

SYLLABUS

History 212

United States History since 1865

Fall 2006

Lecture, W,F 9:00-9:50

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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This class is a survey of U.S. History since 1865 that will focus on how various groups in American society have defined themselves as citizens. Why people have collectively come together to pursue and defend a common set of interests, often to the point of violence, is the primary line of inquiry of this class. In pursuing this question, we will examine the various claims that American citizens have placed upon government, both at the state and federal level. And in the process we will discuss the wide range of social, economic, political, and cultural rights that Americans have demanded over time. These rights are the basis of the many visions that Americans have articulated of a good and moral society. These competing visions, moreover, get to the heart of political contestations over what it means to be an American, a question that is central to understanding the history of our nation.

The lectures organize themselves around discussions of readings. Please come ready to discuss the assigned materials. You will need to come to class prepared every day. Have your thought over the readings? Can you give other students insight into the material? It is to your advantage to keep up with the readings, attend class, and participate in a consistent and meaningful manner.

All material from the course--books, films, lectures, discussion--are fair game for examinations. Names and concepts written on the board during lectures can guide your study for the examinations.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To recognize broad historical processes and the people who were a part of and shaped these events from 1865 to the present
- To interpret primary sources and secondary scholarship

- To compose an analytical essay that is clearly written and well-argued.
- To apply your understanding of the historical past to contemporary issues
- To develop your own interpretations about the people and events in post-1865 U.S. history

GRADING: A final grade will be based upon written work and examinations.

Midterm	20 percent
Final	25 percent
Quizzes	15 percent
Response Papers	20 percent
Discussion		20 percent

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=63-66; D-=60-62; F= 50 or below

EXAMS: The first examination is a take-home a test (1,200 to 1,800 words). The final exam will focus on the last half of the class, but there will be one question that covers the material for the entire semester. Blue books are required. Both examinations provide an opportunity to interpret a range of diverse sources and organize this material into an analytical narrative reflecting your interpretation of U.S. history since 1865.

QUIZZES: There will be **17 quizzes** during the course of the semester. The lowest three scores will be dropped automatically. This includes quizzes missed due to absences. **There are no make-ups.** The quizzes will be based on the readings in Johnson, Zinn, and Contending Voices. Students will use quizzes to demonstrate their knowledge of the assigned readings.

DISCUSSIONS: Every Monday students will meet with their TAs to discuss readings from Contending Voices. Thorough preparation for this class is essential. All readings should be done before class. It is imperative that you have either handwritten or typed notes that outline the central questions and arguments of the assigned readings. On Wednesdays and Fridays, you should bring to class The American Spirit, a volume of primary sources that will serve as a point of departure for informal “lab” work on the days that I will primarily lecture. You should bring Johnson’s A History of the American People and Zinn’s A People’s History of the United States on Friday.

- 1) It is essential that you contribute to class on a consistent basis, that you intellectually engage with your peers, and that you are an active listener. In order to create an inviting environment for everyone to participate, please follow the guidelines:
 - Be ready to explain the broader argument and sub-themes of the assigned material and how the various readings fit together or diverge.
 - Instead of just criticizing a book or an article, focus on understanding the contributions of the assigned readings and why they have had a lasting influence on scholarship and its application to the field of public history.
 - You should feel free to disagree with others, but be specific in your own assertions and support them with evidence. You should also be willing to change your mind and concede to others when they make persuasive, well-reasoned arguments. Please challenge each other in a polite and courteous manner.

- The success of a discussion depends on group interaction. Listen and read carefully and respond to your peers. There should be a dynamic give-and-take between the discussion leaders and the rest of the class. This can only happen if you elaborate upon the assertions of classmates or ask for clarification if you don't understand. Simply answering the questions will not lead to vigorous debate, and the discussion leaders will end up giving a monologue.
- Make your point succinctly, avoid repetition, and stick to the subject.

RESPONSE PAPERS: There will be five response papers (550-650 words each) during the course of the semester. These papers give students an opportunity to analyze the work of other historians, to assemble a range of source material, and to assess and defend their own interpretations. These assignments are not asking you to simply summarize the readings. I urge you to read the Elements of Style before your first response paper is due.

ATTENDANCE: Attendance is mandatory. Missing a class will hurt a student's overall performance. You are allowed **three excused absences**. For every absence after three you will lose **three percentage points from your final grade**. If you miss a class, it is **your** responsibility to get the notes for that day.

BOOKS:

Johnson, A History of the American People
 Zinn, A People's History of the United States
 Hollitz, Contending Voices
 Kennedy and Bailey, The American Spirit
 Strunk and White, The Elements of Style

CLASS SESSIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1 (August 14-18) Reconstruction
Read: F Johnson, 497-507; Zinn, 192-206; and Quiz

Week 2 (August 21-August 25) Industrial America
M (Discussion): Read 1-12 in Contending Voices; Response paper due (550 to 650 words/respond to question 4 on page 20)
W Lecture
F Read Johnson, 537-79; Zinn, 253-82; and Quiz

Week 3 (August 28-September 1) Farmers and the New South
M (Discussion): Read 22-33 in Contending Voices; Quiz
W Lecture
F Lecture

Week 4 (September 4 (No Class)-8) Progressives
M No Class
W Lecture
F Read Johnson, 607-24; Zinn, 349-57; and Quiz

Week 5 (September 11-15) WWI

M (Discussion) Read 64-75 in Contending Voices; Quiz

W Lecture

F Read Johnson, 643-66; Zinn Chapter 14; Quiz

Week 6 (September 18-22) 1920s

M (Discussion) Read 86-97 in Contending Voices; Response paper due (550 to 650 words/respond to question 5 on page 104)

W Lecture

F Lecture

Week 7 (September 25-19) The Great Depression

M (Discussion) Read 106-18 in Contending Voices; Quiz

W Lecture

F Read: Johnson 727-52; Zinn, 377-92; Quiz

Week 8 (October 2-6) The New Deal

M (Discussion) Read 129–140 in Contending Voices; Response paper due (550 to 650 words/respond to question 1 on page 146)

W Lecture

F Read: Johnson 752-768; Zinn 393-406; Quiz

Week 9 (October 9-13) WWII

M No Class (Fall Break)

W Lecture

F Read: Johnson, 768-791; Zinn, 406-24; Quiz

Week 10 (October 16-20) The Cold War

M Take-Home Examinations due

W Lecture

F Read: Johnson, 792-837; Zinn, 424-42; Quiz

Week 11 (October 23-27) The Civil Rights Movement

M (Discussion) Read 188-201 in Contending Voices; Response paper (550 to 650 words/respond to question 1 on page 210)

W Lecture

F Read: Johnson, 891-93; Zinn, 443-67; Quiz

Week 12 (October 30-November 3) Vietnam

M (Discussion) Read 211-23 in Contending Voices; Quiz

W Lecture

F Read: Johnson, 846-90; Zinn, 469-501; Quiz

Week 13 (November 6-10) 1960s

M (Discussion) Read 231-44 in Contending Voices; Response Paper (550 to 650 words/respond to question 5 on page 252)

W Lecture

F Read: Zinn, 503-39

Week 14 (November 13-17) The 1970s

M (Discussion) Read 253-65 in Contending Voices; Quiz

W Lecture

F Read: Read: Johnson, 893-906; Zinn 541-50; Quiz

Week 15 (November 20-24) No Class

Week 16 (November 27-December 1) The Carter and Reagan Years

M Read: Johnson, 910-34; Zinn 563-600; Quiz

W Lecture

F Lecture

Week 17 (December 4-8)

M Review Session

F Final Examination (8-11)

NOTE: While attempting to adhere to the outlines within this syllabus, the instructor reserves the right to adjust components with due notice to the class.