

HIS 212: United States History since 1865

Lecture: Tuesday and Thursdays, 6:00-7:15 p.m. in MHRA 1211

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Office hours: T/Th 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Course Description: Welcome aboard as we journey back through the history of the United States. We are going to start around 1865 and attempt to gather a glimpse into the lives of numerous people and many significant events and social movements along the way. Many of these interactions still have a significant hold on the way we live and see the world today. We will especially examine the lives of some whose voices may not be as prominent as others, as we often gain unexpected insights by looking at how “ordinary” people shape the events of history.

The course will generally flow in a chronological fashion, yet I will focus its content on five themes. My specialty is political history, and we will look at where people meet in debate over the role and purposes of government, the debates over federal vs. state power, and who is in or out when it comes to participation in the political sphere. We will also look at social and cultural history, as these areas will allow us to examine how issues of class, race, gender, and identity affect social relations, citizenship, marginalization of some, and conflicts between groups. In addition, we will delve into economic history with the rise of industry, a labor movement, and ideas about consumption that drive outcomes of wealth and poverty. We will also consider the roles of technology, looking at how innovations reshaped both US history and its interactions with the broader world. Finally, we will also selectively delve into environmental history to see how interactions with the land and waters have reshaped our environment and how the environment has impacted the lives of Americans.

I chose the readings, lectures, and assignments to help you think critically about history. We will use a combination of primary sources and secondary readings as a basis for understanding historical events. Primary sources are materials derived from the historical era in question. They allow historians to immerse themselves into that era to get a clearer sense of events and everyday life. Secondary sources like the assigned books and articles provide an understanding of how historians integrate both primary sources and the perspectives of other historians. In addition, I use my lectures to introduce the big themes, questions, and problems from a particular historical moment. Those ideas will then help you analyze the assigned readings. Each of you should leave this class with a better and deeper understanding of American history and why the past remains relevant today. Students of all fields should also find this class helpful in learning how to participate in scholarly discussion and analyze historical arguments.

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Learning Objectives and Competencies

This course is built to meet the learning objectives and competencies listed below. They are derived from the General Education Program and Minerva's Academic Curriculum and are common with other UNCG courses.

Student Learning Objectives (GHP, GMO, MDEQ, CW, WI)

Historical Perspectives (GHP)

1. Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives.
2. Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing

Diversity and Equity (MDEQ)

Courses in this competency focus on systems of advantage and oppression, structures of power, and institutions while making connections to US or global societies and examining intellectual traditions that address systems of injustice. These courses equip students with the intellectual skills and tools needed to connect both their positionalities and experiences as they reimagine their relationships with the world.

In a Diversity & Equity course, students will:

1. Describe how political, social, or cultural systems and structures, in the past or present, have advantaged and oppressed different groups of people.
2. Describe how political, social, or cultural systems, in the past or present, have produced and sustained ideas of difference and, in the face of that, how marginalized groups have meaningfully engaged in self-definition.
3. Examine individual and collective responses for addressing practices of disenfranchisement, segregation, or exclusion.

College Writing (CW)

Written Communication courses intensively focus on the teaching and learning of transferable writing strategies, including invention, arrangement, style, and revision.

In a Written Communication course, students will learn to:

1. Analyze written texts to understand how they relate to particular audiences, purposes, and contexts as a way to inform one's own writing.
2. Create and revise written texts for particular audiences, purposes, and contexts.
3. Through oral or written reflection, demonstrate awareness of one's writing choices as well as how one's own writing contributes to ongoing conversations.

Writing Intensive (WI)

This is a Writing Intensive course. It will fulfill that General Education requirement.

Students will be able to write in genres appropriate to the discipline(s) of the primary subject matter of the course.

Course Learning Objectives

1. Assess the political, social, economic, cultural, technological, and environmental ramifications of American people and historical events from Reconstruction through the modern era.
2. Contextualize and interpret primary source information—the building blocks of historical analysis—to determine how these sources shape interpretations of political events in American history.
3. Demonstrate the ability to communicate historical ideas effectively through writing and speaking.

Course Readings:

Foner, Eric, *Give Me Liberty! An American History. Seagull Sixth Edition, Volume 2: From 1865*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company. 2019. (ISBN 9780393418262)

You may buy or rent a hardcopy or e-book. Available in UNCG Bookstore, Amazon, and other locations.

I will also assign additional primary and secondary source materials. I will post those files to Canvas.

Assignments and Grading Scheme

Attendance/Participation: (10%): Attending class and engaging with the materials are necessary for you to succeed in my class. The Attendance Policy on page 11 provides details on excused and unexcused absences. Also, I expect you to ask questions and verbally respond to my questions about class materials, as I will track your participation in class.

Discussion Posts: (10%): Every week, you will respond to a discussion prompt on Canvas by posting a 150-word response to one of several questions concerning the readings for that week. I'll open a discussion window at the beginning of the week (Monday) for each discussion section, and it will close on Thursday at 1:00 (before class on Thursday). In your post, you should respond thoughtfully and specifically to the question by referring to the assigned readings. Thoughtful responses to your peers that go beyond simple agreement to deepen the analysis, clarify differences, or reference important examples may result in extra credit.

Writing Assignment 1 (10%): Each student will write a paper in the form of a personal letter (500-700 words) in response to a primary source prompt and guidelines provided in Canvas.

Writing Assignment 2 (15%): Each student will listen to a podcast and will write a 750-900 word essay relating that podcast episode to one or more of the course themes. I will supply the writing prompts and essay guidelines given in Canvas.

Writing Assignment 3 (20%): Each student will write an analytical essay of between 1200-1500 words (roughly 4-5 pages) that responds to an essay prompt in Canvas and incorporates both primary and secondary sources from this course. Students will prepare an outline with a proposed thesis and paper structure. I will provide feedback to be incorporated into a rough draft. Students will turn in that rough draft for feedback on the paper, revise, and resubmit their analytical essay at the end of the term.

Quizzes: (35%): In place of exams, the course will have 7 quizzes worth 50 points each. The first quiz will cover the syllabus content and will be multiple choice. The remaining quizzes will be timed and have the student write short paragraphs to answer identification questions. I will post quiz questions and info on Canvas.

I use a 1000-point grading system, so each percentage point of your grade is worth 10 points. Each quiz is worth 50 points (350 total), the writing assignments are worth 100, 150, and 200 points (450 points total), and overall attendance and discussion posts are worth 100 points each.

Grades follow this scale:

A+ = 97% and above;	A = 94-96%;	A- = 90-93%;
B+ = 87-89%;	B = 84-86%;	B- = 80-83%;
C+ = 77-79%;	C = 74-76%;	C- = 70-73%;
D+ = 67-69%;	D = 64-66%;	D- = 60-63%;
	F = <60%	

Course Schedule

[See Canvas for full assignments and guiding questions. I may substitute or supplement sources if I discover even better ones. I will inform you beforehand if I make changes.]

WEEK 1

Tuesday Jan 11: Lecture: Introduction and Why Do We Study History?

Read: Syllabus

Stearns – Why Study History? (1998) (Canvas)

Thursday Jan 13: Lecture: End of Civil War and Freedom

Read: Foner, *Give Me Liberty*, Ch. 15 pp 564-579

Primary Source: South Carolina Declaration of Secession, 1860
Early, A Memoir (Preface), 1866

WEEK 2

Tuesday Jan 18: Lecture: Reconstruction and “Redemption”

Read: Foner, pp. 579-601.

Thursday Jan 20: Lecture: Industrial Revolution: Labor and Management

Read: Foner, pp. 603-613, 639-647.

Primary Sources: Colored Convention Meeting in House Committee, 1869
The Smell of Powder (Chicago Tribune), 1886
Riis, *How the Other Half Lives* (excerpt), 1890

WEEK 3

Tuesday Jan 25: Lecture: Transformation of the West

Read: Foner, pp. 613-615, 621-629

Thursday Jan 27: Lecture: Populism and Segregation

Read: Foner, pp. 649-669

Primary Sources: Chief Joseph, Washington D.C. Speech, 1879 (Foner p. 622)
The Omaha Platform of the People’s Party, 1892
Du Bois, Of Mr. Booker T. Washington..., 1903 (Foner p. 675)
Washington, My View of Segregation Laws, 1915

WEEK 4

Tuesday Feb 1: Lecture: Immigration and Empire

Read: Foner, pp. 617-620, 669-672, 677-688, 696-699

Thursday Feb 3: Lecture: Electricity and Chemistry Change Society

Read: Pursell, *Machines in America*: Ch. 9, pp. 203-204, 220-228 (Canvas)

Primary Sources: Nast: Uncle Sam's Thanksgiving Dinner, 1869

Keller: Uncle Sam's Thanksgiving Dinner, 1879

First Electric Plant in America? 1882

WEEK 5

Tuesday Feb 8: Lecture: The Rise of Progressivism

Read: Foner, pp. 691-696, 699-705

Thursday Feb 10: Lecture: World War I and Citizenship

Read: Foner, pp. 734-737, 742-746, 755-761

Primary Sources: Report of NY State Factory Inv. Comm. (Triangle Fire), 1916 (pp. 81-83)

Debs, Speech to the Jury... (Foner, p. 757)

WEEK 6

Tuesday Feb 15: Lecture: The Great Influenza Epidemic of 1918

Read: Barry *The Great Influenza*, Prologue, pp. 1-7; Ch 17, pp. 198-205

Topinka et al, "The Great Influenza: The Epic Story..." (Canvas)

McNeill, "Weapon of Mass Destruction," NY Review of Books (Canvas)

Thursday Feb 17: Lecture: Lecture: Women, Reform, and Politics (1870-1900)

Read: Keyssar, *The Right to Vote* Ch. 6 pp. 196-221 (Canvas)

Foner, pp. 712-714

Primary Sources: Gilman, *Women and Economics*, 1898 (Foner, p. 710)

Blackwell: *Answering Objections to Women's Suffrage*, 1917

Van Wert Describes the Flu Epidemic, 1918

WEEK 7

Tuesday Feb 22: Great Migration, Race, and Protest

Read: Foner, pp. 755, 760-767, 775-776, 802-809

Thursday Feb 24: Lecture: Celebration and Backlash: the 1920s

Read: Foner, pp. 779-787, 789-802

Primary Sources: Du Bois, "Returning Soldiers," 1919
Page, "A Flapper's Appeal to Parents," 1922
Evans, "Klan Fight for Americanism," 1926
Holiday, "Strange Fruit," video, 1939

WEEK 8

Tuesday Mar 1: Lecture: The Dust Bowl and the Great Depression

Read: Foner, pp. 810-830

Thursday Mar 3: Lecture: The New Deal and Shifting Politics

Read: Foner, pp. 830-851, 857-859

Primary Sources: Roosevelt, Fireside Chat, 1938
Video: The Plow that Broke the Plains, 1936
Guthrie, "Talking Dust Bowl Blues," 1940.

Friday Mar 4: Last day to withdraw from a course without incurring a WF grade (withdraw failing)

WEEK 9

Tuesday Mar 8: Spring Break – **NO CLASS**

Thursday Mar 10: Spring Break – **NO CLASS**

WEEK 10

Tuesday Mar 15: Lecture: World War II

Read: Foner, pp. 861-903.

Thursday Mar 17: Lecture: Socialism and Communism: Red Scare to the Cold War

Read: Foner, pp. 852-857, 927-934

Foner, "Why is There Not Socialism in the United States?" pp. 57- (Canvas)

Primary Sources: Debs, How I Became a Socialist, 1902
Palmer, "The Case Against the 'Reds'," 1920
"World War II and Mexican Americans," 1945 (Foner p. 888)

“The Negro Has Always Wanted the 4 Freedoms,” 1944 (Foner p. 889)
Chaplin, “Solidarity Forever,” 1977 (original 1915)

WEEK 11

Tuesday Mar 22: Lecture: Technology and Change, mid-20th Century

Read: Machines in America: Ch. 10, pp. 229-230, 236-250 (Canvas)
Foner, pp. 946-949.

Thursday Mar 24: Lecture: The Cold War, 1945-1960s

Read: Foner, pp. 905-927

Primary Sources: Eisenhower, Message to Congress, interstates, 1955
McCarthy: Speech at Wheeling, 1950 (Foner, p. 936)
Smith, Speech in the Senate, 1950 (Foner, p. 937)
Douglas, “The Black Silence of Fear,” 1952
Brenston, “Rocket 88,” 1951

WEEK 12

Tuesday Mar 29: Lecture: The Civil Rights and Social Movements of the 1960s/1970s

Read: Foner, pp. 968-979, 985-989, 991-996, 1014-1019

Thursday Mar 31: Lecture: Rise of Conservatism

Read: Foner, pp. 994-995, 1027-1028, 1030-1043

Primary Sources: Hamer Speech at Democratic National Convention, 1964
Goldwater Speech, 1964 (Foner, p. 1010)
NOW Equal Rights Amendment Brochure, 1976
Gaye, “What’s Going On,” 1971

WEEK 13

Tuesday Apr 5: Lecture: Industry, the Environment, and Short-Term Presidents

Read: Foner, pp. 1020-21, 1043-1052

Thursday Apr 7: Lecture: Conservatism and the End of the Cold War

Read: Foner, pp. 1052-1069, 1071-1074

Primary Sources: Thornburgh, Three Mile Island Remembrance, 1999
Reagan, “Tear Down This Wall” Speech, 1987
Joel, “We Didn’t Start the Fire,” 1989

WEEK 14

Tuesday Apr 12: Lecture: Globalization and Culture Wars

Read: Foner, pp. 1074-1082, 1086-1105

Thursday Apr 14: Lecture: Technology and Change: Late 20th Century

Read: Foner, pp. 1082-1083

Machines in America, Ch 14, pp. 319-336

Primary Sources: Buchanan on the Culture War, 1992

Clinton, Speech on Signing of NAFTA, 1993 (Foner, p. 1088)

WEEK 15

Tuesday Apr 19: Lecture: September 11th, War on Terror, and Economic Instability

Read: Foner, pp. 1105-1107, 1109-1136

Thursday Apr 21: Lecture: 21st Century Social Change and Backlash

Read: Foner, pp. 1136-54

Primary Sources: *Obergefell v Hodges* Supreme Court Decision, 2015 (Foner, p. 1130)

Obama, Eulogy at Emanuel AME Church, 2015 (Foner, p. 1131)

WEEK 16

Tuesday Apr 26: Last Day of class – Summary and Review

Tuesday May 3: Last Paper Due

COVID Class Policies (Required Syllabus Statement)

As we return for spring 2022, the campus community must recognize and address continuing concerns about physical and emotional safety, especially as we will have many more students, faculty, and staff on campus than in the last academic year. As such, all students, faculty, and staff are required to uphold UNCG's culture of care by actively engaging in behaviors that limit the spread of COVID-19. Such actions include, but are not limited to, the following:

- [Following face-covering guidelines](#)
- Engaging in proper hand-washing hygiene when possible
- Self-monitoring for symptoms of COVID-19
- Staying home if you are ill
- Complying with directions from health care providers or public health officials to quarantine or isolate if ill or exposed to someone who is ill.

Instructors will have seating charts for their classes. These are important for facilitating contact tracing should there be a confirmed case of COVID-19. Students must sit in their assigned seats at every class and must not move furniture. Students should not eat or drink during class time.

A limited number of disposable masks will be available in classrooms for students who have forgotten theirs. Face coverings will also be available for purchase in the UNCG Campus Bookstore. Students who do not follow masking requirements will be asked to put on a face covering or leave the classroom to retrieve one and only return when they follow the basic requirements to uphold standards of safety and care for the UNCG community. Once students have a face covering, they are permitted to re-enter a class already in progress. Repeated issues may result in conduct action. The course policies regarding attendance and academics remain in effect for partial or full absence from class due to lack of adherence with face covering and other requirements.

For instances where the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) has granted accommodations regarding wearing face coverings, students should contact their instructors to develop appropriate alternatives to class participation and/or activities as needed. Instructors or the student may also contact OARS (336.334.5440) who, in consultation with Student Health Services, will review requests for accommodations.

Class Policies

Academic Integrity: Cheating, plagiarism, and other acts of academic dishonesty are serious offenses that compromise your ability to learn. While this class may have some opportunities involving group work, most assignments are individual, and you are expected to complete your own work. You should also cite your sources to give credit to the originators of source material. You will turn in your assignments through Canvas, so that the Turnitin app can review your papers and exams to ensure it has no plagiarized content. **If you do not understand or have confusion about what plagiarism is, please see me. I'll gladly spend the time to explain what situations constitute plagiarism and how to avoid them (good citations are essential).**

Also, let me suggest that you watch "Plagiarism 2.0: Information Ethics in the Digital Age" (link below):

<https://login.libproxy.uncg.edu/login?url=https://fod.infobase.com/PortalPlaylists.aspx?wID=102633&xtid=43790>

(Beware specifically "Patch Writing" a form of plagiarism that plagues undergraduates, starting at 4:30).

Enrollment in this course and submission of each written assignment constitute your acceptance of UNCG's Academic Integrity Policy. You can find the full Academic Integrity Policy here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B0rFGGhJvbDHUExSZmFFaWFmb00/view>

Attendance Policy: You are expected to attend every class. Your success in this course depends in part on your ability to regularly attend class. Please inform me of an absence in advance when possible. I will excuse three (3) absences during the semester with no questions asked. **If you encounter extenuating circumstances that result in more than three total absences, you should contact me in writing—I will excuse additional absences for good cause.** Otherwise, every absence above three for the semester will result in a reduction of your course grade.

Classroom Conduct: I expect students to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from time spent in class, please avoid distracting your fellow students and me. I will ask students to leave class if their behavior is disruptive. Please review the Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom Policy for additional information.

Communications: Make sure you read your email regularly. I will primarily use Canvas tools to provide you with information. For example, I will make periodic announcements regarding important course information using the "Announcements" function. I will provide feedback on your assignments using comments. I may also send you an email message via Canvas or your UNCG email address. It is your responsibility to monitor and read all of these communications in a timely manner.

I will gladly respond to your Canvas or campus emails. Please allow me a full day to respond (or two on weekends and holidays). I will try to reply sooner.

I also encourage you to contact me for an office hours. My regular office hours are on Tuesdays, and Thursdays before class from 4:30-6 p.m.

Late Work: All papers and discussion posts are due on the date and time listed on the syllabus. If you need more time for your quizzes or papers, please contact me, as I may be able to offer a due date extension if I understand your situation. For unexcused late assignments, I will deduct 3% of the value of an assignment for each day that assignment is late up to a 20% total deduction. I will accept late assignments, and I encourage you to turn in all assignments regardless of whether they are on time or late.

Syllabus Modifications: I reserve the right to modify or alter any part of the syllabus as the course progresses. It is your responsibility to keep up with class announcements about any alterations. Any modifications will appear on the Canvas syllabus page. **Always check Canvas first for any changes and for deeper questions and guidelines.**

Technology: I welcome the use of technology in the classroom to the degree that it facilitates your learning and does not impede or distract the class. I expect that many of you will use laptops or tablets for notetaking and document reading purposes and I welcome this use of technology. Please refrain from playing unrelated videos or engaging with your social media accounts while in the classroom. If you need to urgently communicate with someone, please step out of class until you complete your communications. If I find that your device usage distracts me or your classmates, I'll ask you to stop what you are doing. Focusing on my lecture and our discussions will greatly improve your ability to understand the class content and to succeed in your class assignments.

Resources for You

History Department: Have you considered majoring or minoring in history? It's easier than you think! Browse our website and Facebook page for more information. Feel free to reach out to any professor to discuss how history might fit into your study plans. (<https://his.uncg.edu>)

Jackson Library: The library (<https://library.uncg.edu/>) is available to help you with research needs. In particular, you might find the History Resources (<https://uncg.libguides.com/his>) page helpful with brief descriptions of primary sources, secondary sources, and a reference guide for Chicago-Turabian style of source documentation.

Office Hours: My office hours are an opportunity for you to visit with me outside of class to discuss concerns or questions you have about the class. I am available during these times if you want to drop by my office. I can also meet with you outside of office hours; but I ask that you make an appointment.

UNCG Writing Center: Offers students assistance with writing assignments. Please contact them to set an appointment. (<https://writingcenter.uncg.edu/>)

UNCG Speaking Center: Offers students assistance in improving your public speaking skills. (<https://speakingcenter.uncg.edu/>)

Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS): If you have any needs or questions related to disability issues, please contact the folks at OARS. I prioritize making this course accessible to all of the students in it, and I will work with OARS to accommodate students' requests. You do not need to disclose details about your disability to me to receive accommodations. (<https://ods.uncg.edu/>)

Student Health Services: Offers students assistance with can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting their website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/>

Health and Wellness: Issues regarding your health and well-being may impact your ability to learn, and during your time in the university, you may experience one or more situations that can impede your academic success. These might include illnesses, strained relationships, anxiety, high levels of stress, alcohol or drug problems, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Student Health Services and The Counseling Center can help with these or other issues you may experience. You can learn about the free, confidential mental health services available on campus by calling 336-334-5874, visiting their website at <https://shs.uncg.edu/> or visiting them at the Anna M. Gove Student Health Center at 107 Gray Drive. For undergraduate or graduate students in recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction, The Spartan Recovery Program (SRP) offers recovery support services. You can learn more about recovery and recovery support services by visiting <https://shs.uncg.edu/srp> or reaching out to recovery@uncg.edu.