

His 152: American History Since 1877

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Course Description:

This course is a survey of American history covering the period from the end of the Civil War to the modern era. Although various topics will be examined, the focus will be on the evolution of a modern capitalist economy, the rise of the United States to the status of a world power, the evolving role of the state in domestic life, and the growth of social and political reform movements. Through in-class lectures, secondary readings, and the use of primary source materials, students will examine not just the way the nation evolved, but why it followed the specific path that it did.

Required Reading:

Nation of Nations, volume II, Davidson, Stoff, et.al (4th edition, concise, New York: McGraw Hill, 2006, ISBN 0073201928)

American Vistas, 1877 to the Present, 7th edition, Dinnerstein and Jackson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

Out of this Furnace, Thomas Bell (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992).

Manchild in the Promised Land, Claude Brown (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1965).

Grading:

All students are required to take two exams, each worth 30% of their final grade. A short paper due the last day of class will constitute another 30%. The remaining 10% will be based on class attendance.

To earn an "A" for the class, students must attain a final average of 89.5%; to make a "B," the average must be 79.5%; to make a "C" the average must be 69.5%; to make a "D" the average must be 59.5%. Anything below 59.5% will be considered failing.

Exams:

Examinations will consist of short identification questions and essays, and will not be cumulative. All exams must be written in an examination book, which can be purchased at the bookstore and which students are required to bring to class on the days of the test. Exams written on anything

besides an examination book will not be accepted. Exams must be written in blue ink or black ink only.

Makeup Exams:

Students missing an exam MUST receive permission from the instructor before the exam is given. Permission to take a make-up exam will be given only in serious circumstances, and usually requires documentation of the conflict.

Scholastic Dishonesty:

Any form of cheating, including plagiarism on papers, copying on exams, or anything else that involves using someone else's work as your own, will not be tolerated. Should I catch you cheating, I will not only fail you in my class, but will bring the matter to the attention of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to discuss additional disciplinary actions.

Papers:

Students must submit one paper of approximately 4-6 pages in length. This paper should examine one of the readings from *American Vistas*, and should provide both a summary of the chapter, and some analysis of the author's argument. Papers must be typed in accordance with conventional standards, and must be thoroughly checked for spelling, grammar, and punctuation. The due date for papers is December 1. Papers must be turned in to me, not left in my mailbox or on the lectern, and late papers will be accepted only under the most extraordinary conditions. Students are encouraged to turn in early versions of their papers to the professor for comments, or at least to bring their paper to the writing center for help with style and grammar.

Course Schedule and Reading Assignments:

Sept 20: Course Introduction

Sept 22: Roots of the Gilded Age (Davidson, chapter 19)

Sept 25: Rise of Big Business (Davidson, chapter 20)

Sept 27: No class (Bell, Part I)

Sept 29: The Failure of Organized Labor (Bell, Part II)

Oct 2: Revolt of the Farmers (Bell, Part III and IV)

Oct 4: The American Empire (Davidson, chapter 21)

Oct 6: The Roots of Progressivism (Davidson, chapter 22)

Oct 9: The Peak of Progressivism (Jackson, chapters 2, 3, and 4)

Oct 11: World War I (Davidson, chapter 23)

Oct 13: The New Era (Davidson, chapter 24)

Oct 16: The Politics of Provincialism (Jackson, chapters 5, 6, 7)

Oct: 18: The Depression and Herbert Hoover (Jackson, chapters 9, 11, 12)

Oct 20: The New Deal (Davidson, chapter 25)

Oct 23: Long-windedness catch-up day

Oct 25: **MIDTERM EXAM**

Oct 27: World War II (Davidson, chapter 26)

Oct 30: The Atomic Age (Jackson, chapters 14, 15)

Nov 1: The Origins of the Cold War (Jackson, chapters 16, 17)

Nov 3: The Origins of the Cold War II

Nov 6: Cold War and Korea (Davidson, chapter 27)

Nov 8: The Red Scare (Davidson, chapter 28)

Nov 10: The Cuban Missile Crisis (Jackson, chapter 18, 19, 20)

Nov 13: No Class (Veteran's Day)

Nov 15: The Struggle for Civil Rights I (Brown, chapters 1-4)

Nov 17: The Struggle for Civil Rights II (Brown, chapters 5-8)

Nov 20: The Great Society (Brown, 9-12)

Nov 22: The Great Society II (Finish Brown)

Nov 24: No Class (Thanksgiving)

Nov 27: Vietnam I (Davidson, chapter 29)

Nov 29: Vietnam II (Davidson, chapter 30)

Dec 1: **Review (paper due)**