

AMERICAN HISTORY (post-1865)

History 2112 – Spring 2011 – MWF 3:35-4:25 – LeConte 323

Keri Leigh Merritt
klm13@uga.edu

LeConte Hall 334
Office Hours: M/W 1-2 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to teach you that history is not just a compilation of people, events, and dates; instead, history is fundamentally connected to everything you do, everything you experience, and everything you believe. The history of America – whether broken down by politics, economics, religion, class, race, or gender – shapes a large part of that past, and this course is designed to help you realize just how powerful that history is.

Thus stated, we will use this survey to examine how certain groups of people came to be considered (and to consider themselves as) American. The term “American” has always been associated with “freedom,” but the history of our country rests upon centuries of injustice and oppression. How do we reconcile those competing ideas, and how do we accurately assess the past through our present-day viewpoints?

Most importantly, however, this course should make you into a better citizen of the United States: by truly understanding the struggles of our country’s past, you will hopefully want to take a more active role in the formation of our future.

COURSE GOALS

I have four main goals in teaching this class.

First, I want you to learn the major themes of U.S. History. I will not expect you to memorize lots of useless dates, places, and names, but I will expect you to understand the major themes and events that shaped American history.

Second, I want you to improve your writing skills. I think that on the most practical level, teaching you how to write well – both in constructing an argument/thesis and in basic style and grammar – is the most applicable “real world” skill I can teach you. I know that the majority of you are not History majors, but I can promise you that whatever career path you choose, it will be imperative that you know how to effectively and efficiently communicate through the written word.

Third, I want you to begin building critical thinking and analytical skills. I will ask you to pose analytical questions about subject matter and write short response papers to readings, and you will have one major in-class presentation. These assignments are all specifically designed to help you interpret and judge historical events.

Fourth, I hope to instill in you a sense of connection to the past. This connection to the past would ideally urge you to become more interested in current events, and it may even help you realize just how applicable and relevant history is in our day-to-day lives.

CLASSROOM DECORUM

Computers ARE ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED from the classroom. Cell phones ARE ABSOLUTELY PROHIBITED from class. Do NOT turn your cell phone on vibrate – turn it OFF. If your phone rings or vibrates, or I catch you text messaging, you will immediately be asked to leave the classroom – and it *will* affect your participation grade. **All students will be expected to behave in a manner consistent with what I consider an appropriate and non-threatening learning environment. I reserve the right to withdraw (with a W or a WF, depending on the student's grade at the time) a student from the course if they behave in a fashion that (in my professional opinion) impairs or disrupts the learning environment of others in the class. It's all quite simple: just demonstrate respect for your fellow students.**

WITHDRAWING

Students withdrawing from the class up until first exam will receive a W. Students withdrawing after the first exam will receive a W or WF depending on their grade at the point of withdrawal. The instructor reserves the right to withdraw students who habitually miss lectures or discussions, fail to turn in assignments or take exams, or who habitually act in an inappropriate or disrespectful manner.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

All students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with university policy as written in *A Culture of Honesty: Policies and Procedures* available at: <http://www.uga.edu/ovpi/honesty/acadhon.htm>. It is imperative that you familiarize yourself with this policy if you have not already done so. **Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated.** Any work that does not comply with the university academic honesty code will receive a zero (0) grade. The student in question will at a minimum be referred to the Honor Council. The consequences for what I consider significant plagiarism on a paper or cheating on an exam will be suspension or expulsion.

GRADES

First Exam: 15%

Second Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 25%

Papers/Questions: 15%

Oral History Project: 5%

Participation: 20%

Grades are based on a 100 point scale: A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 88-89; B 83-87; B- 80-82; C+ 78-79; C 73-77; C- 70-72; D+ 68-69; D 63-67; D- 60-62; F below 60.

PARTICIPATION (20%)

You are adults. You can choose whether or not to come to class. However, 20 percent of your grade is based on in-class participation. If you are often absent, the absolute highest grade you can make in this class is an 80 (and that's assuming you make a 100 on everything else!). Student athletes or others who will be traveling on school-related

business need to furnish written official written documentation by the second week of the semester. Please also let me know during the first two weeks of class if you have any other extenuating circumstances that may affect your participation or attendance (examples: if you are in the military, are a parent, or work more than a part time job).

RESPONSE PAPERS/ANALYTICAL QUESTIONS (20%)

For ten weeks out of the semester, you will be required to turn in an assignment at the beginning of class on Fridays. You may pick any **two weeks** you choose to turn in **two-page response papers** (6% each =12%). For the other **eight weeks**, you will need to turn in **two analytical questions**. These papers and questions may refer to lecture and discussion but need to be based on assigned readings, movies, or websites (8%).

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT (5%)

The week after Spring Break, the entire class will be required to give short presentations based on oral interviews. You may interview anyone you choose, as long as that person is at least seventy-five years old. A transcript or outline and notes of the interview will be due at the time of your presentation. I will give you more guidelines in class.

EXAMS

There will be two mid-term exams and a final exam. You will be asked to supply three LARGE bluebooks, which are available for minimal cost at the UGA bookstore. Please bring me all three bluebooks during the first week of class (no later than 1/14).

MIDTERM EXAMS (15% and 20%)

The midterm exams will consist of two parts. The first part will ask you to identify several important terms. These terms may include any significant person (or group of people), event, or concept. These “IDs” will be discussed in lectures, and they will also appear in your textbook and other assigned readings. The second part of the exam will consist of an essay question that will require you to think broadly and analytically.

FINAL EXAM (25%)

The final exam will follow the format of the midterm exams. The identification section will include only material covered since the second mid-term. The essay question, however, will be comprehensive and require you to develop an answer that will synthesize material from the entire course. Since you are given three hours to take the exam, I will expect the final exam’s essay to be considerably longer than the midterm essays. We will talk more about the structure of the exams during the course of the semester, and I will do my best to teach you “how” to study.

MAKE-UP EXAMS

There will be NO make-up exams. The ONLY two exceptions to this rule will be:

- (1) the death of an immediate family member, or
- (2) a note from a doctor stating that you absolutely, positively could not have taken the exam on that date. A note simply proving you were at the doctor’s office on the day of the exam WILL NOT suffice.

N.B. The make-up exams may be longer and more difficult than the original in-class exam.

LECTURE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

TEXTBOOK: Tindall and Shi, *America: A Narrative History*, Seventh Edition, Vol. 2 (cited below: ANH)

WEEK ONE

MON. 1/10 – Introduction

WEDS. 1/12 – Reconstruction, Part 1

FRI. 1/14 – Reconstruction, Part 2

READINGS: ANH Chap. 18

Booker T. Washington, *Speech Before the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition*

<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=69>

W.E.B DuBois: *Of Booker T. Washington and Others*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=1111>

W.E.B. DuBois, *The Talented Tenth*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=174>

*Nothing due this week – just bring your three blue books to me by Friday.

WEEK TWO

MON. 1/17 – MLK HOLIDAY

WEDS. 1/19 – The New South

FRI. 1/21 – The West and Indian Policy

READINGS: ANH Chap. 19

Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=1428>

Plessy v. Ferguson (Excerpts)

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=699>

*Nothing is due – but think about your participation grade!

WEEK THREE

MON. 1/24 – Business and Labor; The Urbanization of America

WEDS. 1/26 – The Rise of Populism

FRI. 1/28 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chaps. 20, 21, 22 (I will give you specific page numbers in class)

Populist Party Platform of 1892

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=963>

William Jennings Bryan, *Cross of Gold*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=163>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.1/28.

WEEK FOUR

MON. 1/31 – Imperialism and the Spanish-American War

WEDS. 2/2 – From Populism to Progressivism

FRI. 2/4 – Discussion; study tips for Exam #1

READINGS: ANH Chaps. 23 & 24

Andrew Carnegie, *Wealth*

<http://www.swarthmore.edu/SocSci/rbannis1/AIH19th/Carnegie.html>

VIEW: *Without Sanctuary: Photographs and Postcards of Lynching in America*

<http://withoutsanctuary.org/main.html>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.2/4.

WEEK FIVE

MON. 2/7 – EXAM # 1

WEDS. 2/9 – The Great War

FRI. 2/11 – The Aftermath of War (or, how WWI led to WWII)

READINGS: ANH Chap. 7

Christian Science Monitor, “Germany finishes paying WWI reparations...”

<http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Europe/2010/1004/Germany-finishes-paying-WWI-reparations-ending-century-of-guilt>

Woodrow Wilson, *Fourteen Points Speech*

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1918wilson.html>

VIEW: World War I Propaganda Posters (click through about 40-50 images)

<http://firstworldwar.com/posters/usa.htm>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.2/11.

WEEK SIX

MON. 2/14 – The Roaring Twenties and the Republican Resurgence

WEDS. 2/16 – The Great Depression

FRI. 2/18 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chaps. 26 & 27

VIEW: Ken Burns, *Jazz* (in class)

VIEW: A Photo Essay on the Great Depression

<http://www.english.illinois.edu/MAPS/depression/photoessay.htm>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.2/18.

WEEK SEVEN

MON. 2/21 – The New Deal

WEDS. 2/23 – Legacies of the New Deal

FRI. 2/25 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chaps. 28 & 29

VIEW: The New Deal – click entirely through one of the “features” sections – you can pick.

<http://newdeal.feri.org/>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.2/25.

WEEK EIGHT

MON. 2/28 – World War II, Part 1

WEDS. 3/2 – World War II, Part 2

FRI. 3/4 – Discussion/Special Guest Speaker

READINGS: ANH Chap. 30

VIEW: Japanese Internment Online Resource (click through entire site)

<http://www.asianamericanmedia.org/jainternment/siteoverview.html>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.3/4.

WEEK NINE

MON. 3/7 – The Beginnings of the Cold War; The Fair Deal

WEDS. 3/9 – The Birth of the Modern Civil Rights Movement

FRI. 3/11 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chap. 31

A. Philip Randolph, *The March on Washington Movement* (excerpts)

<http://www.bsos.umd.edu/aasp/chateauvert/mowmcall.htm>

Selections (TBD) from John Hersey, *Hiroshima* (to be read online at Google Books)

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.3/11.

MON. 3/14 – FRI. 3/18 – SPRING BREAK

*Work on your interviews this week.

WEEK TEN

MON. 3/21 – In-class presentations

WEDS. 3/23 – In-class presentations

FRI. 3/25 – Review for Exam #2

READINGS: ANH Chap. 32

*This week you will be presenting the results of your oral interviews to the class (3-5 minutes each). You will also need to turn in your notes or transcribed interview. No questions/response papers are due this week.

WEEK ELEVEN

MON. 3/28 – **EXAM # 2**

WEDS. 3/30 – Eisenhower and the Fifties

FRI. 4/1 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chap. 33

VIEW: Civil Rights Website – great study guide

<http://us.history.wisc.edu/hist102/lectures/lecture26.html>

Brown v. Board of Education (1954)

<http://www.nationalcenter.org/brown.html>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.4/1.

WEEK TWELVE

MON. 4/4 – The New Frontier and JFK

WEDS. 4/6 – Civil Rights, Part 1

FRI. 4/8 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chap. 34, pp. 1227-1244.

Martin Luther King, Jr., *Letter from Birmingham City Jail*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=943>

VIEW: *The Witness: From the Balcony of Room 306* (in class)

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.4/8.

WEEK THIRTEEN

MON. 4/11 – The Great Society and LBJ

WEDS. 4/13 – Civil Rights, Part 2

FRI. 4/15 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chap. 34, pp. 1244-1264.

Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique*, Chapter 1

<http://www.h-net.org/~hst203/documents/friedan1.html>

Lyndon B. Johnson, *Great Society Speech*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=92>

*Two analytical questions or response paper due at the beginning of class on Fri.4/15.

WEEK FOURTEEN

MON. 4/18 – Vietnam; Sixties and Seventies Pop Culture

WEDS. 4/20 – Nixon's Rise and Fall

FRI. 4/22 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chap. 35; Jimmy Carter, *Crisis of Confidence Speech*

<http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=966>

*Nothing is due this week – begin studying for your final!

WEEK FIFTEEN

MON. 4/25 – Reagan, Bush, Clinton, and Beyond...

WEDS. 4/27 – Wrap Up

FRI. 4/29 – Discussion

READINGS: ANH Chaps. 36 & 37

Republican Contract With America

<http://www.house.gov/house/Contract/CONTRACT.html>

*Nothing is due this week – study for your final!

WEEK SIXTEEN

MON. 5/2 – Wrap up; study tips for final (last day of class)

FRI. 5/6 - FINAL EXAM, 3:30-6:30 pm

*****I reserve the right to change the lecture and reading schedule, including exam and due dates, at any time during the semester.**