

Registrar's
Office

History 2510 (AU HIST 379): American History since 1865
Senior Course (3 credits)
Grande Prairie Regional College
Winter, 1994
Instructor: Duff Crerar, Ph.D.

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Room: E311
Introduction:

This course traces the development of contemporary America from the period of Reconstruction after the Civil War to the present. Through lectures and class debates from prepared readings, students will examine and evaluate the American historical experience of western settlement, economic expansion and social crisis, racial conflict, imperial expansion, war, social protest and world power status. During the course, students will write two term tests and one essay, as well as the final examination.

Texts: (Available at G.P.R.C. Bookstore)

P. Boyer, et.al. The Enduring Vision, 2nd Ed. Volume 2. D.C. Heath, 1993.

Marcus, Robert and Burner, David. America Firsthand. Volume 2: From Reconstruction to the Present. St. Martin's, 1992.

Davis, Ken. Don't Know Much About History.

Outline:

Week One: Reconstruction

Wednesday - Reconstruction: Plan and Reality
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 15

Friday- Racism
READ: America Firsthand, Chapters 1-3. 16

Week Two: The West

January 10 - The War Against the Indians
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 16
Firsthand, Chapters 4,7.

January 12 - Bonanza
READ: Firsthand, Chapters 5-6.

January 14 - Farm Protest
Firsthand, 11-12

Week Three: Wealth and Power

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January 17 - Industrialization

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 17
Firsthand, 8, 10, 13

January 19 - Labour Response

January 21 - Rags and Riches

Week Four: Sweet Land of Liberty

January 24 - Coming to America

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 18

January 26 - The Cities

READ: Firsthand, 14-15

January 28 - Manners and Morals

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 19

Week Five: Reform and Empire

January 31 - Politics in the Gilded Age

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 20

February 2 - Crosses of Gold - or Silver

February 4 - Splendid Little Wars

Week Six: Progressivism and the Presidencies

February 7 - Progressivism

READ: Firsthand, 17-20

February 9 - A New Presidency

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 21

February 11 - Another New Presidency

Week Seven: Crusade

February 14 - Over There

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter

February 16 - Test 1

February 18 - The War and Progressivism

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 22
Firsthand, 21-23

NBB: Reading Week, February 21-25

Week Eight: Coming Home to Stay

March Feb. 28 - Prosperity and Paranoia
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 23
Firsthand, 24-26.

March 2 - Prosperity and Prohibition

March 4 - Disaster and Despair
READ: Firsthand, 27-28

Week Nine: Crucial Decades

March 7 - A New Deal
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 24

March 9 - Hopes and Fears
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 25

March 11 - Roosevelt's War
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 26
Firsthand, 29-30

Week Ten: Cold War

March 14 - Truman's Wars
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 27

March 16 - Fears and Fantasies

March 18 - I Like Ike
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 28

Week Eleven: Rich Man, Poor Man

March 21 - White Sport Coat - Blue Suede Shoes
READ: Firsthand, 31-33

March 23 - The Right Stuff
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 29

March 25 - The Great Society
READ: Firsthand, 32, 34-35

Week Twelve: Retreat from Empire

March 28 - Good Morning, Vietnam
READ: Firsthand, 36

March 30 - Crisis in the Presidency
READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 30

April 1 - Good Friday

Week Thirteen: The Power and the Glory

April 4 - Right Turn, America!

READ: Enduring Vision, Chapter 31

April 6 - Sparring With the Evil Empire

April 8 - New Social Forces

READ: Firsthand, 37-41

Week Fourteen: Redeemer Nation

April 11 - Imperial Reprise

April 13 - Retrospect and Assessment

READ: Enduring Vision, Epilogue

Final Exam: To Be Instructor Marked

Marking Scheme:

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|------------------------------|----|
| First test | 20 |
| Second test | 20 |
| Essay | 20 |
| Attendance and Participation | 10 |
| Final Examination | 30 |

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Course Format and Philosophy: The course consists of two lectures and one directed discussion each week. The lectures will identify and discuss the most significant events and issues of the week and also serve as guides to the text readings. Ideally, student will have read the assigned chapters of both texts before each class. Tests will be short answer in nature, while the examination will include both short answer and essay-type questions. An attendance and participation mark will be given, which measures class appearance and contribution to discussions. ALL essay topics must be approved by me before final submission. Late assignments will be penalized 50% each day they are overdue, UNLESS special permission is secured from me in advance. Any students having difficulty with their assignments or with the course in general are encouraged to see me as soon as possible -- after class, by contacting me in the office or calling me at home (between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. please!) at 539-7764. I am always willing to help in any way I can.

Course Description: This course traces the development of contemporary America from the failure of Reconstruction after the Civil War to the present day. Students will examine the events, personalities, social and political trends, ideas and controversies in social and cultural values which have characterized American social and political history in this period. Topics and issues which we will study include the exploitation of the American West, the growth of agriculture and industry and reform movements based on the discontents stemming from these developments by 1900. In addition, American foreign policy, beginning with its first imperial enterprises through the controversies of the 1980s will be studied in the context of America's ambivalence about foreign commitments throughout its recent history. Social reform, democratic protest and the mass movements of American society since the Depression and World War II lead the student into the turbulent decade of the 1960's and the crisis in American political leadership which some argue continues to this day.

Course Objectives: Through lectures and class discussions, media presentations and essay research, students will examine and evaluate the American historical experience, and communicate their findings and opinions to both instructor and fellow colleagues. Successful students will complete the course with a working knowledge of American historic events and the historians who have been most influential in describing them, as well as competency in applying historical skills of questioning, research, writing research papers and examinations, and arriving at informed critical judgements on the historic evolution of the most powerful nation in the world today. Universities require of students the ability to express one's self satisfactorily in writing in order to complete courses successfully. The written forms used in this course include:

1. Two short answer, in-class tests, each worth 20 per cent of the final grade. Students will briefly describe and evaluate the significance of two or three events, personalities, issues, or topics in American history during this period. Answers will be chosen from a selection offered in each test, and be about 3-400 words in length for each question. Each test will survey the preceding portions of the course covered in readings and lectures.
2. One research essay, on a topic personally chosen by the student and approved by the instructor, consisting of about twelve double-spaced pages and using at least five sources. This paper will have a thesis or argue that the research discussed in the paper builds towards a decisive conclusion. Worth 20 per cent of the final grade.

3. Because discourse and critical debate are essential to senior University courses, students will be marked on attendance and participation in each class discussion, for a total of 10 per cent of the final mark. Students are expected to come to class with readings completed, notes made on readings and with some questions, opinions or critical conclusions made about both the events discussed in the readings and the stands taken on these events by the writers involved.

6. A final examination will be written during the examination period at the end of the semester, involving short answer and essay-type questions, surveying the major themes of the course. The examination will last three hours and will be worth 30 per cent of the final mark.

Knowledge Objectives: Successful students will know the relevant personalities, interest groups, policies, issues of conflict and consensus, periods and historical influences which explain the history of America during this period. Students will learn the sources and writers which give the most relevant, informative and controversial information and perspectives of this field. In completing this course, students will acquire the working knowledge of both main events and sources which dominate this field.

To best accomplish this, frequent consultation with the instructor is encouraged (even required), throughout the course. Any student with concerns or questions or desiring a forum for debate will be welcomed gladly and encouraged to participate fully in all aspects of the course and its instruction. Keep in touch!