

SYLLABUS

History 212: The United States from 1865

Spring 2019 TR 8:00am – 9:15am

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Office hours: TR 9:30 – 10:30 and by appt.

History Department Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/>

History Department Website: <https://his.uncg.edu/>

Course Description

This course is a survey of American history from the Civil War era to the present. Topics include industrialization, immigration, the Great Depression, the major American wars, the Cold War, and social conflict. Upon completion, students should be able to analyze significant political, socioeconomic, and cultural developments in American history since the Civil War.

We will explore supplementary books and assigned readings that allow an in-depth analysis of key figures and events. It is expected that the course will sharpen critical thinking, concise writing, and perceptive reading.

Our overall goal here is to investigate major events, people, movements, and ideas that shaped the American history. It is also my goal to introduce you to historical thinking skills. Regardless of your major, learning history and the skills of an historian can be valuable to you at UNCG and in your future career. History is not, to the surprise of many, simply the memorization of facts and dates. Rather, history teaches us all transferable skills that apply to every major and career path. Skills that we will learn this semester include: evaluating evidence, evaluating significance, analysis of documents, and synthesizing ideas.

Course Objectives

1. Students will study the development of the United States in a chronological and spatial setting from Reconstruction to the present by examining the leaders, forces, events, and cultural aspects that have helped shape this country.
2. Students will develop an understanding of the interrelationship of economic, political, social, psychological, and technological forces in the shaping of societies and culture.
3. Students will develop an understanding of the ability to practice such academic skills as research, library use, writing, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing historical information.
4. Students will develop an understanding for historical themes concerning the evolution of the United States, including forging a pluralistic society, expansion and empire (political and economic) and industrialization and urbanization.

Instructor's Objectives

1. Use contemporary film depictions of history to investigate popular views of history.
2. Foster collegiality through small group discussions of primary sources and historical thinking skills.
3. Introduce students to history and historical thinking skills including:
Evaluating evidence, determining significance, and synthesizing an argument

Teaching Methods

History 212 will be taught through a variety of methods. I will offer lecture presentations for content. Additionally, we will read primary documents, secondary materials, and watch documentaries to promote classroom discussion. Supplemental readings will play a key role in classroom discussion throughout the semester and developing the historical thinking skills outlines in our Student Learning Outcomes. We will reserve time noted on the schedule to discuss weekly readings. We will address wide-ranging big historical questions. As such, your participation will be essential to learning in this class in order to answer our big questions.

Required Readings:

Eric Rauchway, *The Great Depression and New Deal: A Very Short Introduction*, 9780195326345

Gil Troy, *The Reagan Revolution: A Very Short Introduction*, 9780195317107

Walter Nugent, *Progressivism: A Very Short Introduction*, 9780195311068

Stephen Aron, *The American West: A Very Short Introduction*, 9780199858934.

Assignments and Grading Breakdown:

Movie Analysis: 100 Points

Students will select and watch a movie from the list that I provide you. Students will then complete a 3-4-page paper on their thoughts of the film and respond to a prompt provided by the instructor. It is important to employ what you learn in the class and readings to determine if the movie is accurate or not.

Reading Reflections: 4 x 50 points each = 200 Points

Students will read, four books from OUP's AVSI series and write a two to three page reflection on each. In order to succeed on these reflections, you must briefly summarize the contents of the book in about a page and then reflect for one to two pages. The reflection is open ended in nature. Pick something in the book that stood out to you and explain why and how it stood out. You may also connect the book to what we learn in class. The objective of this assignment is to expose students to some contemporary historiography.

Primary Source Exercises: 4 x 50 points each = 200 points

Students will complete four "Voices of Freedom" exercises during the semester. Each assignment will be available on our Canvas webpage. Please check the modules section under the heading "Voices of Freedom," they are in PDF format. Students must answer each question at the end of the assignment in hand written or type written form to be turned in, in class, on the due date listed on the syllabus. Please note: You will only be answering the questions at the very end of each set of sources under the "QUESTIONS" section.

Mid-Term Examination: 100 Points

Students will complete an exam covering the first half of the course material. Questions will include short answer identifications, short essays, and primary source analysis. You will have multiple options to choose from on this exam. Answers will be judged on accuracy, employment of historical thinking skills, and abundance of historical information. If you have an extremely substantial and documented reason for missing the mid-term, contact me at the earliest possible time to schedule a make-up time. It is your responsibility to notify me as early as possible to schedule the make-up.

Final Examination: 100 Points

Students will complete an exam covering the final half of the course material. Questions will include short answer identifications short essays, and primary source analysis. Answers will be judged on accuracy, employment of historical thinking skills, and abundance of historical information. You will have multiple essay options on this exam. The final examination is not cumulative but will include important material from the mid-term as I see fit. There will be no make-up time for the final.

Attendance and General Participation: 100 points

I will pass around a daily attendance sheet that you must sign. I expect every student to attend every class session. Attendance and participation will count towards a portion of your grade. You can miss 3 class meetings before I begin deducting points from your final grade. Since the course is out of a total number of points, I will deduct 5 points from your final grade per absence beyond the third. **I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences.** Students are expected to attend every class, be attentive, and act in an adult manner. The correlation between class attendance and student grades is strongly related. If you absolutely have to miss a class for a serious reason, I suggest you get the class notes from a classmate. It is your responsibility to keep up with the class notes and readings. Please raise your hand if you have a question about anything I say. We will also watch short videos and documentaries in this course. I will ask you to write a short reflection on these – the points for that will come from this category. Do not be late to class. Two latenesses will equal an absence. I will calculate your percentage at the end of the semester and that will be your attendance grade. For example, if you attend 47 out of 50 class sessions your final attendance grade will be 94%. Your participation grade will come from discussion throughout the semester. I will keep notes concerning how much participation each student achieved.

Total: 800 Points

No weighted grades here. Divide your total earned points by 800 and you will arrive at your percentage. I adhere to UNCG's standard grading scale. Another note: Everyone starts this class with 800 points and receive deductions. That's how your assignments work too. Every assignment worth 25 points is what you begin with and you lose points for incorrect answers, for example. This is how I grade. It is up to you to prove to me (through evidence) that you should keep the full credit.

Late Work:

I will accept late work at a 10% per day, including weekends, grade reduction. For example: This class ends at 9:15am. If I don't have your assignment in my hand at that time the clock will start. This does not mean that you will earn a 9 out of 10 if you turn it in one day late, it means you will earn whatever grade you do and then I will take 10% off. If you hand me a subpar assignment and it earned 7 out of 10 points, the lateness will turn it into a 6 out of 10 and so on.

Code of proper classroom conduct

The classroom is a learning environment and requires appropriate behavior. A higher degree of maturity and consideration for others is expected of you now that you are in college. Students will NOT: 1.) talk to neighbors or whisper during class, 2.) arrive or depart as they please, 3.) eat in class, 4.) use cell phone telephones, I know when you are texting, TURN IT OFF, I can hear vibrations and so can everyone else - it's distracting and annoying. Students WILL: 1.) raise your hand if you have a question, 2.) attend to bathroom needs before or after class, 3.) eat before or after class - I'm okay with drinks. I take all of this very seriously and I expect you to take it seriously too.

I encourage, and love, questions and comments. Raise your hand during class, see me before or after class, or during my office hours.

At the first sign of trouble - come to me and I will help you. I may not know you are having problems if you don't come to me.

Academic Integrity

The best learning environment is one based on mutual respect and trust. There are no mitigating circumstances to justify academic dishonesty. If you are unclear about what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism, please ask - Ignorance is no excuse. Discovery of academic dishonesty will bring stiff penalties, including a failing grade for the assignment in question and possibly a grade of F for the course. The maximum penalty at ACC for plagiarism is possible expulsion from the entire state school system, so for your own sakes, DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. Don't think you can fool me. I have been reading and writing history for many years now. You will be caught if you plagiarize. This is not a challenge; this is a plea. Don't do it, it will ruin your career as a student at UNCG.

Additional Information

I want you to succeed in this class. Please come see me if you are having trouble, or if you want to talk history! Ask questions, read often, study often. Please see me or have the OARS office contact me if you require a disability accommodation as soon as possible.

The course schedule on the following page will change as circumstances dictate. Considering the breadth of material that we have to cover in a short period of time, do not be surprised if I have to revise the schedule. I will announce in class and by email if I need to make changes.

If you need to contact me outside of class, email me. I check it several times daily.

If class is cancelled for any reason - snow, hurricanes, or a sick instructor - you will be notified on your UNCG issued email address, so check it often.

Course Schedule [Assignments as assigned in bold]

Week 1 (1/15-1/17)

Course introduction, Syllabus, What is history?, Primary and secondary sources.
Reconstruction

Week 2 (1/22-1/24) [Voices of Freedom (Canvas): Petition to A. Johnson and Sharecropping Contract, due 1/24]

Reconstruction continued, Gilded Age

Week 3 (1/29-1/31) [Reading Reflection: *American West*, due 1/31]

Industrialization, Labor, Western Settlement

Week 4 (2/5-2/7)

Empire Building, Progressivism, Spanish American War

Week 5 (2/12-2/14) [Voices of Freedom (Canvas): Eugene Debs and WEB Du Bois, due 2/14]

Woodrow Wilson's Progressivism and WWI

Week 6 (2/19-2/21) [Reading Reflection: *Progressivism*, due 2/7]

Wilson and the Great War, Red scare

Week 7 (2/26-2/28)

Return to normalcy and the 1920s, Crash and Depression

Spring Break 3/5-3/7

Week 8 (3/12-3/14)

Review, MID TERM EXAM 3/14

Week 9 (3/19-3/21) [**Reading Reflection: *The Great Depression and New Deal*, due 3/21]**

Crash and Depression, the New Deal

Week 10 (3/26-3/28)

American foreign policy and the coming of WWII

Week 11 (4/2-4/4) [**Voices of Freedom (Canvas): Henry Luce and Charles Wesley, due 4/4]**

World War II, U.S. in WWII

Week 12 (4/9-4/11)

The Cold War, Korea

Week 13 (4/16-4/18) [**Voices of Freedom (Canvas): The Sharon Statement and The Port Huron Statement, due 4/18]**

Civil Rights and Women's Rights movements

Week 14 (4/23-4/25) [**Reading Reflection: *Reagan Revolution*, due 4/25]**

LBJ, Vietnam, Nixon

Week 15 (4/30) [**Movie Project due 4/30]**

Conservatism, the End of the Cold War, the 90s, and the twentieth century

Final Exam on Tues. May 7th from 8:00 am – 11:00 am outlined by the University's final exam schedule.