

History of the Modern United States



French workmen prepare the Statue of Liberty for shipment to the United States, 1880s

AMH 2020: U.S. History Since 1877, University of Florida, Fall 2018
MWF, Period 3: 9:35-10:25 AM, Keene-Flint 109

Mr. Madison W. Cates

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Office Hours: Keene-Flint 215, Monday 10:30-11:30 AM, Thursday 3-4 PM, Friday 8:30-9:30 AM, and by appointment

Description:

How do we explain the rise of a modern American nation? Between 1865 and the 1980s the United States emerged from shattered and divided disunion with weak claims to western territories to become a diverse, powerful continental and world empire. These changes were neither inevitable nor welcomed by all Americans. By paying attention to the voices of contemporaries, we will try to answer a series of perplexing questions in American history, including: What does freedom mean? Who is an American? And, what is the proper relationship between individuals and government? We will examine struggles over the meaning of citizenship; the expanding power of government in the economy and daily life; changing relations of the individual with the community; and the complications of national and international expansion.

The course begins in the aftermath of the Civil War and ends in the waning days of the Cold War, each event marking the end of an era and the beginning of another.

This class will adhere to the National Research Council's classification of history as a social science and provide you with an introduction to the social and behavioral sciences. Consequently, we will employ paradigms, terminology, and methodologies used by social scientists—including both quantitative and qualitative methods. In lecture and discussion section we will focus on American politics and society and the relationships among individuals within our political and social systems. In addition, the core text for the course, *The American Yawp*, will model the techniques and guidelines by which historians research and write about society. Through the required weekly reading and in discussion sections, you will learn to question and evaluate historical sources and evidence and, in the process, become informed thinkers and critical readers. For more information, see the addendum found on the last page of the syllabus.

Course Objectives: This course is organized around a series of fundamental problems for all Americans, problems that can only be answered historically. Students will:

1. Understand the influence of diverse historical forces – technological, social, political, cultural, economic – on human behavior, achievement, and ideas.
2. Analyze evidence, synthesize conflicting points of view, and evaluate assumptions and biases to attain a balanced historical perspective.
3. Develop the ability to effectively communicate critical thinking, both orally and in writing.
4. Learn key themes, principles, terminology, and methodology within the discipline of history.
5. Gain a thorough understanding of the U.S. Constitution, our founding documents, basic principles of American democracy, and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance; along with landmark Supreme Court cases and their impact on law and society.

Students with Disabilities

Please do not hesitate to contact the instructor during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. 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, as well as your instructor, values and expects academic integrity. Ethical violations include cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, and academic misconduct (including turning in the work of others as your own and reusing old assignments). These will not be tolerated and will result in a failure of the assignment and 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. 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/wp-content/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/>

Student Evaluations

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Course Assignments

- Please have your syllabus on hand and be sure to keep up with all of the reading and writing deadlines.
- **Readings:** The reading for this class will ebb and flow, so pay attention to the syllabus and make sure you note which weeks have heavier reading and writing assignments. You are expected to read ALL the assigned readings prior to your discussion section and arrive in section with questions, comments, and opinions about what you have read. Make sure to allow enough time in your schedule to read thoroughly and critically.
- **Quizzes:** There will be six (6) quizzes given during the semester. I reserve the right to let you know when they will be administered (or not!). These quizzes will be short and will be on the day's reading. Quizzes will be graded on a 20-point scale, and you may drop your lowest score.
- A five hundred (500) word essay analyzing one primary document is due on **Wednesday September 26**. Your essay will be graded according to the content of your ideas *and* the quality and accuracy of your prose. Further instructions regarding format and content will be distributed on Canvas before the paper is due. Late papers will be penalized one half of a letter grade for every day that they are late.
- An in-class midterm exam covering all material up to that point will be on **October 15**.
- A one thousand (1000) word essay on *My Soul is Rested* is due on **November 12**. Further instructions regarding format and content will be distributed on Canvas before the paper is due. Late papers will be penalized one half of a letter grade for every day that they are late.
- A seven hundred-fifty (750) word essay on the impact of television on American society and politics during the latter half of the 20th century is due on the last day of class,

December 5. Further instructions regarding the format and content will be distributed on Canvas before the paper is due.

- An in-class final exam will be given on **December 12, from 12:30-2:30 PM**

Grading: History is a disciplined way of understanding our world as well as the record of the past. The goal is for you to learn to think historically by reading and writing historically. The assignments in this course are designed to assess your performance. They are also intended and designed to enhance your learning experience. There are no “busy work” assignments.

Participation and Attendance	10%
6 Quizzes (lowest dropped)	10%
Analytical Essay #1	10%
Midterm Exam	20%
Analytical Essay #2	15%
Analytical Essay #3	10%
Final Exam	25%

UF Grading Scale

Letter Grade A A- B+ B B- C+ C C- D+ D D- E WF I NG S-U

Grade Points 4.0 3.67 3.33 3.0 2.67 2.33 2.0 1.67 1.33 1.0 .67 0 0 0 0 0

A: 100-93, A-: 90-92 C+: 77-79, C: 74-76, C-: 70-73

B+: 87-89, B: 84-86, B-: 80-83 D+: 67-69, D: 64-66, D-: 60-64 F: below 64

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Attendance Policy

Attendance is central to your learning experience. In addition to showing up for lecture and section on time, be ready to articulate and defend your ideas, as well as to listen to and work with the ideas of others. Attendance in lecture may be taken on a random basis throughout the semester. Attendance in discussion section will be taken every day. **You are permitted two unexcused absences without penalty. Five or more unexcused absences will result in failing grade for the class.** I am not responsible for contacting students during the semester to apprise them of their attendance status; it is the responsibility of the students to keep a record of their absences. Religious holidays, UF athletic travel conflicts, and written explanations from a certified health professional are eligible for an excused absence when cleared with me ahead of time. See UF attendance policy at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Late Work and Make-up Policy

Unless stated otherwise, late papers will be penalized one-third-letter grade for each day they are late. If you know of an excused absence, contact your me as early as possible to make arrangements to turn in work ahead of time. Missed exams cannot be made up unless you have a university excused absence that you notify your professor of beforehand. If you have an unforeseen emergency, please contact one of us as soon as possible after your absence.

Mobile Electronic Device Policy

Recent studies have shown that college students retain less information when they use laptops instead of pen and paper, and that open laptops are disruptive to nearby students. However, I recognize that many of you are more comfortable taking notes on a computer. Please do not abuse this privilege. I reserve the right to ban laptops if they become disruptive over the course of the semester. Please silence your cell phone prior to the start of class and do not text during class time.

Correspondence

I will send important course announcements and other correspondence to you via your UF email account. If you do not use this as your primary account, please make sure that you have your UF email forwarded to you and check your email regularly!

Required Readings:

- 1.) Joseph Locke and Ben Wright, [*American Yawp*](#), Part II, Chapters 15-30
- 2.) Elmer Kelton, *The Day the Cowboys Quit* (1986), ISBN: 9780875650548
- 3.) Howell Raines, *My Soul is Rested: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement in the Deep South* (1983), ISBN: 978-0140067538

NOTE: This schedule is a proposed course of action, not a contract. Dates, reading assignments, and lecture topics are subject to change with notice.

Week 1: August 22-24

W- Course Intro/The Meaning of Freedom

F- Read and discuss: [*American Yawp*](#) [hereafter *AY*] Chapter 15 and documents on Canvas

Week 2: August 27-31

M/W Lectures- Reconstruction and Looking West, Read: *AY*, Chapter 17

F- Read and discuss: [*AY*](#) Documents on Canvas

Week 3: September 3-September 7

M-NO Class: Labor Day, Start Kelton, *The Day the Cowboys Quit*

W Lecture- Industrial Work, Read Chapter 16, *AY*

F- Read and discuss: *AY* Documents and Scott Reynolds Nelson, “Who Was John Henry?” on Canvas:

Week 4: September 10-14

M/W Lectures- The Second Civil War and The Crisis of the 1890s

F- Finish *The Day the Cowboys Quit* and Read *AY* documents on Canvas

Week 5: September 17-21

M/W Lectures- Race and Empire at the Turn of the Century

F- Read and discuss: *AY* Documents on Canvas

Week 6: September 24-28

M/W Lectures- Who Were the Progressives?

Analysis Paper #1 Due in Class on Wednesday (9/26)

F- Read and discuss: Selected Documents on Progressivism and College Football on Canvas

Week 7: October 1-4

M/W Lectures- WWI and Its Aftermath: A Return to “Normalcy?”

F- Read and discuss: *AY* Documents and 1920s Article on Canvas

Week 8: October 8-12

M Lecture: The Great Depression

Wednesday October 10- MIDTERM EXAM

F- No Discussion

Week 9: October 15-19

M/W Lecture: What the New Deal Did and the Road to World War II

F- Read and discuss: Canvas Documents on Internment Camps and War Refugees

Week 10: October 22-26

M/W Lectures: The Arsenal of Democracy and the Cold War

F- Read and discuss: *AY* Documents and Stephanie Coontz article on Canvas

Begin Reading *My Soul is Rested*, Intro., Book 1: Chs. I-II, IV-V, Book 2: Chs. V-VI .

Week 11: October 29-October 31

M/W Lectures: The Affluent Society and its Discontents

Friday (11/2)-NO Class: UF Holiday

Week 12: November 5-9

M/W Lectures: The 1960s: Everybody Wants Freedom

F- Read and discuss: AY Documents and Virgil Hawkins article on Canvas.

Finish selected chapters of *My Soul is Rested*, Intro., Book 1: Chs. I-II, IV-V, Book 2: Chs. V-VI

Week 13: November 14-16

Monday (11/12)-NO Class: Veterans Day

Analysis Paper #2 Due on Canvas

W Lecture- The Wars in Vietnam

F- Read and discuss: AY Documents and Jefferson Cowie article on Canvas

Week 14: November 19th

M Lecture- Limits and the Unraveling of America

W/F (11/21-11/25) – NO Class: Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: November 26-29

M/W Lectures- The Reagan Revolution and the New World Order

F- Read and discuss: AY Chapter 29 Documents on Canvas

Week 16: December 3-5

M/W Lectures: Into the 2000s and Looking Backward

Analysis Paper #3 Due in Class (12/5)

F- NO Class, Reading Day

December 12 @ 12:30 PM- FINAL EXAM

A Note on Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity Credit

General Education: Objectives for Social and Behavioral Sciences and Diversity

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