U.S. History Survey, 1877–Present  
HIS 134 011 – Spring 2016

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Class Days, Time, and Location: MW, 1–2:15 p.m. in Ferguson 179  
Phone: 936.468.1735  
Office: Steen Library 209 or Austin Building 312A  
Office Hours: Wednesdays, noon–1 p.m. or by appointment. I welcome and encourage students to visit me in my office. However, please note that I am notoriously difficult to catch and split time between my two offices. So that I can ensure I am available and in a specific location, please email in advance of stopping by my office. Email is always the best way to catch me; I constantly monitor it during the workday.

Course Description

A comprehensive survey of American history from the end of Reconstruction to the present. Meets Texas state requirements for all graduates.

Course Goals

The goals of the course are to expand your knowledge of the basic content of recent American history, introduce you to the conflicting interpretations of these historical phenomena, and give you the tools to analyze historical artifacts for yourself. We will also develop your ability to process information and express yourself clearly, in both the written and spoken word.

Required Materials

I do not believe that the cost of textbooks and course readings should impede a student from being able to fully engage in this course. Thus, I have endeavored to ensure the required materials are as low in cost as possible.

We will utilize portions of several textbooks available as open educational resources (OERs). While you are welcome to purchase a physical copy of these texts, you are not required to do so; they are both available free and available online, and we will use only limited portions of each.


You are also required to read one monograph. You may choose either of these:


Other readings, videos, podcasts, etc. will be assigned throughout the semester and will be posted in D2L.
Grading and Evaluation

Students have the opportunity to earn 1000 points in this course. Grades are determined from a variety of assignments:

- Accountability Quizzes: 150 points total
- Book Quiz and Related Project: 1 of each @ 75 points each (150 points total)
- Content Examinations: 3 @ 150 points each (450 points total)
- Activities: 250 points total

Accountability Quizzes

On dates of my choosing, I will give accountability quizzes. These will cover assigned readings, videos, or podcasts for the class. Quizzes can vary from being online or in-class to individual or group quizzes.

Book Quizzes

On the days indicated on the Semester Calendar, there will be a very straightforward quiz, consisting of both multiple choice questions and a short answer question, on the selected, assigned monograph.

Content Examinations

These exams will consist of multiple-choice and essay questions on the material covered in Units 1, 2, and 3 (respectively). They are not cumulative, and they will be timed. The penalty for taking more time than is allotted is five points per minute. Exam dates are noted on the Semester Calendar.

Those students whose average on all coursework prior to the Final Exam (to include all module activities, exams, and book exams) is 93 or higher will be exempt from the Final Exam.

Activities

Activities will be graded on several criteria: thoroughness, thoughtfulness, and timeliness. Activities can come in a variety of forms, including (but not limited to) online discussions, primary source analyses, or projects.

Online Discussions

Online discussions may take place at various intervals throughout the course. In a discussion, you must post your own response to the prompt and, if required, respond to other students. "I agree" is not a response to another student that will merit points; this may be how you feel, but it doesn't require much depth of thought on your part. Responses must be substantive and reflect critical thought and engagement with the course material. Feel free to reply to other students' postings with oppositional points of view, but you must speak respectfully.

Please remember that the discussion board is an academic environment and should be treated as such; proper grammar, spelling, and syntax are expected. Though your postings should be of sufficient length to properly answer each question, your grade will be based not on the length of your postings (unless specifically noted) but on your active participation and the content of your messages. Note that while you may not fully understand each module's content, discussions can be a good way to help yourself and your fellow students to make sense of them. Thoughtful, appropriate questions about the content carry value and reflect critical thought.
Analysis Exercises

In an analysis exercise, I will give you several thought-provoking questions and possibly a primary source to examine. You will then answer questions and/or craft an essay that carefully answers the questions asked and/or describes the document(s) and analyzes its/their historical significance. Analysis essays should be well-written, contain no grammatical or syntactical mistakes, and contain a high level of thought and polish.

Final grades will break down as follows:

A = 90-100% (900-1000 points)
B = 80-89.9% (800-899.99 points)
C = 70-79.9% (700-799.99 points)
D = 60-69.9% (600-699.99 points)
F = 59% and below (599.99 points or fewer points)

It is your responsibility to keep up with your grades and to calculate your current average for your own knowledge.

Extra Credit and Late Work

There is no extra credit in this course. Late work is not accepted.

Exam Make-Up Policy

I will not give a make-up exam without a university-approved, documented excuse. If you miss an exam, it is your responsibility to contact me within one day of the missed exam to initiate a discussion of if and when you will be allowed to take a make-up exam.

Professionalism

I expect you to arrive on time to and fully prepared for class. Disruptive or distracting behavior will not be tolerated. This class will be highly interactive. I expect you to remain open minded and to treat each other with respect.

Attendance Policy

Regular and punctual attendance is expected. Poor attendance will make it difficult to satisfactorily perform well. I will take attendance at each class meeting. Regardless of your attendance, you are responsible for all material and announcements delivered on class days. Should you need to miss class, I strongly encourage you to get notes/a run-down of class from a classmate. You will not be allowed to make up work missed in class unless your absence is excused. Should you miss more than ¼ of the total days class meets, I reserve the right to drop your final grade by as much as 20%. For more information on what constitutes an excused absence, consult SFA’s Class Attendance and Excused Absence Policy.

Technology

My personal belief is that the distractions of technology negatively affect attention, comprehension, and retention. However, until the privilege is abused, I will trust that you as an adult can make an appropriate decision about your use of technology in class. I also trust that you will not negatively affect another student’s learning with your use of technology. Should you wish to use a laptop or mobile device while in class, please
sit oat one of the tables in the back of the room. I reserve the right to prohibit the use of technology in class at any time.

**Program Learning Outcomes**

This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course.

**General Education Core Curriculum**

This course has been selected to be part of Stephen F. Austin State University’s core curriculum. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six objectives for all core courses: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

**General Education Core Curriculum Objectives and Student Learning Outcomes**

HIS 134 is part of the university's Core Curriculum and as such strives towards both the general goals of the core and the specific objectives for classes designated for inclusion in the American History Foundational Component Area as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

Courses in this Foundational Component Area focus on the consideration of past events and ideas relative to the United States.

Courses in this area, such as HIS 134, include instruction in the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.

In addition to learning the above, students in HIS 134 will demonstrate the more general ability to:

- think critically, which includes the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information about this period of history;
- communicate effectively by developing and expressing ideas through written and visual communication;
- gain intercultural competence, a knowledge of civic responsibility, and an awareness of how humans in the past have engaged effectively in regional, national, and global communities; and
- understand the role that personal responsibility has played throughout history and gain the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to making ethical decisions.

**University Policies**

**Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.
Definition of Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one's own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper without giving the author due credit.

Academic and professional careers have ended because of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism. If you have any questions about what does or does not constitute plagiarism, please let me know. In doing so, we can avoid what could potentially be a very costly and serious error. I take academic dishonesty very seriously and will not tolerate it.

Please read the University's complete student academic dishonesty policy.

Withheld Grades (Semester Grades Policy, A-54)

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Students with Disabilities

To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, visit Disability Services.

Tentative Schedule

Week of January 19: Introduction
Week of January 25: The Gilded Age + Corporate America
Week of February 1: The 1890s
Week of February 8: The Progressive Era + Exam 1
Week of February 15: World War I
Week of February 22: The 1920s
Week of February 29: The Great Depression
Week of March 7: World War II + Exam 2
Week of March 14: SPRING BREAK

Week of March 21: *Farewell to Manzanar* Book Quiz/Project

Week of March 28: The Cold War

Week of April 4: Consensus to Conflict

Week of April 11: Impetuses for Change

Week of April 18: Vietnam and the Late 1960s + *Loose Change* Book Quiz/Project

Week of April 25: Watergate and the Crisis of Confidence

Week of May 2: Ronald Reagan and the Rise of Conservatism

Wednesday, May 11, 1 p.m.: Final Exam

This schedule is tentative and may change at any time. Any changes to the schedule will be announced in class.