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Department: History  
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Office: Liberal Arts North 354/Ferguson G75  
Office Hours: MWF 10:00-11:30, TR 2:00-3:30 or by appointment. Office Hours will typically be held in LAN 354, but if I’m not there I’ll be in Ferguson G75.

Course Description

A comprehensive survey of American history from Reconstruction to the 21st century. Meets Texas state requirements for all graduates.

Program Learning Outcomes

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

Student Learning Outcomes (What do we expect you to get out of this class?)

My goals for you are to achieve two things. First, cultural literacy. All persons with a college education are simply supposed to be aware of certain people, events, issues, themes, etc. from our shared past. Such knowledge is just part of being an educated person. A basic understanding of history is vital to being an engaged citizen in a working democratic republic, and an informed citizenry is vital to the life of such a republic. Second, I want you to master (or at least gain competence in) information evaluation and management. In the essays that you will write in this class you will be asked to aggregate information, assess the relative significance of each piece of that information, and use the information to solve a problem or support a critical position. That is a skill set that you will use in any career in which you may find yourselves in life.

TIP: If you don’t know what words like “aggregate” mean, get a dictionary app or bookmark Dictionary.com and use it. Don’t just skip words that you don’t know.

Successful completion of this course will require consistent attention to deadlines, substantial reading, and a commitment to developing effective analytical abilities.

Texts and Materials

All required materials for this course are available free and online. College costs enough without paying for books. The e-books listed below will be used at various times during the
semester. We’ll use portions of each, and I’ll provide links to specific portions that may require your attention.

- *The American Yawp* (primary source readings).

Additional readings and/or links to videos will frequently be placed in D2L on specific topics.

**Course Requirements: Grading and Evaluation**

Students have the opportunity to earn 660 points in this course. Grades are determined from a variety of assignments:

- **Weekly reading response:** 8 @ 20 points each  
  - (160 points total)  
- **Essays:** 4 @ 100 points each (400 points total)  
- **Source Analysis Assignment:** 50 pts.

**Total points:** 660

Final grades will be determined as follows:

- A = 90-100%
- B = 80-89%
- C = 70-79%
- D = 60-69%
- F = 59% and below

**Reading Responses**

If you read, take notes, and engage with the material, you should have no trouble with these brief writings. I’ll ask you for your thoughts (in about 250 words) about the assigned readings and course discussions for that week. You will submit these readings in D2L Dropbox during the appropriate weeks.

**Exams**

Each of the four main units of the course contains an essay exam. For each exam, you will receive a question prompt dealing with the content in the appropriate unit. You will write an essay in class addressing the question contained in the prompt. Each of these essays will ask you to take a position on a selected topic and to support that position with evidence from your course readings. You will receive more detailed instructions along with your first essay prompt.
Source Analysis Assignment

One assignment near the end of the semester will require critical analysis of an historical event in United States history from the period since 1877 based on your evaluation of primary sources. Each student will be provided a selection of primary sources to interpret and evaluate, place in historical context, and utilize to construct an analytical essay. The essay will require that students think critically about the sources, examine how individual choices and decisions influenced the course of history, and consider the ways in which people engage with regional, national, or global communities. During the course of the semester, students will be introduced to primary sources and how such sources can be used to inform historical argument. Further instructions will be provided at the appropriate time.

Attendance Policy

There is no formal attendance policy for this course. However, successful completion typically requires regular and punctual attendance. Information provided and discussed in class will not always be available in your readings or other course materials. If you know that you will be unable to attend class at any given time please let me know ASAP.

Course Calendar  (Subject to change if necessary)

Instruction in the Core Objectives (critical thinking, communication, teamwork, and social responsibility) will be given at this time and reinforced throughout the semester.

Week 1  Introduction
Week 2  Reconstruction and Politics: Race in Post-Civil War America
Week 3  The Making of Modern America: Immigration, Urbanization, Industrialization
Week 4  Government and the People: Gilded Age and Populism
Exam 1 Thursday, February 6
Week 5  The Progressive Moment
Week 6  The Roaring ‘20s and “Normalcy.”
Week 7  The Great Depression
Week 8  The New Deal
Exam 2 Thursday, March 5
Week 9  SPRING BREAK
Week 10  WW II and the Cold War
Week 11  Civil Rights in Post-WWII America
Week 12  The Sixties
Week 13  The Credibility Gap
Exam 3 Tuesday, April 7
Week 14  The Post-Vietnam Mindset
Week 15  The City Upon a Hill
Week 16  Rodney King and OJ Simpson: America at the end of the 20th Century
Academic Integrity

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 University's complete student academic dishonesty policy.

Withheld Grades (Course Grades Policy)

At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic unit head, 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, except as allowed through policy [i.e., Active Military Service (6.14)]. If students register for the same course in future semesters, 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, visit Disability Services.

**Explanation of credit hours awarded for course:**

HIS 134 (United States History II) meets for 150 minutes each week for 15 weeks and also meets for a 2-hour final examination. Students typically have weekly reading assignments from a combination of textbooks, primary document collections, and supplemental materials (biographies, historical novels, memoirs, etc). Typical sections of the course require students to take 2-3 exams per semester, in addition to the final exam. Many also require students to take quizzes. Course instructors are required to hold regular scheduled office hours to make themselves available to consult with students as needed. Combined, studying for quizzes/exams, doing the required reading, completing writing assignments, and consulting with course instructors average two hours of work outside the classroom for every hour spent in the classroom. Online sections of the course contain extensive written content within modules, and instructors hold "electronic office hours" to consult with students as needed, generally responding to student inquiries within twenty-four hours. Online course content includes the same information students in a face-to-face lecture course receive, requiring students to engage the online modules for at least 150 minutes per week. Besides engaging the material in the modules, online students have outside reading assignments similar to those mentioned above for face-to-face students. Thus, for every hour an online student spends engaging the content in the modules, he/she spends at least two hours completing associated activities and assessments.

**General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:**

In addition to those student learning goals listed above, HIS 134 is part of the university’s Core Curriculum and as such strives toward 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.

Courses in this Foundational Component Area focus on the consideration of past events and ideas relative to the United States. Courses in this area include instruction in the interaction among individuals, communities, states, the nation, and the world, and how these interactions have contributed to the development of the United States and its global role.

Therefore, in addition to the stated learning objectives 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.

SFA is committed to the improvement of its general education core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

The chart below indicates the core objectives addressed by this course, the assignment that will be used to assess the objectives in this course and uploaded to D2L this semester, and the date the assignment should be uploaded to D2L.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Objective</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source Analysis Assignment</th>
<th>Date Due in D2L</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking Skills</td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication Skills</td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas though written, oral, and visual communication.</td>
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<td>Empirical and Quantitative Skills</td>
<td>To include the manipulation and analysis of numerical data or observable facts resulting in informed conclusions.</td>
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<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>To include the ability to consider different points of view and to work effectively with others to support a shared purpose or goal.</td>
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<td>Personal Responsibility</td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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