

History 1378

HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1865

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Office Hours: TTh 11:30-1:15

Spring 2007
Aud 1 – AH
TTh 1:00-2:30

Teaching Assistants: James Arlington <jarlington@hotmail.com>
M 2:30-5:30 AH 645
Tim O'Brien <tjobrien@uh.edu>
T 2:30-4:00, Th 11:30-1 AH 639
Gregory Peek <gpeek@uh.edu>
MT 3:30-5:00 AH 645

Course Description

History of the United States Since 1865 is an overview of American society from the end of the Civil War to the present. The course will focus on the following themes:

1. the role of the United States in the world;
2. the persistence of issues of gender, race, and ethnicity;
3. the development of politics and changes in the political behavior of Americans;
4. the shift from a rural, agrarian society to an urban industrial society to a suburban post-industrial society;
5. the impact of the above four themes on the lives of ordinary Americans.

We will examine American history as a series of historical interpretations rather than as a collection of facts to be memorized and forgotten. In and of themselves, facts mean little. But as evidence, reliable and relevant facts are essential to support a historical argument. The study of modern America is a dynamic process subject to a variety of interpretations (including our own) of historical sources. We will consider a range of primary documents and historians' interpretations while we argue our own conclusions to various historical questions. Through this process, we will strengthen the skills necessary for analytical and critical reading, writing, and thinking

Learning Outcomes:

- Students will attain, through lectures, discussion and reading, and demonstrate, through quizzes and exams, knowledge about the historical development of the modern United States.
- Class discussions of primary sources and secondary works of history will help students develop critical reading and analytical thinking.
- Essay exams will enable students to improve their critical thinking and writing skills.

Required Books

Mary Beth Norton, et. al., A People and a Nation, Vol. II (brief) since 1865, 7th ed.
 Elizabeth Hoffman and Jon Gjerde, eds, Major Problems in American History, Vol. II: Since 1865, 2nd ed.
 Willa Cather, My Antonia
 Wallace Terry, Bloods

I expect you to complete the reading in Norton and the Major Problems books for the days they are due. Norton provides general historical background for the topics while Major Problems offers key documents and historical interpretations in the history of the US. Bring Major Problems on the days scheduled for its discussion. I have set aside class periods for the discussion of Cather and Terry; please bring each of those books to the corresponding discussion.

General Course Requirements

1. Attendance at all classes and completion of the required reading for each meeting.
THIS IS AN ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL PART OF THE COURSE.
2. Active and thoughtful participation in discussion and classroom activities.
3. Two reading quizzes, on Tuesday, Feb. 6, and Tuesday, Apr. 10.
4. One in-class midterm exam on Thursday, Mar. 8.
5. A three-hour final exam on Tuesday, May 8.

Final grade distribution:

Attendance and participation	15%
Two reading quizzes	30%
Midterm exam	25%
Final exam	30%

Class Format

The course will be conducted through a combination of interactive lectures, drop quizzes on the Major Problems book, discussions, and films. I would prefer not to present a monologue in the form of a lecture; instead I expect that you will participate actively in class through raising and answering questions, contributing to discussions, and commenting on required reading. Indeed, three components of a successful experience in this course are regular attendance, completion of reading assignments, and, active learning! I encourage you to ask questions at any time during class.

Furthermore, please take advantage of my office hours! I am available for any course-related issues you would like to discuss. I am here to help you and welcome the opportunity to talk with you. I also strongly encourage you to seek aid from your teaching assistant. They too will be having regular office hours and welcome the opportunity to talk with you.

Finally, try to arrive on time; if you are late, provide as little disruption as possible. If you need to leave early, please let the instructor know before class. Students making any type of loud noise or other disturbance (e.g., reading newspapers, text messaging, surfing the net) will be asked to leave. All portable phones, pagers, and other noise-producing electronic equipment must be turned off. **NO TAPE RECORDING DEVICES WILL BE ALLOWED IN CLASS.**

Reading Quizzes

You will be required to complete two brief reading quizzes, one on Cather, My Antonia, and the other on Terry, Bloods. A list of twenty study questions will be passed out in advance and the actual questions asked on the quizzes will come from these study guides. Reading quizzes will be about 30 minutes long and you will need to provide short answers to five out of the eight questions asked.

PLEASE NOTE: THERE ARE NO MAKE-UPS ON READING QUIZZES. IF YOU MISS A READING QUIZ FOR ANY INEXCUSABLE REASON, YOU WILL RECEIVE A GRADE OF "0" FOR THAT QUIZ.

Exam Policy

Both the midterm and final exams will consist of a combination of short identifications and essay questions. Prior to each exam, a formal study guide will be passed out to help you prepare for that exam. These will consist of a short list of possible identifications and essay questions. The actual identifications and questions used will come from the study guide. You will not have any choice in which IDs or essays you will get to answer. For the midterm, you will have to answer four IDs and one essay. For the final, you will have to answer six IDs and two essays. The final will also be cumulative, however, it will be more heavily weighted on material from the second half of the course.

PLEASE NOTE: To help you prepare for these exams as you take notes, the vast majority of identifications will come from the terms I put on the screen at the beginning of each class period. The remainder will come from prominent persons, events, and concepts in the required readings, handouts, and films shown during class. Prior to each exam, opportunity will also be provided during class to discuss the essay questions.

To do well on these exams you will need to answer the questions asked in a clear and coherent manner, incorporating material from the lectures, the readings, and the films. No top-level grades will be given to answers that do not include information from all of these sources.

Grade - percentages equivalents:

A 93-100%	B+ 87-89%	C 73-76%	D 60-69%
A- 90-92%	B 83-86%	C- 70-72%	F 59% and below
	B- 80-82%		
	C+ 77-79%		

Emergencies

In the event of illness, a death in your family, or other personal crisis, I will be sympathetic. I may also be able to adjust due dates and provide extra help, **BUT ONLY IF YOU ALERT ME IMMEDIATELY AND IN ADVANCE OF THE DUE DATE OR EXAM.** A belated excuse for poor or late work will not be accepted. If you have any problem that interferes with your work in this course please consult me as soon as possible. You will need to provide appropriate, written documentation for any medical excuse.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

You are expected to be familiar with and abide by the University of Houston's policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism (if not, see the student catalog). You may study together for quizzes and exams (indeed, I would encourage you to do so) and you may work together in class on certain group projects. But **ALL** quizzes and exams are to be written only by you, the individual student. You are also responsible for being sure that your work is not plagiarized by others. In addition, except for the drop quizzes, exams are to be taken independently of any notes, texts, or assistance from others. Failure to abide by the university policies on academic dishonesty and plagiarism will result in an "F" for the course.

Objectionable Materials Warning

Some of the reading materials and film clips that we will see contain scenes of explicit violence, sexual brutality, ethnic and gender stereotyping, nudity, obscenity, adult themes, profanity, and offensive language that might be found objectionable by some. There may also be ideas or practices endorsed by specific books or motion pictures that some may consider immoral or amoral. In the instructor's opinion, all of these materials are essential for understanding modern American history. If these materials will make you uncomfortable, please do not enroll in the course.

UPDATED CLASS SCHEDULE

Week 1: Reconstruction

Jan. 16 No reading

Jan. 18: Norton, ch. 16

Week 2: Reconstruction; Western Expansion

Jan. 23: Norton, 360-67
Problems, ch. 1
Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 3.

Jan. 25: Norton, ch. 17
Problems, ch. 2
Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 39.

Week 3: Industrialization and Urbanization

Jan. 30: Norton, chs. 18-19
Problems, ch. 3
Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 67.

Feb. 1: Cather, intro and Books 1-2

Week 4: Populism and Progressivism

Feb. 6: Cather, Books 3-5
Reading quiz on Cather

Feb 8: Norton, 367-74, ch. 21
Problems, ch. 5
Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 122.

Week 5: Progressivism; Imperialism

Feb. 13: No reading

Problems, ch. 10

Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 279

Mar. 22: No reading

Week 11: **1950s: a Culture of Conformity?**

Mar. 27: Norton, ch. 29

Problems, ch. 11

Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 310

29: Norton, 553-60, 567-68

Week 12: **The Civil Rights Movement; The US in Vietnam, 1945-73**

3: Problems, ch. 12

Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 343

5: Norton, 563-67, 580-82

Problems, 406-14, 417-36

Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 407.

Terry, 1-142

Week 13: **The 1960s: Moving Left**

Apr. 10: Terry, 143-291

Reading quiz on Terry

Apr. 12: Norton, 560-63, 568-73, 576-82

Problems, 353-57, ch. 13

Be prepared to discuss all of the questions asked on p. 374.

Week 14: **The 1970s: The End of the Postwar Boom**

17: Norton, 582-94

Problems, 414-17

19: No reading

Week 15: Reagan and the 1980s

Apr. 24: Norton, ch. 32
Problems, ch. 15
Be prepared to answer all of the questions on p. 438

Apr. 26: No reading

FINAL EXAMINATION:

TUES, MAY 8, 2:00-5:00 pm, Aud 1 – AH.