

HIS 212: U.S. History Since 1865 (Sec 005)
Tues 6:00-8:50pm, MHRA 1215
Spring 2011

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Office hours: Tuesdays 4:45-5:45pm
and by appointment (MHRA 2114)



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Course Description:

Pearl Buck, a famous American novelist, once said “If you want to understand today, you have to search yesterday.” In order to best understand the United States as it exists today, we will be engaged this semester in searching the yesterdays of America since 1865 with important clues from the past including historical writings, memoirs, photographs, and films as our guide. You will want to think of these clues from the past as tools to help you to begin to answer larger questions about how the United States has grown and developed into what we see in the present.

As is the case with most introductory history courses at the college level, you will find that history is so much more than the memorization of dates, names, and events. Of course, you will be expected to know the basic facts behind major time periods in American history but the heaviest emphasis will be placed on your ability to conceptualize and organize these facts into larger narratives. In essence, you will be given a role similar to that of a story writer. Ultimately, I hope that this course will help you to see how historical knowledge (or understanding how the past is connected to the present) can positively inform people’s choices in the future.

Course Objectives:

1. To enhance students’ knowledge and comprehension of major events, persons, and themes that shaped the United States since the end of the Civil War.
2. To build students’ reading, writing, articulation, and critical thinking skills for stronger arguments.
3. To foster students’ curiosity and understanding of the discipline of history and its usefulness and necessity in a free society.

Course Expectations:

In order to take full advantage of this course, it is expected of each student to attend class regularly. I will *not* provide copies of my lecture notes or PowerPoint presentations, therefore, if you are absent from a class, it is your responsibility to get notes on the lecture from a fellow classmate. On occasion, I will also give unannounced “pop” quizzes to be counted as part of your participation grade. It should go without saying then that it is not in your best interest to miss classes on a frequent basis since your final grade will undoubtedly suffer as a consequence. If a student garners three or more unexcused absences, he or she may be called in to meet with the instructor to discuss the attendance problem.

Students are also expected to read assigned readings before coming to each class, bring the readings to class (this includes the text, memoirs, and primary source reader), participate in group activities and during in-class discussions, complete five primary source assignments, write three response papers, and be present and prepared on the day of the midterm and final exams.

Course Materials:

Text

1. James Oakes, *Of the People: A History of the United States*, Volume II: Since 1865, Concise Edition (Oxford University Press, 2011)

Other

1. Primary Source Reader (Copy King, 611 W. Lee Street), \$10.00
2. James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* (Vintage Books, 1989)
3. Condoleezza Rice, *Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family* (Random House, 2010)
4. *Fail-Safe* (1964)— film will be showed in-class

Participation:

Participation, which comprises **15%** of your final grade, includes coming to class regularly, answering questions posed by the instructor, making intellectual comments or asking thoughtful questions about the readings or lectures when applicable, working well with classmates during planned group activities such as the mock Yalta conference, and passing occasional “pop” quizzes. A good portion of your participation grade will also derive from the two in-class debates held during the semester (see the Debate handout for more information).

I know that speaking up is easier for some students rather than others, but I hope to create a relaxed and open atmosphere in order for everyone to feel both comfortable and confident to speak and ask questions. All forms of discussion and debate are meant to be both enriching as well as enjoyable. And like any endeavor in life, the following age-old adage still holds true: “You learn to speak by speaking, to study by studying, to run by running, to work by working.”

In determining your final participation grade, I look at the “whole picture” and take into account improvements made over the course of the semester in all categories of participation listed above.

Primary Source Assignment (5 total):

Each week students will be assigned between one and five primary source documents to read from the primary source reader. In addition to reading each, students will have the opportunity to individually interpret the meaning, intent, and context of at least five of these primary sources. Each primary source interpretation will be worth **2%** of your overall grade. You may choose to write on any of the primary sources in the reader but you may not analyze more than one primary source in one week. A handout with specific guidelines and questions for you to answer will be given out during the first week of class.

Memoir And Film Responses (3 total):

Students will write 3 response papers this semester. Two of the responses will center on one of the two memoirs assigned, James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Coloured Man* and Condoleezza Rice's *Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family*. The third response will analyze the film *Fail-Safe*. Due dates for each response paper are listed on the schedule below.

Responses should be between 4-5 typed pages in length and are due at the beginning of class on the scheduled due date (no late work will be accepted). When citing course material in your essays, use footnotes that include the author's name and page number or lecture date. Also, before turning in your essays, *always* proofread them for clarity, grammatical errors, and misspellings. Have pride and turn in work that reflects your best effort.

Each response will be worth **10%** of your overall grade and will be primarily graded for insightful thought and analysis and use of support from the lecture notes, readings and/or films.

The topics and guidelines for each response paper will to be distributed shortly after the semester begins.

NOTICE: Plagiarism (which is defined by the taking of the words or ideas of another and presenting them as your own) is strictly prohibited and will be punished either through failure of the course and/or expulsion from the university. Thus, do not use or attempt to use material from the internet to write your papers. If you have questions, please review UNCG's policy on plagiarism: <http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/tutorial/integrate/plagdef.asp>.

Midterm and Final Exam:

There will be two in-class exams in this course, a midterm and a final worth **20%** and **25%** of your total grade, respectively. The final will not be cumulative.

The two tests will be drawn from weekly lectures and course readings (both primary as well as secondary). The format will include short-essays, identifications, and a few multiple-choice questions. Guidelines for the exams will be discussed in further detail in the weeks prior to test day.

It is important to note that there will be no make-up exams given for either the midterm or the final. If you are absent on the day of either exam, no matter the reason, you will be assigned a 10-page research paper to complete in lieu of the exam. Failure to complete the research paper in a two-week period or failure to take the exam on test day will result in a zero for that particular exam grade.

Grading Summary:

- I. Participation: 15%
- II. Midterm: 20%
- III. Final: 25%
- IV. Primary Source Interpretations (5 at 2% each): 10%
- V. Response Papers (3 at 10% each): 30%

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

97-100	A+	73-76	C
93-96	A	70-72	C-
90-92	A-	67-69	D+
87-89	B+	63-66	D
83-86	B	60-62	D-
80-82	B-	<60	F
77-79	C+		

Questions? Issues?

If there are any general or specific questions or issues about the course please feel free to speak with me or email me to set up an appointment to meet on campus, preferably during my office hours. My job is to guide and assist your learning of the material as best as I can.

Schedule:

WEEK 1: PUTTING THE UNION BACK TOGETHER, 1865-1877

- 1/11-** Reading: Chapter 16, Oakes
Primary Source: Black Codes (1865); Thaddeus Stevens, Redistribution of Land (1865);
Report of the Commission on Indian Affairs (1869)

WEEK 2: IN THE SWING OF INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM, 1865-1895

- 1/18-** Reading: Chapter 17 and 18, Oakes
Primary Source: Rules for Indian Boarding Schools (1890); Andrew Carnegie, “The
Gospel of Wealth” (1889)

WEEK 3: RESPONSES TO INDUSTRIALISM, 1870-1900

- 1/25-** Reading: Chapter 19 and 20 (to p. 574), Oakes
Primary Source: Political cartoons of Gilded Age

WEEK 4: FOREIGN DIPLOMACY AND TALK OF EMPIRE, 1890-1900 (Mock Debate)

- 2/1-** Reading: Chapter 20 (p. 574 to end), Oakes
Primary Source: America Should Retain the Philippines (1900); America Should Not
Rule the Philippines (1900)

WEEK 5: PROGRESSION TO PROGRESSIVISM, 1900-1920

- 2/8-** Reading: Chapter 21, Oakes; Chapter 1-3, James Weldon Johnson, *The Autobiography of
an Ex-Coloured Man*
Primary Source: Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* (1906); Jane Addams, *Why Women Should
Vote* (1910); Margaret Sanger, *Woman and the New Race* (1920)

WEEK 6: THE WAR TO END ALL WARS, 1914-1919

- 2/15-** Reading: Chapter 22, Oakes; Chapter 4-6, Johnson
Primary Source: *Schenck v. United States* (1919)

WEEK 7: THE ROARING AND SOARING TWENTIES, 1920-1929

2/22- Reading: Chapter 23, Oakes; Chapter 7-9, Johnson

Primary Source: Calvin Coolidge, Third Annual Message, (1925); Just What Is It To Be A Good Wife in This Modern Age?; Pamphlets on New Jersey and Louisiana Ku Klux Klan

WEEK 8: THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND A PROMISE OF A NEW DEAL, 1929-1940
(Midterm Exam)

3/1- Reading: Chapter 24, Oakes; Chapter 10-end, Johnson

Primary Source: Letters to President Roosevelt (1930-1936); Herbert Hoover, On the New Deal and Liberty (1936)

WEEK 9

3/8- NO CLASSES (Spring Break)

WEEK 10: FIGHTING FOR DEMOCRACY AT HOME AND ABROAD, 1940-1945 **(Memoir Response #1 Due)**

3/15- Reading: Chapter 25, Oakes; Chapters 1-5, Condoleezza Rice, *Extraordinary, Ordinary People: A Memoir of Family*

Primary Source: Roosevelt's State of the Union (1944)

WEEK 11: HEATING UP A COLD WAR, 1945-1952 **(Film Screening: *Fail-Safe* (1964); *Mock Yalta Conference*)**

3/22- Reading: Chapter 26, Oakes; Chapters 6-11, Rice

Primary Source: Tibbets and Weller, To Use an Atomic Bomb; Truman Doctrine (1947); Marshall Plan (1948)

WEEK 12: LIVING THE GOOD LIFE, 1945-1963 **(Film Screening: *Fail-Safe* (1964))**

3/29- Reading: Chapter 27, Oakes; Chapters 12-19, Rice

Primary Source: A Journalist Describes Levittown (1948); Nixon and Khrushchev, The Kitchen Debate (1959); Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)

WEEK 13: A NEW FRONTIER AND THE GREAT SOCIETY, 1960-1968

- 4/5-** Reading: Chapter 28, Oakes; Chapters 20-25, Rice
Primary Source: Goldwater, Conscience of a Conservative (1964); King, Speech in Senate (1966); Carmichael and Hamilton, Black Power (1968)

WEEK 14: A NATION IN DECLINE, 1968-1980 (Film Response Due)

- 4/12-** Reading: Chapter 29, Oakes; Chapters 26-32, Rice
Primary Source: A Native American Protest (1969); Phyllis Schlafly, The Power of the Positive Woman (1977); Carter, “Crisis in Confidence” (1979)

WEEK 15: “IT’S MORNING AGAIN IN AMERICA,” 1980-1991

- 4/19-** Reading: Chapter 30, Oakes; Chapters 33-end, Rice
Primary Source: Jerry Falwell, On the Moral Majority (1981); Reagan, Berlin Wall Speech (1987); *Black Enterprise*, “Critics Say No To Reagan’s Drug Policy,” (1988)

WEEK 16: GLOBALIZATION AND A NATION TRANSFORMED, 1992-2008 (Mock Debate)

- 4/26-** Reading: Chapter 31, Oakes
Primary Source: Clinton, Remarks on Affirmative Action (1995); Bill Gates, Capitalizing on the ‘Cognitive Niche’ (1999); Nader, “It’s Time to End Corporate Welfare as We Know It (1996); Kristol, “The Cultural Revolution and Its Capitalist Future,” (1992); Bush Doctrine (2002)

***Final Exam/Memoir Response # 2 due: Tuesday, May 3, 7:00pm (MHRA 1215)**