

**HIST 4960**  
**Issues in Teaching History and Social Science**  
**Professor Chris Endy     Spring 2025**  
**Thursdays, 6:00 to 8:45 pm in King Hall B2015**

## **Contact Your Professor**

Email: [cendy@calstatela.edu](mailto:cendy@calstatela.edu)

Drop-In Hours (also known as Office Hours): Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:00 to 3:30 and 5:00 to 5:55 pm on Zoom or in my office (King Hall C4076A). You never need an appointment for drop-in hours. Just stop by unannounced. My Zoom link for office hours is posted on Canvas. If I am meeting with another student, please remain in the Zoom waiting room and I will let you in when I'm free. If you can't make my drop-in hours, let me know and we can arrange another time to connect.

Office Phone: 323-343-2046. Email is usually a better option, but you can sometimes reach me via phone on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and you can leave a voicemail message at any time. Please note that I let my phone go to voicemail when I am already meeting with someone in my office.

More Info: See the [Syllabus Appendix](#) on Canvas for tips, resources, and definitions of key phrases such as "class participation," "good writing," and "plagiarism." See my [personal faculty webpage](#) with advice on surviving college and links to some of my favorite things:

## **What will you learn in this class?**

This goal of this seminar is to help you become an effective secondary-school history and social science teacher. This class will also benefit anyone interested in the role of history and historical thinking in contemporary society. HIST 4960 revolves around the following "**big picture**" **questions:**

Question 1. What **skills, concepts, and social science content** should middle- and high-school students learn?

Question 2. What **strategies and concepts** can teachers use to help their students learn those skills, concepts, and content?

Question 3. How can college history majors develop **rewarding careers** in education?

In terms of **learning outcomes**, by the end of class, you will demonstrate understanding of:

1. the nature of historical thinking (i.e. the specific forms of analysis that define history as a discipline) and why it holds value in today's society, with an emphasis on moving history education AWAY from a focus on memorization of dates and names;

2. the public role of history, including the role history can play in students' intellectual and civic growth and the role history can play in healing or empowering communities;
3. techniques to make history and historical thinking relevant and accessible for students, with an emphasis on engaging students in diverse communities around southern California;
4. skills needed for successful course design and lesson planning, including:
  - evaluating and adapting existing plans
  - creating original activities
  - developing overarching themes and questions that give coherence to a course;
5. methods for finding a job, building a teaching career, and continually improving as a teacher.

## Assignments and Grading

Class Participation	13%	Attendance and engagement in class activities
Special Contributions to the Class	3	Every student will make two special contributions to class; at least one must be a mini-oral presentation on an issue related to class themes;.
Office Visit	1%	Visit in person (no Zoom) on or before 13 February; easy perfect score! Come alone or in a group for a brief chat.
Responses x6 (2.5% each)	15%	Informal, short-answer writing assignments in which you respond to reading assignments or internet research.
Projects x5 (about 8% each)	38%	Building blocks for your active-learning exercises and lesson plan; these should be more polished than the responses.
Job Search Portfolio	8%	Includes a resume/CV, cover letter, statement of teaching philosophy, and reflection essay.
Oral Presentation	8%	Prepare and deliver a short lecture and active-learning exercise for the class, followed by a short reflection essay.
Final Portfolio	14%	Revised and expanded versions of your projects' active learning exercises, your job search portfolio, and anything else that you think prospective employers would find useful.

We will use a “+/-” system: A (93-100), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (60-66), F (0-59).

Failure to earn a passing grade on the final portfolio or oral presentation, or failure to attend at least 8 class sessions, will result in an automatic failing grade for the whole course. That said, I want you to succeed in this class. If you put in the work and stay in touch with me, I will work with you to make sure you do ok.

If you don’t understand the basis of the grade you received or if you disagree with the assessment, speak to me—but only after letting twenty-four hours pass for you to absorb and reflect on my feedback. Please check your grades on Canvas to ensure that I accurately record each assignment. Be careful if using Canvas to tabulate your overall grade, because Canvas can make your grade seem higher or lower than it really is, depending on the settings the professor uses. Your official grade will follow the information provided here in this syllabus, even if the Canvas estimate shows something else.

## **Required Readings, Supplies, and Other Costs**

Bring paper and a pen or pencil each day for note-taking. We will have readings available (at no cost) via Canvas or campus library databases. If you can, print these readings and use a pen to mark key passages and write your own thoughts in the margins. This is the best way to learn and prepare from class while reading. If you cannot print, you need an electronic version of the reading accessible during class, and make sure to record your thoughts and questions about the reading on a sheet of paper. Paper notes will prepare you for class and for later assignments.

## **Late Policy and the Free Lates**

Yes, you can turn in assignments late. Here’s my view on late penalties. I encourage students to submit work on time because our in-class activities draw on that work. At the same time, I know that our lives can get busy, and I don’t want late assignments to ruin your overall grade. That’s why I make the late penalties relatively modest. Here’s the breakdown for most assignments:

- 1 day late: 3% off
- 2 to 3 days late: 5% off
- 4 to 21 days late: 10% off
- 22+ days late: 20% off

No late work will be accepted after the last day of classes (Week 15), unless you make advance plans with me. A late Final Portfolio will lose 5% for each day late. Final Portfolios cannot be submitted more than three days after the due date.

The Free Late: For four assignments, you may turn in your work seven days late with no penalty. To activate a Free Late, simply go to the assignment page on Canvas and type “Free Late #1” (or #2 or #3) in the Assignment Comment section. (Tip: Some students say that they need to navigate to “submission” or “rubric” on Canvas before they can enter an assignment comment.) Canvas will still label your assignment as “late” but I will know not to give it a late

penalty. You do not need to give a reason for the delay. Exceptions: You may NOT use a Free Late for the oral presentation or final portfolio.

## **What should I do if I start to really fall behind?**

Sometimes work, health, or family can make it hard to attend class or meet deadlines. If you see a problem approaching, please visit my office hours or send me an email to keep me posted. When an unexpected problem arises, let me know as soon as possible. If a real hardship arises and you let me know what's going on at an early stage, I will do my best to work with you and help you do well in the class.

## **Plagiarism, ChatGPT, and Text-Generating AI**

As a professor, I've noticed that students often resort to plagiarism when they run out of time or don't understand how to do an assignment. If you find yourself drifting toward plagiarism, visit my office hours or send me an email. I can help you get through the assignment or calculate the (modest) late penalty. You will be much better off taking a small late penalty than committing plagiarism. For a definition of plagiarism, and for resources on avoiding it, see my Syllabus Appendix on Canvas. The Syllabus Appendix also contains advice and class policy related to ChatGPT and other kinds of text-generating AI.

## **Attendance**

I have designed this class to revolve around learning that we do together in the classroom. If you miss class, you will miss the heart of this course. Please make attending *each* class session a top priority. Arrive on time and stay until the end. If an unexpected emergency arises, send me an email as soon as possible and contact members of your team. Missing one or two classes during the semester will not hurt your grade, but further unexcused absences will. These absences will also result in a lower class participation score.

## **Disabilities**

As your professor, I want all students to succeed in class. If you have a disability or any other issue that affects your learning, please let me know at any time. Also take note of the resources at the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) (Student Services Building Room 1320).

## **Change**

I may make reasonable changes to the syllabus when needed.

# CLASS SCHEDULE

Full details on assignments will appear on Canvas.

## WEEK ONE

23 January: Introduction to the course // What do you need to become an effective social studies teacher?

## WEEK TWO

30 January: What did we learn in HIST 3085? // Student-centered teaching

Read) Syllabus and Syllabus Appendix (on Canvas)

Read) Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (Continuum Books, 1993), excerpts from Chapter 2 (posted on Canvas).

**Response 1 due**

## WEEK THREE

6 February: Student-centered teaching // Historical Thinking and SoTL (scholarship of teaching and learning) // The importance of big picture questions

Read) Tara J. Yosso, "Whose Culture Has Capital? A Critical Race Theory Discussion of Community Cultural Wealth," *Race Ethnicity and Education* 8 (March 2005): 69-91.

Read) Stanford History Education Group, "Historical Thinking Chart." ([link](#))

Read) Sam Wineburg, "Thinking Like a Historian," Library of Congress Teaching with Primary Sources. ([link](#))

Read) Thomas Andrews and Flannery Burke, "What Does It Mean to Think Historically?," *Perspectives on History* [American Historical Association newsletter] (1 January 2007). ([link](#))

Read) Bruce A. VanSledright, "What Does It Mean To Think Historically... And How Do You Teach It?," *Social Education* 68:3 (2004): 230-233.

Read) Abby Reisman, "How to Facilitate Discussions in History," *Educational Leadership* (February 2017): 30-34.

Read) Abby Reisman, "Entering the Historical Problem Space: Whole-Class Text-Based Discussion in History Class," *Teachers College Record* 117 (February 2015): 1-44. Just read pages 1-6.

**Response 2 due**

## WEEK FOUR

13 February: Teaching sensitive topics // Teaching history with maps

Read and View) Various web resources and videos; details to be shared later.

**Response 3 due**

*Last day to visit office hours for the opening office hours assignment.*

## WEEK FIVE

20 February: Student writing in history classes // Building classroom-relevant historical knowledge // Teaching history with lectures and timelines

Read) Chauncey Monte-Sano, "What Makes a Good History Essay? Assessing Historical Aspects of Argumentative Writing," *Social Education* 76 (November/December 2012): 294–298.

Read) Various online history lesson plans (details to be shared later)

**Response 4 due**

## WEEK SIX

27 February: Building more classroom-relevant historical knowledge // Preparing for your lesson plan proposal // Teaching history with movies

Read) Secondary-source readings related to your topic (details to be shared later)

**Response 5 due**

## WEEK SEVEN

6 March: Lesson-plan building // Teaching history with movies

**Project 1 due (proposal for your lesson plan)**

## WEEK EIGHT

11 and 13 March: Research for the lesson plans

Small-group meetings in my office (King Hall C4076A)

14 March (FRIDAY): Zoom symposium w/ Cal State LA alumni teachers, 4:30pm to 6pm

Please keep your schedule free for this Friday afternoon. It will be a really valuable event, and you will need your notes from it to complete Response 6.

## WEEK NINE

20 March: Topic TBD

**Project 2 due (active learning exercise using maps)**

## WEEK TEN

27 March: Oral Presentations (1 of 6)

**Response 6 due (on the alumni teacher workshop)**

*SPRING BREAK: No class on 3 April*

*WEEK ELEVEN*

10 April: Teaching history with movies // Oral Presentations (2 of 6)

**Project 3 due (active learning exercise using lecture as a springboard)**

*WEEK TWELVE*

17 April: Career building for history teachers // Oral Presentations (3 of 6)

**Project 4 due (active learning exercise using a movie or documentary)**

Read) Advice on applying for jobs (details to be shared later).

*WEEK THIRTEEN*

24 April: Oral Presentations (4 of 6)

**Project 5 due (active learning exercise using AI or another novel technology)**

*WEEK FOURTEEN*

1 May: Presenting Our Teaching Selves to the World // Oral Presentations (5 of 6)

**Job Search Portfolio due**

*WEEK FIFTEEN*

8 May: Oral Presentations (6 of 6) // Course Conclusion (last time we meet together!)

*FINALS WEEK*

15 May (Thursday)

**Final Portfolios due via Canvas by 11:59pm**