

Grande Prairie Regional College

Dept. of Arts, Commerce and Education

HI2510: American History after the Civil War

Credits: 3 (3 Hrs.) Lecture/Discussion

Winter, 2004

Pre- and Co-requisites: None

Room: C316

Instructor: Duff W. Crerar, Ph.D.

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Office Hours: tba

Introduction: The course surveys the outstanding events, personalities, issues and historical trends in the history of the United States of America, from post-Civil War Reconstruction to the year 2003. Through lectures and class discussion of selected readings, the course traces developments from western settlement, economic expansion and social crisis to the rise of imperialistic national consciousness. Racial divisions, social protest and world power status round out the material covered in the course, so that students will have a working familiarity with the American experience after 1865. Students will write two term tests, one research essay, and a final examination to be scheduled in April.

Texts:

Boyer, Clark, Katt, Salisbury, Sitkoff, Woloch. **The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People.** Volume 2: from 1865. 4th Edition Houghton Mifflin, 2000.

Cary, Weinberg, Hartshorne and Wheeler, **The Social Fabric, Volume 2: American Life from the Civil War to the Present.** 9th Edition. Longman, 1999.

Stout, Neil. **Getting the Most out of Your U.S. History Course.** 3rd Ed. (students may have this from previous courses, or else they can use Marius and Page, **A Short Guide to Writing about History**, from World History courses.

Outline:

January 5: Reconstruction

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 16 (beginning).

January 7: Reconstruction Dies

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chap.16. Also **Social Fabric**, Chapter 1

January 12: Wild, Wild West?

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 17; **Social Fabric**, Chapter 3

January 14: The War Against the Indians

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapt.17; **Social Fabric**, Chapt. 2

January 19: Industrialization - Rags to Riches?

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chap. 18; **Social Fabric**, Chapter 4

January 21: Labour Responds

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter18; **Social Fabric**, Chapter 5.

January 26: The Cities

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 19; and **Social Fabric**, Chapter 6

January 28: Coming to America -- and Cultural War

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 20; also **Social Fabric**, Chapters 7-8

February 2: Politics of Privilege

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 21

February 4: Mid Term *Test 1*

February 9: Imperialism Beckons

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 21

February 11: Progressivism

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 22

February 23: A New Presidency

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 22

February 25: Crosses of Gold, Halters of Rope

READ: **Social Fabric**, Chapters 9-10

March 1: Over There: America and the Great War

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 23

March 3: Prosperity and Paranoia

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 24; **Social Fabric**, Chapters 11-12

March 8: The Winter Years

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 25; and **Social Fabric**, Chapters 13-14

March 10: The Good War

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 27; and **Social Fabric**, 15-16

March 15: The Cold One

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 28

March 17: **Test 2**

March 22: I like Ike

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 29; **Social Fabric**, Chapter 17

March 24: The Right Stuff

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 30; **Social Fabric**, Chapter 18

March 29: Good Morning, Vietnam!

READ: **Social Fabric**, Chapters 19-20; also John Stoessinger, **Why Nations Go to War**, Chapter 4 (RESERVE)

March 31: Crisis in the Presidency

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 31

April 5: Right Turn, America!

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 32; **Social Fabric**, Chapter 22

April 7: Deconstruction America

READ: **Enduring Vision**, Chapter 33, and **Social Fabric**, Chapter 21

April 12: Study Day

April 14: Exam prep and retrospect.

Final Exam: TBA.

Course Format and Philosophy:

The course primarily consists of lectures, films, slides and guided discussions. This means that students should always have read the assigned readings *before the scheduled class*. The lectures will identify and discuss the most significant events and issues of the week, and also serve as guides to the texts. *You cannot do well in this course if you don't do the readings*. The tests are short answer in nature, while the final examination consists of a choice of essay questions reviewing the entire course.

Your research essay is your special opportunity to become a specialist on a topic you are interested in. **You must clear all essay topics (please propose your own) with me, so that I can use my training to help you locate sources and avoid pitfalls.** As you can see, I have scheduled some classes with no readings, so that you can use the normal preparation time for essay research and writing. But do NOT skip classes those days: I will be telling you things you must know to do well on the final examinations. I DO notice attendance, even when I forget to take it! I DO notice whether you are well prepared for class or not, and I WILL be asking you questions.

Late assignments will be heavily penalized UNLESS you have provided me with a legitimate excuse or a reason *in advance*. I do not like surprises. I am happy to give advance permission for an extension. Any students having trouble with their assignments or with the course are encouraged to see me or contact me by phone, email, etc. as soon as possible. I am eager to help in any way I can!

Marking Scheme:

First Test	20
Second Test	20
Essay (twelve pages)	20
Attendance	10
Final Examination	30

	100

Description: We will trace the development of contemporary America from the failure of Reconstruction to the deconstruction of American core values and power structures at the end of the Twentieth Century. American life oscillates between extremely idealistic and pragmatic, even cynical poles as the nation acquires an overseas empire, wages war on the last free western aboriginal cultures and wrestles with the gap between rich and poor, rural and city, race and gender inequalities. Presidents evolve new styles of ruling, and governments wax and wane in their supervision and interference in the life of the citizen. Social reform, democratic protest and mass movements in culture lead into the turbulent decades since 1960 and the crisis in American political leadership which some argue continues to this day.

Objectives: Students will evaluate the American historical experience and communicate their findings through formal essays and examinations. Successful students will have a working knowledge of major historical events, personalities, political and cultural movements, and the skills of historical research and analysis. Universities require students to express themselves satisfactorily in writing in order to complete their degrees. Therefore, students will be expected to write in the accepted format and to the accepted standard of the historian's craft.