HIS 134: US History Survey, 1877 to the Present
Spring 2018

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Required Book
Gordon Parks, A Choice of Weapons
Sherman Alexie, You Don’t Have to Say You Love Me

Course Description
A comprehensive survey of American history from the end of Reconstruction to the present. With a focus on the creation of modern American, this course will provide an examination of the political, economic, social, and cultural forces that defined this historical period. In general, this course will emphasize four main themes: 1) the expansion of business and the corporate state; 2) The consolidation of power by the federal government; 3) the struggles of individuals and groups to gain and retain power; and 4) the transformation of American life due to urbanization, territorial expansion, and social changes.

Assignments and Grades
The assignment breakdown for this semester is as follows [all assignments are due via D2L]:

- Exams [30%]
  There will be three exams throughout the semester—please check the syllabus for the dates, but these will correlate with the material in each of the three modules.

- Essays [45%]
  You will be submitting three essays based on primary sources this semester.

- Final Exam Essay [15%]
  You will have a final exam project related to the two memoirs.

- Participation [10%]
  Finally, as this is an online class, you will have various small assignments throughout the semester.

Due Dates [all via D2L]:

- Exams: February 13, March 27, May 8 (Tuesdays)
- Essays: February 16, March 30, May 4 (Fridays)
- Book Essay: April 24
Course Responsibilities
You are responsible for all registration deadlines. All of the assignments are required. To pass this class you must complete and turn in all of the assignments. Also, course schedules occasionally change and all major changes will be announced on D2L. Other than opportunities I provide for the entire class, no extra credit assignments will be offered during the course of the semester, after the semester is over, or on an individual basis. All work must be submitted by the due date. Late work will incur a ten-point penalty for each day past the due date.

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 classes designated for inclusion in the American History Foundational Component Area as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

HIS 134 includes instruction in the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, considering how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.

In addition to learning the above, students in HIS 134 will demonstrate the more general ability to:

- Think critically, which includes the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information about this period of history.
- Communicate effectively by developing and expressing ideas through written and visual communication.
- Gain intercultural competence, a knowledge of civic responsibility, and an awareness of how humans in the past have engaged effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
- Understand the role that personal responsibility has played throughout history and gain the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to making ethical decisions.

Academic Integrity (A-9.1)
Academic integrity is a responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways including instruction on the components of academic honesty, as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism.

Definition of Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp.
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/.

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.

Course Schedule:
Module One: Age of Jim Crow
1/16 Reconstruction / New South
1/23 Race and Empire
1/30 Jim Crow
2/6 Progressive Era / Great Migration
2/13 WWI / Nativism

Module Two: Mass Culture and the Modern World
2/20 1920s: Culture / Modernity
2/27 New Deal
3/6 WWII / Conformity
3/13 Spring Break
3/20 Civil Rights I
3/27 Civil Rights II

Module Three: Protest and the Meaning of Meaning
4/3 Cold War / Vietnam
4/10 Watergate to 9/11
4/17 Obama / Post Truth Landscape
4/24 Redefining Protest
5/1 Age of Diminished Expectations

FINAL EXAM: May 8 (Tuesday)

It is well that we keep in mind the fact that not all of American history is recorded. And in some ways we are fortunate that it isn’t, for if it were, we might become so chagrined by the discrepancies which exist between our democratic ideals and our social reality that we’d soon lose heart. Perhaps that is why we possess two basic versions of American history: one which is written and as neatly stylized as ancient myth, and the other as unwritten and chaotic and full of contradictions, changes of pace, and surprises as life itself.

Ralph Ellison