**SYLLABUS FOR HIS 134.015**  
**US HISTORY 1877- PRESENT**

**Instructor:** Dr. Stephen Taaffe  
**Room:** F 474  
**Office:** Dugas Liberal Arts North 310  
**Office Hours:** MWF 9-10, T-Th 9:30 – 11, and by appointment  
**Home Phone:** 936-462-7417  
**Office Phone:** 468-2378  
**e-mail:** staaffe@sfasu.edu

**Objective and Purpose:** The purpose of this class is for students to understand and evaluate the various social, political, ideological, and economic factors that shaped American history since 1877. Students will demonstrate their mastery of material through their performance on exams and classroom participation. By the end of the semester students will be able to use their newly acquired knowledge to interpret, analyze, and assess historical sources and contemporary interpretations of the past so as to recognize their biases and place current societal debates in historical context.

**Texts:**  
Tindall and Shi’s *America: A Narrative, vol. 2* (any edition)

**MakeUps:** You have 24 hours to contact me if you miss a test. I will give all make-up exams on Friday, 16 November, at 6:30 AM.

**Grading Rationale:**  
First Midterm 33%  
Second Midterm 33%  
Final 33%

There are also two optional assignments that I will discuss after the first exam.

**Grading Scale:** A: 90-100, B: 80-89, C: 70-79, D: 60-69, F: 59 or less. *You must complete and pick up all assignments, except the final exam, to pass the class.*

**Attendance Policy:** You can miss up to and including five classes without penalty. For each hour missed thereafter, *for any reason whatsoever,* I will deduct one letter grade from your final grade.

**Plagiarism and Cheating:** If I catch you cheating on an exam, I will fail you for the exam or for the course.

**Pet Peeve:** If I catch you with your cellphone out during class, I can and will throw you out, and you won’t be allowed back until you write a paper for me. You cannot use computers in class either.

**Tentative Schedule and Assignments:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Tue 28 Aug | Gilded Age and Immigration and Urbanization  
| Thu 30 Aug | Immigration and Urbanization (cont) and Big Business and Labor  
| Week 2 |  
| Tue 4 Sep | Discussion and Populism and the 1890s  
| Thu 6 Sep | Populism and the 1890s (cont) and Progressivism  
| Week 3 |  
| Tue 11 Sep | Discussion and American Overseas Empire  
| Thu 13 Sep | American Overseas Empire (cont) and Wilson and the Road to World War One  
| Week 4 |  
| Tue 18 Sep | United States in World War One and 1920s Politics  
| Thu 20 Sep | 1920s Politics (cont) and Discussion  
| Week 5 |  
| Tue 25 Sep | First Midterm  
| Thu 27 Sep | Life in the 1920s and Hoover and the Great Depression  

Week 6: Tindall and Shi, chapters 28-29
Tue 2 Oct Hoover and the Great Depression (cont) and Roosevelt and the New Deal
Thu 4 Oct Road to World War Two and United States in World War Two

Week 7: Tindall and Shi, chapter 30-31
Tue 9 Oct United States in World War Two (cont) and Discussion
Thu 11 Oct Origins of the Cold War and Truman and Postwar America

Week 8: Tindall and Shi, chapters 32-33
Tue 16 Oct Truman and Postwar America (cont) and Korean War
Thu 18 Oct We Like Ike and Life in the 1950s

Week 9:
Tue 23 Oct Life in the 1950s (cont) and Civil Rights Movement
Thu 25 Oct Discussion and Kennedy Administration

Week 10: Tindall and Shi, chapter 34
Tue 30 Oct Second Midterm
Thu 1 Nov Kennedy Administration (cont) and Johnson and the Great Society

Week 11: Tindall and Shi, chapter 35
Tue 6 Nov Vietnam War and Counterculture
Thu 8 Nov Counterculture (cont) and Nixon’s Foreign Policy

Week 12: Tindall and Shi, chapter 36
Tue 13 Nov Discussion and Nixon’s Domestic Policy
Thu 15 Nov Nixon’s Domestic Policy (cont) and 1970s Politics

Week 13:
Tue 27 Nov Life in the 1970s and Reagan and Conservative Resurgence
Thu 29 Nov Reagan and Conservative Resurgence (cont) and Discussion

Week 14: Tindall and Shi, chapter 37
Tue 4 Dec End of the Cold War and Clinton and 1990s Politics
Thu 6 Dec Clinton and 1990s Politics (cont) and Bush and Iraq

Final: Thursday, 13 December, at 8 AM
Course Objectives:
1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in American political history since 1877, with emphasis on the expansion of federal and presidential power, the evolution of American political parties, and the role of dissenters in American politics.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in American economic history since 1877, with emphasis on the role of corporations and the rise of the welfare state.
3. Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in American social history since 1877 with emphasis on urban history, reform movements, labor history, family and gender roles, and religion and culture.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the changing role of the US in the world since 1877, with emphasis on imperialism of the 1890s, World War I, World War II, the origins of the Cold War, and the Vietnam War.
5. Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in cultural interactions since 1877, with emphasis on immigration to the United States, the history of ethnic/race relations, and the post-war Civil Rights movement.
6. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the methods historians use to gather and analyze evidence about the past.
7. Students will be able to use the knowledge and skills gained in the course in the fulfillment of their responsibilities as active citizens in a democratic society.

Program Learning Outcomes: This is a general education core curriculum course and no specific program learning outcomes for this major are addressed in this course.

Student Learning Outcomes: HIS 134 is part of the university’s Core Curriculum and as such strives towards both the general goals of the core and the specific objectives for social science classes set by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The Board has identified six skills, or “intellectual competencies,” as the foundation for all university-level work: reading, writing, listening, speaking, critical thinking and computer literacy. This section of HIS 134 offers students experience in all of these areas, except for speaking. In addition, this course will emphasize the Coordinating Board’s objectives for social science classes:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in American political history since 1877, with emphasis on the expansion of federal and presidential power, the evolution of American political parties, and the role of dissenters in American politics.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in American economic history since 1877, with emphasis on the role of corporations and the rise of the welfare state.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in American social history since 1877 with emphasis on urban history, reform movements, labor history, family and gender roles, and religion and culture.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the changing role of the US in the world since 1877, with emphasis on imperialism of the 1890s, World War I, World War II, the origins of the Cold War, and the Vietnam War.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of key developments in cultural interactions since 1877, with emphasis on immigration to the United States, the history of ethnic/race relations, and the post-war Civil Rights movement.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of the methods historians use to gather and analyze evidence about the past.
- Students will be able to use the knowledge and skills gained in the course in the fulfillment of their responsibilities as active citizens in a democratic society.

Withheld Grades (Semester Grades Policy, A-54)
Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Students with Disabilities: To obtain disability related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.