! The quizzes are all based on the readings so please take your time reading and take notes so that during those twenty minutes you do not have to keep flipping through the book looking for answers. The discussion board posts offer you a chance to voice your opinion on the issue being discussed. Please read the syllabus and the instruction for the points. You do not want to lose points because you didn’t follow instructions! But most of all, do take your time, focus, and have fun learning! I have enjoyed this class so much during these five weeks! I definitely recommend it!

**Comment # 35**

Undertaking an online course is an exercise in self-discipline. Approach the course with the understanding that you have full control over the level of success you will achieve. As with any online course, you will only get out of it what you put in to it. I would recommend planning out your schedule each week, taking some time early in the week to assess the upcoming workload, and evenly spreading it out before the due date. Waiting until the last minute to work on your assignments without a plan will often leave you overwhelmed and you will quickly fall behind. Specifically for a History course, each chapter builds off the last, so it is important to learn the
information in each section or the next will be much more difficult to understand. Online courses give great flexibility, but at the same time require much more independent effort.

Comment # 36

The best advice that I would give to succeed in this online course is to remain focused, disciplined and expect to read and write for several hours. Canvas is a new program that makes this course so much better as it is very well organized and clear in context. This has been one of the toughest online courses I have taken but also one of the most informative. What I would truly recommend is to take notes while reading and also to highlight important details to study before taking quizzes as there not a walk in the park. Missing one assignment or date on this course can truly throw you off track so it is important to create a checklist that helps assure you are completing all the assignments on time. Stay up to date and don’t miss any assignments. The syllabus and guidelines professor Varga sets are very straight forward if you follow instructions I am sure you can succeed in this course.

Comment # 37

The best advice I could give to future students in this online History class is to read the syllabus, word for word. Every possible question I seemed to have throughout this summer session, was answered as soon as I reread the syllabus. Professor Varga tells you exactly what to study for the quizzes (the Chapters) and has specific guidelines for Discussion Board submissions. If you follow all of the guidelines, then you should be able to get solid grades on all of your assignments. In addition, it helps to stay on track and to not fall behind on your readings. Find a good time for you, and just knockout one chapter at a time. I found it best to just read a chapter a day, Monday through Thursday. Lastly, just remember that even though it's a short online class, you should treat it the same as any semester long class. Good Luck!

Comment # 38

The best advice I can give any student who plans to succeed in this online History 111 class would be fairly simple: do your readings and stay on top of your assignments. First and foremost, I would say that this class requires you to do A LOT OF READING, and you most likely you will not find yourself passing if you do not take the time to actually read every assigned chapter. Honestly I would say for me, this was the hardest part of the class. Between work and other classes it became kind of a battle to find time to keep up with the readings. I would recommend that if you're extremely busy that you always keep the book with you. It won't be impossible to do your reading if you always have it on hand. Also, one thing that helped me a lot in succeeding in this class was having an arranged schedule. The class itself runs on a very tight schedule, however, I made sure that when I planned to sit down and do a discussion or take a quiz that I did.
In the end, I would say that this is a course where you get out what you put in so if you are persistent and you stay on top of your readings you will succeed.

Comment # 39

For future students who wish to take online classes in order to get ahead or catch up during the summer, do not consider these classes to be any less difficult than regular spring or fall semester classes. When choosing to take an online course, keep in mind that the work will either be just as much if not more than a regular course because their is less time in order to complete the same amount of work. Just because the class Is online does not mean that you will be exempt from reading, taking notes, studying and taking tests and quizzes. Some online classes even require for students to do group projects with other students in the class. While the benefit of taking online classes is being in the comfort of your own home or office, hard work is still essential in order to receive a passing grade. My advice is to take online classes seriously and do not wait for the last minute to complete assignments.

Comment # 40

My best advice would be to stay engaged with the readings, the videos and especially the Discussion Boards. The quizzes are tough on the details, so pay attention and stay alert while reading! But the most interesting and thought provoking aspects of the class are the Discussion Boards. The questions provided by Mr. Varga are a strong springboard into a thought process of your own; they require you to take your own stances and analysis of the history you're learning about. This brings it all to life and causes you to apply the principles of our National heritage to your own views of everyday life. You have to understand where we've come from to get an idea of where we should be going. If you take the readings seriously and put an effort into your Discussion Boards you'll enjoy Mr. Varga's class. And if you enjoy it, you'll be engaged to do well!

Comment # 41

The best advice that I can give a future student taking an online history course such as this one is that you need to be on top the dates that assignments are due. You need to be organized because every week you have two discussion boards and about 2-4 quizzes due. Before completing each discussion board I would strongly recommend that you read each chapter, watch all of the videos and take at least one of the two quizzes assigned for each chapter.

The class is very interesting if you read each chapter and complete all of the assignments. The last piece of advice I would give to a future student is to not procrastinate and to always try to finish each assignment as soon as you can because it can get overwhelming if you leave everything until the night it is due.

Comment # 42
I can honestly say that this online history course was a challenge, but I enjoyed the course so much and learned A LOT! The first tip I recommend is READ THE TEXTBOOK! I can not stress that enough. The discussion boards require you to know what you are talking about and do not get me started on the quizzes. You have roughly a minute and a half for each question max, so you can NOT try and scan through the book for the answers. Next tip, actually watch the videos Professor Varga provides, they have helped me understand so much content I did not quite understand from the book and they are pretty interesting when you pay attention. I know the discussion boards can get quite frustrating, especially if you are having difficulties understanding certain aspects in the chapter. The best solution, is start them ahead of time (like the day before at least), I usually do a draft in Google docs and then copy and paste it over. I take my time, and if I get impatient, I will stop and walk away for a few hours and Google docs automatically save it. Other than that, as long as you read the chapters, watch the videos and do not push everything off to the last minute, you will succeed in an online history course and actually enjoy it. Over the past month I have initiated what I have learned from this course in conversations with my friends and they were very impressed.

Comment # 43

The advice I have for future students who will be taking this online course is to read the syllabus in advance so you will be prepared. Always stay ahead, because it is an online class it is very easy to forget about certain deadlines. Another piece of advice would be to make sure you are reading the book in depth so you fully understand the material.

Comment # 44

Read the syllabus.

Most of what students need to know is in the reading. Quizzes are specifically based on just the the reading, so do it, take notes, and then go back over the reading before taking the quizzes. The questions on the quizzes are detailed. Read the questions carefully. Sometimes there's some misdirection, and sometimes the questions guide you to the right answer. Don't stress out over the quizzes. Pace yourself. There's more than 2 minutes per question, and you use much less than that for most questions. Even though 20 minutes is a short amount of time, you're probably better off taking the full two minutes to get a correct answer than rushing and finishing in 8 minutes and getting a bunch of things wrong.

Most of the videos are about half-hour long, but they are really helpful to answering the short-answer questions -- and you have to cite them. Don't wait until the last minute to watch the videos because they are essential in responding to the short answer questions. Take notes on the videos. The videos add context to the written materials. I like to do the reading (carefully), then watch the videos, then go back over the reading before taking a quiz.

Most importantly, don't fall behind and prioritize your effort. The class is heavily weighted on a single primary source assignment, so don't wait until the last minute to get it done. If you don't
do well on that assignment, it will hurt your grade proportionally more than any other assignment.

When you do the primary source assignment, pay attention to the sample the professor gives you.

The written short-answer posts are weighted more heavily than the quizzes. And, you don't get to do them twice if you get a bad grade. So give them a relatively heavier priority. Check your spelling, check your grammar, and actually answer the question. Check the discussion boards after you submit your first post because the professor will sometimes offer alternative questions that are more interesting and easier than trying to write an argument against what you think is the right argument.

Finally, quizzes are weighted the least, and you have two chances. Take a quiz, and if you don't do well, pay attention to the questions. The same topics are likely to be on the next quiz. As I said before, the quizzes are based on the reading, so if you do poorly, maybe skim back through the sections for the questions you missed.

Comment # 45

Within taking an online class you need to know how to prioritize your time wisely and not procrastinate. There is always that little voice in the back of your head saying that you can do it later, but you probably have other priorities in addition to taking an online class. In order to succeed in this class, I suggest you read every chapter and not just skim through the book so during the quizzes you don’t have to flip through the book because you are given a limited amount of time. With the discussion boards choose a topic where you feel more confident writing about and can write a very well thought out discussion instead of choosing the topic that is easiest. Also to make things easier complete the discussion boards on the day they are due instead of waiting until the last minute. What helped me personally was creating a reading schedule so I was never behind on reading and could take the quizzes two or three days before it was due. In order to succeed in this class, you have to be willing to put in the work, you can’t slack off and due the bare minimum.

Comment # 46

I enjoyed this online class and it is very convenient for me as I am a full time RN working nights. The advice I have is to plan ahead with the syllabus and stay organized. Especially for a short term class like this one that has a lot of reading and multiple assignments due each week. Keeping up with the reading would ensure success on the discussions and quizzes. The videos are helpful and tie the readings together in short, concise clips, so be sure to watch them and incorporate the information into the assignments. The amount of preparation and work is
reasonable and there is a lot to be learned as long as the student makes it a priority to engage and stay organized.

Comment # 47

The advice I would give to a future student taking an online history class would be to really stay on top of due dates and upcoming assignments. Discussions take some time to read the chapter and really develop an opinion so it is time consuming if you are putting forth full effort. It is best to really read the chapter and process all the information and get a better understanding before taking a quiz and or writing a discussion. After turning in your assignment read other peoples point of view and see if you notice anything else and build more of an opinion. Do not wait to the last minute to do all the quizzes and discussions. They can become very overwhelming and you will not reach your full potential. Read the chapters thoroughly before taking the quizzes, do not skim. The questions are not easy and require you to actually read. This class is super interesting and flexible with a busy schedule.

Comment # 48

This advice is especially for students who enroll in History in summer for online instructions. I work full time and have many family commitments, so this advice is for students in my situation. There is lots of material to cover within six weeks so start reading the book and take notes from day one. Please do not procrastinate. Don’t think that since it is summer and online you can take it at leisure. You will be sadly mistaken. Make notes on important events that changed the course of history or made material difference. Unless one takes good notes, the quizzes can be challenging. Try and post discussions and take quizzes one day ahead of the due date. If you wait till the last minute things can go wrong and 25 points is a lot to lose and difficult to make up. Since there is lots of information in the chapters take the quiz soon after you read the chapter and when the information is fresh in your memory. Take an interest in the subject because besides helping get good grades, it tells us a lot of how this country has struggled to get rid of age old practices of slavery, monarchy and keep the concept of freedom and liberty alive. It will also help in gathering good material for the discussion posts. If one stays focused getting a good grade is very much possible.

Thank You and Good Luck.

Comment # 49

For students taking an online history class such as this one, I would advise them to stay on top of their assignments and readings. Since it is an online class, it can give you a more flexible schedule, but you need to use your time wisely. I believe it is a good idea to maintain a personal schedule in order to avoid leaving the given assignments until the last minute and potentially missing a deadline.
Try to finish the discussion boards on the first day they are assigned instead of the night they are due. I recommend reading and fully engaging in the assigned chapters and viewing the videos more than once so that you are more prepared before the quizzes. Consider taking a quiz right after completing the chapter’s discussion board so the information is fresh in your head.

Try not to procrastinate and stay focused. This class has interesting topics and is definitely achievable as long as you work hard and stick to your schedule.

**Comment # 50**

all Future students,

You will definitely need the book. Read every single word in those chapters because it will be needed when taking the quizzes and during the discussion posts. This is not an easy class. Watching the videos are important as well because sometimes the video helps you understand what the book is trying to say. Keep track of due dates because this class is online and it is easy to forget due dates. Invest in a planner to help you stay on track and organized. Good luck!

**Comment # 51**

I think the most important advice to someone who is taking an online History class is to be engaged in the topic. Even though not everyone is interested in the topic of history, having the knowledge of basic American History will make you a more well-rounded individual. If you see the importance of the class you will be inclined to have more interest.

I think that it is very important to read the chapter and make sure you know what you are reading before you move on. Complete the discussion board right after you read and watch the videos, then finish the quizzes right away while the information is fresh. Log on often to make sure that you have completed all the assignments by the deadline and spread the work out over a few days. Don't wait until the day that it is due.

The class is very doable is you are willing to put in the time. It is organized in a way that is easy keep up with and a lot can be learned if you complete all the assignments.

**Comment # 52**

I enjoyed this class a lot. For future students I suggest that you read everything although it is a fair amount of reading the assignments are not to difficult. As long as you space out your days and stay on top of the reading you will do great! The quizzes are not bad you get to use your book and that has all the answers so you shouldn't do bad on the quizzes unless you didn't read than you won't know where anything is and they are timed quizzes. If you have a planner I suggest using it and writing down when you are going to read and do the work. If you space it out the work load is not a lot at all. I enjoyed this class it was very interesting and I loved the topics. As long as you stay on top of everything you will of great in the class.
Comment # 53
I would advise future students to stay on top of the work load and to start reading the chapters early. The reading can be time consuming, and students will learn and retain a lot more information if they aren't rushing. I found the week to be much easier if I began reading on the weekends during any free time instead of trying to fit it all into a busy week. It's helpful to take quizzes soon after reading a chapter, or if it's been awhile, to flip through the chapter again prior to the quiz. Also, start the primary source assignment early to give yourself time to figure out what you want to do. Don't assume the class will have less work because it is online, and be aware of when things are due. Overall, it's easy to be successful in this class as long as you put in the effort.

Comment # 54
The best advice that I can give future students taking an online history course is print out the class syllabus the first day you have get it. Do not procrastinate because you will fall behind fast. When I first started I printed out the class syllabus and I look at it every day. I highlight what I have done so I can move forward with the class. I also took the liberty to look at the orientation letter for this class so I have a general idea of what the class is about and get to know the instructor better to see what expectation you need to meet for successfully passing the class. Be diligent with your work. Make your online class a priority over what you have going on at home unless it is an emergency. It can be overwhelming so making a list a night before on what you need to get done will help you get the work done. Have fun and don’t be shame to ask questions. I made my own schedule based on any down time I had. This was a fun class for me and the videos really help with retaining the information I read. Thank you.

Comment # 55
My advice to future students that are taking this class is to be thorough in you assessments of what you are reading. If you need to, read things over twice in order to really grasp certain ideas and events. Make sure that if you are doing any further research on what you are reading due to needing more than what the book tells you, use scholarly references. You need to make sure that in the act of defending or negating a statement; your credibility in knowledge is backed up by legit sources with proven facts and not just opinions. Wiki is not a credible source.
The most important thing that you should do is read the Syllabus! It is there for your benefit. By reading the syllabus several times, you will find that it helps keep you on track throughout the course. It gives helpful information for better success.
Make sure you read all the material required. Not only does it help you with your tests, but it gives you the ability to be able to actually carry on conversations and debates with credible arguments politically and economically. It's important to know your history in order to understand the way things are at work today; what things mean and to understand where people stood in our history.
The videos wrap up the reading and help bind things together in an overall charismatic and visual way. The power points are helpful when having to look back to refresh you memory on what you read.

The professor is really good about feedback and an on time grading schedule. Also, if you have any questions, emailing the professor will give you the fastest response.

Overall, this class is enjoyable. It was a refresher to things that I've learned many years ago, but strengthened my debates in certain areas when dealing with politics today.

**Comment # 56**

This was by far one of the hardest online 5 week classes I have taken. My best advice for prospective and/or future students taking this class is: **Don't fall behind.** It takes a lot of time and preparation for a 5 week that force feeds an absurd amount of information. Plan your days out accordingly and do not wait till the last second to complete assignments. Be open and mindful to others opinions, don't be afraid to contact the instructor, and make sure you have the right book before the class even gets started. This class is set up like an AP US History class, so treat it like it is.

**Comment # 57**

To future students,

Do not take this class lightly. Make sure you purchase all necessary items (i.e. the textbook) before hand and if you have an issue, address it with the instructor immediately. If you have a busy lifestyle and cramped schedule please make a schedule and do your best to stay on top of assignments and due dates as best as possible as time will seem to fly by very quickly. Keep in mind of the courses you are taking it can be very difficult to juggle classes. Read and watch the videos thoroughly. Highlights, notes and tabs can be helpful. Read syllabus and instructions carefully and thoroughly, ensure you completely understand what is expected from you as a student. Be respectful to colleagues and instructor, try to visualize, empathize and remember that history is something that really occurred and real lives and real people went through these situations. Try to take something out of the class, and truly learn something not just make a check-mark. All in all stay on schedule do all assignments, do your best, always check every day to see all tabs and links and requirements, study, study, study, and learn. It was a good class, more demanding for my life situation than I expected, but very interesting and I loved the videos, I loved reading the United States Constitution. All was very interesting, I wish I would have had more time to absorb and retain more of the information and reading.

**Comment # 58**

To future students taking an online course such as this one, I would urge time management. It is an online course so it is more flexible than an in-class course, but do not let the work pile up. By planning ahead when to read, take quizzes, and complete assignments, you will find yourself less
overwhelmed by a large workload. Because a course such as this one covers a lot of curriculum in a short period of time, the class will be very overwhelming when left to the last minute. Another very important thing to remember in a course like this is that, just because it is online, you are not guaranteed to pass with flying colors, as many assume. When reading, pay attention to details and read thoroughly. You will be glad when the quizzes roll around. Lastly, use the resources provided to you. Professor Varga provides video links. Although discussion boards do require a quote from one each time, be sure to watch them for your own learning as well. Some people have difficulty reading pages and pages and comprehending what they have just read. This is when the videos can be extremely beneficial.

Comment # 59

Taking an online class is always a big commitment. You have to be extremely disciplined and be able to remember various deadlines. When beginning the class, I highly recommend reading the syllabus, and taking note of all the deadlines. If you plan out which assignments, you are going to complete through out the week it can be very helpful. Next, there are a lot of quizzes in this course, therefore there is a lot of reading. Reading the textbook and the chapters is very important. You will not pass the quizzes if you do not read. I also recommend watching the videos because they coincide with the text nicely and help you better understand the material. If you find that you are a major procrastinator I would not take this course, for the assignments pile up quick, and it is too much work to wait until the last minute. Plan everything out, and read the material. If you do that you will be successful in the course.

Comment # 60

The best advice that I can give to student's taking this online history, is to study study study. The quizzes are pretty difficult but definitely achievable. The discussion boards are also very important when in the class, the completion of the discussion board is very important not only in your thread, but also your response to someone else’s as well. As this class in particular was on American history, there are a lot of childhood movies and videos that can easily be related to the topics we are discussing that might be even more enjoyable then watching the required movies, so additional "research" outside of the online class is very handy as well. When I first came into this class I thought it was going to be a breeze, all I'd have to do is do the homework and watch the videos provided, when in actuality there’s much more to it than that. You have to read the book, watch EVERY movie with notes, annotate when you’re reading, and even do outside research in order to complete your assignments successfully. With it being an online class it also gives you a lot of free time for work or whatever situation may be, so what I do recommend is to get a hold of your time management make some room so that you don't have to rush all of your work or get it done at the last minute. When doing that it's basically asking for error, so basically what I'm saying is the three key points is to study, create enough time, and pay attention to every detail given.

Comment # 61
The advice I would give to future students is discipline yourselves. You are going to have to make time to read the book, watch the videos, complete the quizzes, complete your discussion board, and complete your reply. Believe it or not one chapter one chapter can take a significant amount of time. If you have a busy schedule and are limited on time reconsider this class. It moves at a real fast pace and you are going to have to be able to keep up. I am burning up with a fever right now as I write this but that is the type of discipline you need for this class. Good Luck.

Comment # 62

The Best advice I could give anyone who is thinking about possibly taking an online history class is to keep up with all the reading and to make great use of your time. You will struggle if you choose not to read and to just cruise your way through. Besides, this is a class about our history as a nation, some respect and effort should be put in. Making good use of your time will make it very easy for you to get your assignments done and turned in, in a timely order. But overall, the effort you put in will determine your grade, so to be successful try your hardest and it's not too difficult of a course.

Comment # 63

Future Students,

So first off, disregard any ideas people have shared with you about online classes. They are not as easy as you may think. It is only difficult in the sense that it takes as much effort as an in-class history class would take, without the lectures and support of classmates. This class will definitely challenge one's focus and discipline and you should only take it if you have both. I would recommend setting a few hours a day aside to complete the discussion boards as well as to read the chapters of the textbook thoroughly. The class may seem a bit intimidating, but the professor is always willing to help and work to help you succeed. Just work hard and don't slack off and you'll get through it without a problem.

Comment # 64

This was a great fast-paced class. I truly enjoyed it. I feel that the following steps will ensure the success of other students in this class:

- read the syllabus very carefully. Points might be lost for not following technical requirements rather than research work itself.

- be mindful of assignments due dates. No make ups in this class.
- allocate adequate amount of time to study. It is a very fast-paced class. Aside from the textbook, there are additional resources you need to use (e.g. videos).

This class is not an easy "A", however, adhering to the syllabus makes it very doable. Hope that helps. Good luck!

Comment # 65

In the past few weeks, I have learned a lot from this class. I have taken history courses previously, but I enjoyed how this course focused on different aspects of United States history that I have not studied in detail. I would highly recommend that you read the book in detail. The quizzes were tough for me in the beginning because I did not realize how detailed the questions on the quizzes would be. I falsely assumed that the questions would relate to only the big events that occurred. I would recommend highlighting in the book as you read, or to take notes. Overall, with proper time management, this class was great. The discussion questions really open your mind about the significance of each event that has taken place in history.

Comment # 66

To future students:
Do not take online classes for granted, especially history courses! My first point of advice is having good time management. Any history class you take will require a substantial amount of reading, however with an online class that typically lacks formal lectures, I feel reading is much more important for your success in the class, and there is usually a lot more of it. Set deadlines for yourself and always stay on top of the reading. Falling behind can be a huge hit to your grade when you’re unable to catch up with the multiple chapters that all piled up. Furthermore, when reading, try to avoid distractions at all cost and take notes if possible! Taking notes on the reading assignments will keep you engaged in the long chapters and will help you retain the information about the content; this will obviously prepare you for the exams. Furthermore, read the syllabus and all assignment instructions at least TWO times so you are very clear with what is being asked to do. And finally, just because it is an online class does not mean you cannot ask the teacher for help; email them! If something is unclear, don’t just guess, ask the professor.

Comment # 67

My advice for prospective and/or future student taking an online history course such as this one is to make sure you read the chapters assigned! Your answers on quizzes and discussions are based off of what you have read from the textbook and really helps you along the way. I would also suggest you use time management wisely as you cannot procrastinate in a class such as this. Even though you are given adequate time for deadlines, you do not want to put in half of the effort because it will show and the professor will catch it.

Comment # 68
To Future Students, take lots of notes. The book might not be the most interesting thing you have read, but note taking will really help keep facts from the book in your mind. Also for the quizzes I recommend you take them immediately after having read the chapter and not doing all of them in one day. Although they are only 15 questions you do take every quiz twice. The best part of the class is that the work is due Wednesday and Friday, so if you space your homework out right and stay on track you can complete a chapter a day and a quiz and then later work on the post. DO NOT TRY to read a chapter, watch a video and work on the post the Day it is due. If you do it right your weekends will be free. Make sure to clearly read the syllabus and to always ask questions when you have any.

Comment # 69

The very best advice I could give to future students for an online history class like this one is to keep your focus and to not underestimate it just because it is an online class. It still requires the vigorous reading of a lecture-style class, and while it is convenient to be able to do it whenever you'd like throughout the day, it is then very easy to lose track of time (and motivation). I would recommend setting reminders on your phone/calender to help with time management (and remembering when things are due). Another piece of advice I have is to read the syllabus carefully, as every teacher has a different way of wanting things to get done. Overall, these classes are nice if you stay on top of your workload!

Comment # 70

The best advice I can give students who are thinking about taking this or any online class is to not fall behind, even a little. Falling behind even a little bit can be detrimental to a student’s grade and their time. When you fall behind no matter how far, that material being learned will be neglected, or over looked. It may be a chapter is skipped or an assignment not turned in, but none the less something is missed. The worst part is trying to catch up at the end and cramming not only the material needed for the final, but also the material that was neglected or missed. I can understand having to put off assignments till they are due because of other aspects of life, but make sure that even if you have to miss a couple hours of sleep to stay with the class and not fall behind it will be very beneficial. Some online classes don’t allow you to go back and finish work that is passed due as well. In this case some material that was neglected can be lost now for good and that material could be on the final or next test.

Comment # 71

My advice for future students who are choosing to take an online history class is to read! Read everything you get in this course from the syllabus to the text book. Make sure you understand the syllabus fully and are ready to take on the amount of work that is required for this class. You need to make sure that all discussion boards meet the proper requirements in terms of length and citations. The book needs to be in your hands by the first day of class. Make sure you read every chapter fully and it wouldn't hurt to do a little bit more reading on the internet about the subject
to complete the discussion boards. The book isn't very straight forward or helpful with terms so you need to be thorough when reading and highlight the important aspects of the chapter. Watch all the videos that are provided and don't procrastinate any of the assignments. It's not an easy class but if you put in the right amount of time and effort you will do fine.

Comment # 72

The best advice that I can offer to new students is to study the syllabus, and know what is expected of the class from the beginning. Plan ahead for major assignments don't let them sneak up on you. Stay up to date with all reading material and studying, and mark dates on a calendar for quizzes, and due dates so you won't miss anything. Prepare to dedicate as much time as possible, and check in daily for announcements or any changes.

Comment # 73

My advice for future students taking an online history class like this one is to avoid procrastination. Try not to turn in your assignments the day it’s due or a few hours before because if something still needs to be fixed on an assignment it’ll be too late. I admit that I have done this a few times with some assignments. It's good to constantly keep up with any recent updates and to keep track of deadlines so you can plan ahead with your readings and assignments. Always take notes because you cannot retain that much information from the chapters by just reading the book. You never know, whatever you write in your notes might show up again on the quiz. Always refer back to the syllabus because it includes all the information you need for this class. Overall, the class had very interesting topics which kept me going and the assignments were fairly graded which I cannot complain about. Stay focused and be diligent and you’ll do well in this class.

Comment # 74

To all future students taking online courses:

Give yourself at least two hours a day to devote to assignments. If you are taking a Summer course, more time is needed since the learning experience is crammed into a shorter period of time. Look at it as though you are in class, but with the luxury of getting to be in your pajamas. Always utilize the syllabus to make sure that you know what and when an assignment is due.

Comment # 75

The best advice for this online class is to not procrastinate. In the beginning of this class session I would stay on top of the assignments and get them done when they were available, but towards the end I fell behind and it caused me to put it off until the last minute which is stressful. I also advise that students do quizzes in chunks because if you try to do them all at once it will be difficult. Take this class seriously and truly read the material and watch the videos this way the discussion boards and quizzes will be much easier.
Comment # 76

In an online course, you don’t only learn about the course and the material instructed, but you will also learn how to time manage, follow instruction on your own and be an independent learner. If you are a procrastinator, online classes may not be the best option for you. Online courses are designed to make it so if you procrastinate, that few hours before 11:59pm are dreadful. My advice is to work on everything ahead of time and relax later, rather than relax at the beginning and fret at the end. The syllabus is there all semester for a reason. If you are ever confused about an assignment, pull up that syllabus and reread it. If it still doesn’t answer your questions (9 out of 10 times it does) then ask the professor. If you can manage to discipline yourself, online classes are not as scary as most say they are.