



An unknown man in Dubuque, Iowa during the Great Depression (1940)

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Office Hours: Wednesdays from 12:30-2:30 via Zoom or by appointment

Course Description

The goal of history is to tell true stories about the past. Truth depends on evidence but stories rely on interpretation.

What is the “true story” of modern America? In this class, we will study the history of the United States since Reconstruction to formulate an answer.

We will focus on three key questions to guide us. How has the public sphere of government, citizenship, and democracy and the private sphere of personal belief and capitalism changed since Reconstruction? How has war—from the aftermath of the Civil War to Vietnam—propelled social, cultural, and economic change in American society and foreign policy? And how did the twentieth century remake American ideas about freedom, democracy, and capitalism into something “modern”?

Although the purpose of history is to tell true stories, it is also about developing skills in critical thinking, effective communication, and time management. Additionally, since this course satisfies the Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity requirements, students will be held to a standard that places a premium on well-developed arguments, nuanced use of qualitative and quantitative evidence, as well as clear and forceful writing.

Note: I reserve the right to alter the syllabus if necessary.

Course Format

This course will utilize Canvas, Google Meet, YouTube, Zoom, Kahoot, and other digital tools in an attempt to make an online history class engaging, enlightening, and, hopefully, fun.

Monday through Thursday we will meet at the scheduled class time via Google Meet for lecture. On (most) Fridays, we will meet via Zoom for a discussion period, highlighting a key theme from the week using assigned primary sources and other material.

We will use Canvas for class communication as well as to submit most assignments. I will host office hours through Zoom to utilize its waiting room feature.

Required Reading

Selected primary sources and other material via Canvas

Bartow J. Elmore, *Citizen Coke: The Making of Coca-Cola Capitalism*

Tim O'Brien, *The Things They Carried*

Optional Reading

I recommend reading the textbook chapters to reinforce the lectures as well as aid in studying for the midterm and completing other assignments. *The American Yawp* is a free, open-source textbook:

[*The American Yawp: A Massively Collaborative Open U.S. History Textbook, Vol. II: Since 1877*](#)

Assignments and Grading

Quizzes (10%)

Attendance (10%)

Canvas Posts (15%)

Book Review, *Citizen Coke* (15%)

Midterm (25%)

Final Blog Assignment (25%)

Quizzes: Due on Fridays (with one exception), students will complete a comprehension quiz via Canvas. Each quiz will consist of five, randomized questions to test individual understanding of

that week's material including assigned primary sources. There will be a total of five quizzes, each worth 2% of the final grade.

Canvas Posts (CPs): Due on Sundays, students will write three CPs, responding to a prompt on Canvas related to assigned primary sources, required readings, and lectures. Students will not be expected to reply to other students but feel free to generate interesting conversations. Each post is worth 5% of the final grade.

Attendance: For each lecture and discussion section, **attendance will be mandatory and recorded randomly** at some point during the session. If students are not in the Google Meet or Zoom call at the point attendance is taken, their absence will be considered unexcused unless they have communicated with me about their absence. In such a short class, students are allowed only one unexcused absence. Additional unexcused absences will result in a 2% deduction from the attendance grade, which is worth 10% of the final grade. Students with more than five unexcused absences will fail the class. Please see the attendance policy below for additional detail.

Midterm: The midterm will be essay-based and open-note. Consequently, students can use lecture notes, *The American Yawp*, and primary source material as long as appropriate citations are provided. I will provide additional guidance on citations during the course.

Before the midterm, students will sign a pledge stating that they will adhere to the standards of the UF Honor Code. **Any violation of the UF Honor Code will be prosecuted** (see academic honesty policy below). The midterm will be available from July 24-27 and submitted via Canvas.

Book Review: The book review will offer students the opportunity to assess and analyze a self-contained piece of historical work that meaningfully engages with course themes. Guidelines for the book review will be provided during the course.

Final Blog Assignment: Instead of a research paper, students will write a blog post on a Wix-hosted class website. Unlike a traditional research paper, students will be able to use digitized primary sources, images, recorded video, and other multimedia sources to craft an argument that answers a historical question. I will provide three prompts that students can select but students can also pick their own topic as long as it is approved by me. Guidelines for the final blog assignment will be provided during the course.

Grading Scale

A: 90-100	B+: 87-89	B: 80-86	C+: 77-79	C: 70-76
D+: 67-69	D: 60-66	E: Below 60		

Attendance Policy

Although mandatory online attendance is not ideal, FERPA—a federal law regulating higher education—restricts teachers from recording classes without student consent. As a result, Google Meet and Zoom sessions will be considered equivalent to traditional face-to-face meetings and attendance is mandatory to ensure high participation. However, I understand that students might face unique challenges because of COVID-19 and I am willing to be flexible. **But I absolutely expect communication—students must communicate with me if they will be unable to attend any course sessions or have any technical difficulties, and I will seek reasonable accommodation. If a student did not attend and I have no record of communication either before or during a course session, that student’s absence will be considered unexcused. In short, communicate. Otherwise, participate.**

Attendance in each section will be recorded randomly. Students are allowed one unexcused absence. Each additional unexcused absence will result in a 2% reduction in their attendance grade. Students with more than five unexcused absences will fail the course.

UF’s official attendance and make-up policies can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Late Work

All late work will be penalized 1/3 a letter grade for each day it is late unless otherwise excused by me. Missed exams cannot be made up unless students have a university excused absence and I am notified beforehand. If you have an unforeseen emergency, please contact me as soon as possible so adjustments can be made as needed.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting an accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Honesty

The university and your instructor values and expects academic integrity. Ethical violations including cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and academic misconduct (including turning in the work of others as your own or reusing old assignments). These will not be tolerated and will result in a failure of the assignment, the risk of an automatic failing grade in the course, and possible expulsion from UF. To avoid plagiarism, you must not copy the words, phrases, arguments, ideas, or conclusions of another person or source including internet sources without

properly crediting the person or source with both quotation marks and a footnote or parenthetical citation. Make sure that you properly cite direct quotations, paraphrased information, and facts that are not widely known. I will provide you with guidelines for proper citations and formatting prior to your submission of all written work, but you may contact me at any time for clarification. For more information on UF's academic honesty policy, see:

<http://regulations.ufl.edu/wpcontent/uploads/2018/06/4.040-1.pdf>

For more information on how UF's Judicial Affairs processes cases of plagiarism, see:

<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/appeal-process/>

Course Schedule

Week One, July 6-10

Reconstruction and the Gilded Age, 1870s-1890s

Lectures & Discussion Section

Monday, Reforging a Nation: The Civil War and Its Aftermath

Tuesday, American Westworld

Wednesday, On the Move: Immigration in the Gilded Age

Thursday, Beauty and Brutality in a Pound of Steel

Friday, Discussion Section—"For and Against in the Gilded Age"

READ: Primary sources for Friday discussion section & *Citizen Coke*, ch. 1-3

DUE: Friday, July 10th—Quiz #1; Sunday, July 12th—CP #1

OPTIONAL: *American Yawp*, chapters 16-18

Week Two, July 13-17

The Progressive Era and World War I, 1900-1920

Lectures & Discussion Section

Monday, Making Liberalism Modern in a Progressive Era

Tuesday, Progressive Politics: Women's Suffrage and Temperance

Wednesday, American Empire

Thursday, A Peace to End All Peace: The Aftermath of World War I

Friday, Discussion Section—"Patriotism and World War I"

READ: Primary sources for Friday discussion section & *Citizen Coke*, ch. 3-6

DUE: Friday, July 17th—Quiz #2; Sunday, July 19th—CP #2

OPTIONAL: *American Yawp*, chapters 19-21

Week Three, July 20-24

The 1920s and the Origins of the Great Depression, 1920-1931

Lectures

Monday, The Not-So-Great Gatsby 1920s

Tuesday, A Consumer Revolution, A Semi-Sexual Revolution

Wednesday, The Acids of Modernity

Thursday, The 1929 Crash and the Origins of the Great Depression

Friday, No Discussion Section. Study for Midterm.

READ: Finish *Citizen Coke*, Study for Midterm

DUE: Monday, July 27th—Midterm

OPTIONAL: *American Yawp*, ch. 22

Week Four, July 27-31

The New Deal and World War II, 1931-1945

Lectures and Discussion Section

Monday, The American People in the Great Depression

Tuesday, What Did the New Deal Do?

Wednesday, The Clouds Gather: The United States on the Eve of World War II

Thursday, A War of Many Fronts

Friday, Discussion Section—"The Good War?"

READ: Primary sources for Friday discussion section & *The Things They Carried*, pgs. 1-81.

DUE: Friday, July 31st—Quiz #3; Sunday, August 1st—*Citizen Coke* Book Review

OPTIONAL: *American Yawp*, chapters 23-24

Week Five, August 3-7

The 1950s and the Cold War

Lectures and Discussion Section

Monday, Cold Warriors in a Suburban Nation

Tuesday, Civil Rights Movement and the Black Freedom Struggle

Wednesday, Vietnam War

Thursday, Countercultures: the New Left and the New Right

Friday, Discussion Section—"The Vietnam Syndrome"

READ: Primary sources for Friday discussion section & finish *The Things They Carried*.

DUE: Friday, August 7th—Quiz #4; Sunday, August 9th—CP #3

OPTIONAL: *American Yawp*, chapters 25-27

Week Six, August 10-14

From Nixon to 9/11

Lectures and Discussion Section

Monday, Pivotal Decade: the 1970s

Tuesday, The Reagan Revolution

Wednesday, The 1990s and Beyond

Thursday, Final Reflections

Friday, Final Blog Assignment Due

DUE: Thursday, August 13th—Quiz #5; Friday, August 14th—Final Blog Assignment

OPTIONAL: *American Yawp*, chapters 28-29

A Note on Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity Credit

This course satisfies the Social and Behavioral Science Gen-Ed Credit at the University of Florida. The social and behavioral sciences provide instruction in the key themes, principles and terminology, underlying theory, and/or methodologies used in the social and behavioral sciences. You will learn to identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures and processes. This course emphasizes the effective application of accepted problem-solving techniques as well as the evaluation of opinions and outcomes.

This course also satisfies the Diversity Gen-Ed Credit at the University of Florida. Diversity courses provide instruction in the values, attitudes and norms that create cultural differences within the United States. This course will encourage you to recognize how social roles and status affect different groups and impact U.S. society. This course will guide you to analyze and to evaluate your own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures, and to distinguish opportunities and constraints faced by other persons and groups.

Student Learning Outcomes For Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity: Content and Skills

Category	Content	Critical Thinking	Communication
Social and Behavioral Sciences	<p>Know key themes, principles and terminology within that discipline.</p> <p>Know the history, theory and/or methodologies used within that discipline.</p> <p>Identify, describe and explain social institutions, structures and processes within that discipline.</p>	<p>Apply formal and informal qualitative and/or quantitative analysis effectively to examine the processes and means by which individuals make personal and group decisions.</p> <p>Assess and analyze ethical perspectives in individual and societal decisions.</p>	<p>Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively in forms appropriate to the discipline, individually and in groups.</p>
Diversity	<p>Know the roles of social structure and status of different groups within the United States.</p>	<p>Analyze and evaluate your own cultural norms and values in relation to those of other cultures.</p> <p>Identify, evaluate and compare your own social status, opportunities and constraints with those of other persons and groups.</p>	<p>The diversity designation is always in conjunction with another category; Communication outcomes are listed in those categories.</p>