

**HIS 339-01 – War, Society, and Reform: America, 1896-1945**  
**Spring 2010 – Tuesdays and Thursdays, 3:30-4:45**  
**Bryan 204**

**Instructor Info**

Natasha Thompson

Email: [enthomps@uncg.edu](mailto:enthomps@uncg.edu)

Office: MHRA 2103

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3 pm and by appointment

**Course Description**

In this course we will examine some of the major historical events and themes associated with the period from 1896 to 1945. These include the Progressive Movement, World War I, the New Era, the Great Depression and New Deal, and World War II. We will focus on the ways in which American society experienced these events, as well as how it changed as a result of them. In order to gain a richer understanding of this period, we will examine the experiences of many segments of American society. Although our study will address several broad themes, we will continually discuss the changing nature of government during this period, focusing on how its role shifted from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, as well as on how citizens' expectations of government also morphed during this time.

**Course Objectives**

At the end of the semester, students will be able to:

1. Identify key events and themes in US history from 1896 to 1945.
2. Identify and analyze primary sources.
3. Connect historical events to current issues.
4. Identify and evaluate historical arguments.
5. Formulate and defend arguments about historical events.

**Required Texts**

Adams, Michael C.C. *The Best War Ever: America and World War II*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Gilmore, Glenda, ed. *Who Were the Progressives?* New York: Bedford /St. Martin's, 2002.

Kennedy, David M. *Over Here: The First World War and American Society*. Oxford University Press.

McElvaine, Robert S., ed. *Down and Out in the Great Depression: Letters from the Forgotten Man*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Other readings listed on the course calendar can be found either under the Course Documents or E-Reserves sections of Blackboard.

If you are new to US history or haven't taken a history course in a while, you may find it beneficial to consult a general text to refresh your memory or fill you in on information with

which you are unfamiliar. Jackson Library has a couple of these online as e-books, including *A History of the United States* by Philip Jenkins.

### **Recommended Text**

Rampolla, Mary Lynn. *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History*. Bedford/St. Martin's.

(This book is very useful if this is your first history course or you haven't written much in previous history courses that you've taken.)

### **Exams, Assignments, Activities, and Evaluation**

#### Exams

Midterm – 15%

Final – 20%

Current Events Paper – 15%

#### Book Reviews

Short – 15%

Long – 20%

Research Activity – 5%

Participation – 10%

#### Exams

There will be one midterm exam and one final exam. These are both take home essay exams. You will be given a prompt a week in advance of the due date. In order to answer the question, you must incorporate the readings from the course into your response. There is no need to conduct outside research and **YOU WILL BE PENALIZED** if you bring in sources other than the assigned readings. (This saves you time as you don't have to track down and evaluate other sources.) Responses should be 1500-2000 words. You may use any standard (Times New Roman, Arial, Calibri, etc.) font and font size of your choosing – just make sure that you check your word count.

In order to be counted as on time, the midterm exam must be submitted by the start of class (3:30 pm) on the date it is due. The final exam, which is cumulative, must be submitted by the end of the exam period (6:30 pm) on the date of the final exam.

When writing your response bear in mind that the prompt will ask you to form your own argument about a particular issue and support it with specific examples from the readings. Make sure that you organize your written response into paragraphs. Your paper will be stronger if you include a thesis statement in your introduction outlining what you intend to argue in the body of the paper. Each supporting paragraph should also have its own topic sentence. This helps with the flow of your paper and also keeps you organized and on track.

Although you are using sources assigned in the class, you must make sure that you appropriately cite all materials that you use. For the purposes of these exams, you must use footnotes and not parenthetical citations. You are not required to give full citations, but you do need to provide the author's last name and the page number where you located the material. Make sure that if you cite a source by an author with multiple readings assigned for the course (Kennedy and Gilmore,

for example), that you also list which work you are referencing. No works cited pages are required for these exams as you are doing no outside research.

All exams must be submitted through Blackboard. You can do this by clicking on “Assignments” and then selecting the applicable exam. Blackboard will allow you to upload a copy of your response and submit it digitally. To avoid technical difficulties, make sure your paper is saved in either a .rtf or .doc (NOT .docx) format. A “test” assignment is available so that you can familiarize yourself with the submissions process before your exams are due. Graded exams will be returned to you electronically via your UNCG email. Your exams will be evaluated in terms of overall clarity, the strength of your argument, your use of available sources and your compliance with the requirements for the exam (word count, citations, etc.).

### Current Events Paper

As history does not occur in a vacuum, it is important to recognize and understand how past events and issues relate to and continue to influence contemporary events. At some point during the semester you must locate a **print** news story that relates to something we are covering in class. Make a copy or print the article that you find, write a 575-750 word response that describes the article and also relates it to what we have studied in class, and submit them together. You must also briefly explain to the class on what you read and how it connects to our study of US history.

There is no set due date for this assignment, but no current events papers will be accepted after April 29. Additionally, hold on to your papers/articles until we have covered the topic in class. For example, if you find an article that relates to the Great Depression in February, save it until March. However, if you find an article that relates to WWI in April, you could use it since we would be past the WWI unit.

Papers will be evaluated in terms of overall clarity, adherence to requirements, and your analysis of the relevancy of the event to the course.

### Book Reviews

Throughout the semester you will be required to write two book reviews. Doing so allows you to not only further investigate topics of interest to you, but also explore arguments that historians have made about particular events. In the first review, you will examine one book. In the second review you will discuss three books. For both of these reviews, you may choose any topic that interests you so long as it is relevant to the course. If you wish to write on either world war, make sure that you focus on American experiences (as this is a US history course).

First (Short) Review – 550-600 words

Second (Long) Review – 1000-1300 words

Both must be submitted by 3:30 pm via Blackboard on the days they are due.

Book reviews are different than research papers. Rather than relating all of the factual details of a particular event, in a book review you will instead identify the author’s primary argument(s) about a particular historical period, event, etc., describe the various means by which the author supported his/her argument, and, to the best of your ability, offer your own assessment of the

argument and supporting evidence. Did the author effectively prove his or her argument? Did the author supply adequate evidence to make his or her point? What strengths and weaknesses could you identify in the book?

I know that you may not read every single word on every single page of the books you evaluate. However, you should have an idea of how each chapter relates to the author's overall argument. Make sure you pay close attention to introductions and conclusions to help you locate the primary argument of each book.

In the short review, you evaluate only one book. In the longer review, you will examine three books that are all on the same subject. You have the option of using your first book as one of the three in your long review, provided that you do not copy and paste from your first review. (I'll have a digital copy, so I can verify this.) If you absolutely cannot stand your first author or the subject of your first review, you're also free to choose three new books on a different subject. One other thing to bear in mind with the long review is that to a degree you should have the author's talk to one another in the body of your paper. Do not just write three separate reviews and include them all in the same paper. If Author A argued that the world is flat, then point out that Author B proposed a different theory, that the world is instead round. Make sure you are linking the three books together. You should also consider change over time. Are there considerable differences between older and more recent books?

When locating books, make sure that you are using scholarly sources. This means that you are essentially seeking out books written by historians presumably for an academic audience. Some signs to look for when evaluating whether or not you have a scholarly source are:

1. The author – Is this person a historian? You might find this information on the back cover, or in the introduction or acknowledgements sections of the book. If you're unsure, a brief internet search may be useful. For the purposes of this course, you need to seek out books written by historians because you are trying to discover what historians (and not sociologists, psychologists, economists, etc.) have said about your subject. This doesn't mean the other disciplines aren't valid. However, we are trying to get a better understanding of the state of the field in history.
2. Sources – Does the author show where he or she found his or her sources for writing the book? Scholarly sources will usually have some form of citations, typically footnotes or endnotes, identifying evidence used. At the very least, your book should have a bibliography.
3. Publisher – Many (although not all) scholarly books are published by university presses.

In terms of formatting your reviews, all you need at the top of the page is/are the citation(s) for the book(s). Make sure you are using Chicago Style citations. (A link to a citation guide is listed under the "Plagiarism" section of the syllabus.) To cite specific examples from the book, use footnotes. You need only provide the author's last name (so long as you do not have 2+ authors with the same last name) and the page number. No full citations are required in the footnotes. Make sure that you break your reviews down into paragraphs. Your review will flow better if

you have an overarching thesis statement for your review and a topic sentence for each paragraph. This will help keep you focused and organized.

One thing to keep in mind is that brevity is crucial when writing book reviews. For the most part you should summarize and paraphrase your authors' words. If you must include direct quotes, aim for no more than a sentence. You have limited space and must communicate that you comprehended what your author was arguing.

Book reviews must also be submitted via Blackboard. Follow the instructions on the syllabus under the Exam section. To avoid technical difficulties, make sure your paper is saved in either a .rtf or .doc (NOT .docx) format. Graded reviews will be returned to you electronically via your UNCG email. You will be evaluated in terms of overall clarity, your analysis of the book(s), and your ability to adhere to the requirements for the assignment.

### Research Activity

On April 15, we will meet in the Martha Blakeney Hodges Reading Room in Jackson Library to work with documents from the Women Veterans Collection. There will be a written assignment distributed on that day that accompanies the activity which will be graded.

### Participation

Several factors contribute to your participation grade.

First, you must be alert and engaged during class. Sleeping, texting, web browsing, etc. during class time will negatively impact your participation grade.

Throughout the course of the semester you will occasionally have brief writing prompts at the beginning of class on the day's readings. While you may use your notes and the readings to answer these, you need to be familiar with the material to do well on the writing prompts. (Familiarity with readings will also aid you greatly on exams.) These will be graded on a pass/fail basis.

From time to time you will have short written assignments that accompany videos we watch in class. These are also graded on a pass/fail basis and contribute to your participation grade.

### Grading Scale

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 (0-59)

### Late Work

If you submit late work during the semester, you will lose a letter grade for each class period that it is late. (If it was due Tuesday and you submitted it on Thursday, your A paper would become a B. If you submitted in on the following Tuesday, it would be a C, etc.)

Due to grading deadlines, **NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 6:30 PM ON TUESDAY, MAY 11.** There are no exceptions to this policy. Plan accordingly.

### **Attendance**

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted two unexcused absences during the course of the semester. Any unexcused absences over two will result in a penalty of THREE points per additional absence off of your final grade. If you are going to be absent from class, it is best to contact me as soon as possible. All excused absences must be adequately documented.

### **Plagiarism and Academic Integrity**

For this and all of your other classes, make sure you are familiar with UNCG's Academic Integrity Policy, located at <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu>.

Plagiarism on all written assignments will result in a grade of zero for the assignment. There will be no opportunities to make up plagiarized assignments and I will notify UNCG's Office of Academic Integrity of all infractions. Plagiarism includes not only cutting and pasting text without giving credit to the original source of the information, but also presenting someone else's ideas as your own, even if you don't use their exact words. Cite often.

A useful citation guide can be found at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/>.

Multiple instances of cheating and plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the course.

### **Email**

Throughout the course of the semester, I will contact you via your UNCG email account. It is imperative that you check these accounts regularly so that you do not miss out on important information from this class, as well as from your other classes and university announcements. This is also how all digitally-submitted work will be returned to you. Because of how Blackboard is set up, I cannot use any other email address except the one issued to you by the university.

If you need to contact me by email, either go through Blackboard or use the address listed at the top of the first page (enthomps@uncg.edu). For complex reasons, searching for me in the directory does not work and the "Natasha Thompson" you may find is not me.

### **Office Hours**

My office hours are listed at the top of the first page of the syllabus, but appointments can be made if these do not fit into your schedule. If you have concerns about the course or questions about assignments, your performance, or the material in general, please feel free to talk to me about them. The sooner you contact me about problems and concerns, the more likely we will be to find a solution.

### **Food and Beverages**

Food and drinks are **NOT** allowed in the classroom (not even water). This is not my personal policy, but is instead the policy of the Bryan School. Since the Bryan School was kind enough to allow other departments to use their classrooms, make sure that you respect their wishes.

## Other Info

1. Make sure all electronic devices are either off or silent. If you have a special circumstance (first responder, etc.) please let me know as soon as possible.
2. In the event of inclement weather, check 334-4400 or 334-5000 for information about delays or closings. You can also check UNCG's website and local news and radio stations.
3. The University Writing Center (located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the MHRA building) is a useful resource if you feel you need assistance with writing for any of your classes.
4. If you need an accommodation through the Office of Disability Services, please let me know as soon as possible.

I will do my best to keep to the schedule listed below. However, unforeseen events may arise that could force us to alter it slightly. In the event that changes are made, I will let you know in a timely manner.

## Course Calendar

### Week 1 – Introduction to the Course and Setting the Scene

Tuesday, January 19

Syllabus Review and Course Introduction

Thursday, January 21

Reading: Dawley, "Gilded Age Liberty" (located under e-reserves)

### Week 2 – War, Empire, Reform

Tuesday, January 26

Thursday, January 28 – Introduction to the Progressives

Reading: *Who Were the Progressives?* Pgs. 3-20, 105-130, 65-69

### Week 3 – Progressives & the Push for Reform

Tuesday, February 2

Thursday, February 4

Reading: *Who Were the Progressives?* Pgs. 195-213, 223-249

### Week 4 – Progressives & the Push for Reform

Tuesday, February 9

Thursday, February 11 – The Debate Over Suffrage

**First (Short) Book Review Due at 3:30 pm via Blackboard**

Readings (Both E-Reserves):

"Jane Addams, Progressivism, and Woman Suffrage"

"Better Citizens Without the Ballot"

### Week 5 - WWI

Tuesday, February 16

Reading: Kennedy, *Over Here*, pages 45-92

Thursday, February 18

Reading: Kennedy, *Over Here*, pages, 144-167

Week 6 - WWI

Tuesday, February 23

Thursday, February 25

Reading: Kennedy, *Over Here*, pages 185-190, 198-218, 245-254, 270-287

Week 7 – New Era

Tuesday, March 2

Thursday, March 4

**Midterm Exam Due via Blackboard at 3:30 pm**

Week 8

**March 11-15 – Spring Break**

**Have fun & be safe!**

Week 9 – New Era

Tuesday, March 16

Reading: “Sacco and Vanzetti” (E-Reserve)

**Last Day to Drop a Course without Academic Penalty**

Thursday, March 18

Reading (Located on Blackboard in “Additional Readings” under “Course Documents):

“Flappers and Philosophers and Farmers”

“The New Woman” (Just skim this one)

Week 10 – Depression and New Deal

Tuesday, March 23

Reading: “The World In Debt” (E-Reserve)

McElvaine, “Introduction,” in *Down and Out in the Great Depression*

Thursday, March 25

Reading: “What the New Deal Did” (E-Reserve)

Week 11 – Depression & New Deal

Tuesday, March 30

Thursday, April 1

Reading: *Down and Out in the Great Depression*, 35-119

Week 12 – Depression & New Deal

Tuesday, April 6

Thursday, April 8

Reading: *Down and Out in the Great Depression*, 125-229

Week 13 – WWII – Overview and Introduction to the War

Tuesday, April 13

Reading: *The Best War Ever*, Preface and Chapters 1-4



Thursday, April 15

Meet in Library

Review pages 85-86 of *The Best War Ever*

Week 14 – WWII – Experiences at Home and Abroad

Tuesday, April 20

Thursday, April 22

Reading: *The Best War Ever*, Chapters 5-7, Afterword

Week 15 – WWII – The Debate Over the Bomb

Tuesday, April 27

Readings (All found on Blackboard in “Additional Readings” under “Course Documents”):

“Estimate of the Enemy Situation”

“Minutes of Meeting Held at the White House - 18 June 1945”

“Recommendations on the Immediate Use of Nuclear Weapons”

“Memorandum for the Secretary of War - 26 June 1945”

“Memorandum for the Secretary of War - 28 June 1945”

“Memoir of Zenshiro Hoshina”

Thursday, April 29

**Last Day of Class**

**Last Day to Submit Current Events Assignment**

**Second (Long) Book Review Due at 3:30 pm via Blackboard**

Tuesday, May 4

**Follow Friday Schedule – We DO NOT meet on 5/4/2010**

Tuesday, May 11

**Final Exam Due via Blackboard by 6:30 pm – We are not meeting in the classroom this day.**