



AMH 2020: U.S. History Since 1877

Instructor: Richard Brust

Meeting M,W,F 11:45-12:35
Keene-Flint 111

Office Hours: M, 10 a.m.; W, 1 p.m.; F, 9 a.m.
Keene-Flint 009

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COURSE OVERVIEW

“The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”

-- William Faulkner
Requiem for a Nun

This course examines American history from the end of Reconstruction to the present. It is a long and complicated story, and it requires students to take the class discussion home with them, and to think about it and debate it with their classmates. As distinct from many other subjects they will study, history is a subjective process; it demands thoughtfulness and inquiry. Nor is it confined only to the readings of this class. That means we will also examine American history through a panoply of different sources: music, film, documentaries, newspaper articles. All are included in the Class Schedule.

The central inquiry of this course is the question: *Who is an American?* How do we define the qualifications that make someone a citizen? In an era that saw black people

emerge from slavery, only to face Jim Crow laws; waves of immigrants flooding into the country; women's quest for the right to vote; the expansion of labor unions; a rising imperialism over new lands and people; and the sad demise of the American native, the effort to define who Americans ought to be is essential to these times. Nor was it a passive undertaking. The nation stumbled into periods of chaos and violence in our effort to explain what makes a person an American.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The Class Schedule is divided into five sections, each roughly explaining that period and its overriding issues. They are:

America Goes to Work -- How did the rise of post-bellum industrialism lead to the ever expanding differences between the Gilded Age and the working class?

America Doesn't Work -- What problems did this new caste-based society face? What did the Progressive Era hope to accomplish? How did we plunge into the Great Depression?

America Expands -- How did Americans deal with the conquest of the West, the rise of imperialism, the country's plunge into the two world wars, and the aftermath of the Cold War?

America at Home -- As a new world power, what problems did Americans begin to find at home? What prompted the Civil Rights Movement, as well as other rights movements of the era?

America Now -- How can we explain the rise of the conservative movement in the second half of the century? What problems are we still having to deal with?

In each section students will learn of the different ways that Americans define themselves, and of the leading historical discourses. We will also learn how history played out in culture: How did Americans explain their times in the arts? How did the culture of each era explain to us what Americans thought?

ASSIGNMENTS/EXAMS

Required Reading:

The American Yawp, <http://www.americanyawp.com/>

John Kenneth Galbraith. *The Great Crash 1929*. New York: Mariner Books, 2009.

Nancy Hewitt and Kirsten DeLegard, editors. *Women, Families and Communities; Vol. 2*. New York: Pearson Publications, 2008.

Cleveland Sellers. *The River of No Return*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1990.

Students are expected to complete **two papers** of about three pages each on topics that I will pose as the class proceeds. It is crucial that students learn how to write an essay, and we will focus on that skill during the semester. Each paper will be double-spaced, in 12 point type, with reasonable margins. They will be entered into the Canvas assignment slot. **Deadlines are absolute.** A half grade will be deducted for each day the paper is late. If you can not complete the paper on time, contact me by email at least two days before its deadline.

There will be an **in-class mid-term** exam about halfway through the semester. You will be asked to identify certain terms and to write two short essays.

As a **final project**, students will be asked to choose a recent song, film, book, court case, etc., and to explain how it fits into the class. What current issues does it raise, and how do those issues encompass some of the ideas of the class? For example, can we see how the Progressive Era's ideas play out? Does it invoke the problems of the Jim Crow era? These papers will be about six to seven pages.

GRADING

Each short paper will be 15 percent of the final grade; the mid-term will be 25 percent; and the final essay will be 30 percent. I will also grade attendance at 5 percent and class participation at 10 percent.

The grade scale is as follows:

A = 95-100
A- = 90-94
B+ = 86-89
B = 82-85
B- = 80-82
C+ = 76-79
C = 72-75
C- = 70-72
D+ = 66-69
D = 62-65
D- = 60-62
F = below 60

ATTENDANCE

It should go without saying, but attendance is crucial for this course. I will discuss in class concepts and ideas that are *not* within the assigned reading. So attending and participating is fundamental to understanding this course.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. If students arrive after attendance has been taken, they should speak to me after class.

Students may miss up to two class meetings with no questions asked. However they MUST contact me by email no later than two hours before class if they expect to be absent.

Should they miss additional classes, students must present an excused absence. For information on what constitutes an excused absence, students should consult UF's attendance policies:

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

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.”

HONOR CODE

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students in this class are participating in the pilot evaluation of the new course evaluation system called GatorEvals. The new evaluation system is designed to be more informative to instructors so that teaching effectiveness is enhanced and to be more seamlessly linked to UF's CANVAS learning management system. Students can complete their evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Please note your other classes this semester

may be evaluated in the current GatorRater online evaluation system at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu> . Thank you for serving as a partner in this important effort.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care:

If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center

<https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS) Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department, 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

<http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling.

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring.

<http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>

CLASS SCHEDULE

Initials:

WFC = *Women, Families and Communities; Vol. 2*

TAY = *The American Yawp*

PS = Primary Sources in *The American Yawp*

AMERICA GOES TO WORK

Week 1

Aug. 21: Introduction

Aug. 23: TAY 15 -- Reconstruction

Read it all but focus on sections:

I. Introduction

V. Racial Violence in Reconstruction

VI. Economic Development During Civil War, Reconstruction

VII. The End of Reconstruction

Week 2

Aug. 26, 28, 30:

TAY 15 -- Reconstruction (continued)

Read: Intro to *Plessy v. Ferguson*

<https://www.history.com/topics/black-history/plessy-v-ferguson>

Dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson*

<http://chnm.gmu.edu/courses/nclc375/harlan.html>

Read: WFC -- “Not That Sort of Woman”

TAY 16 -- Capital and Labor

Read: PS: William Graham Sumner on Social Darwinism

Watch: Factory scenes from Charlie Chaplin’s *Modern Times*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfGs2Y5WJ14>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6n9ESFJTnHs>

Week 3

Sept. 2: NO CLASS -- LABOR DAY

Sept. 4, 6:

TAY 17 -- Life in Industrial America

Read it all but focus on sections:

III. Immigration and Urbanization

V. Gender, Religion and Culture

Read: WFC -- Coming of Age

View: Jacob Riis; “How the Other Half Lives:

Photographs of NYC’s Underbelly”

<https://petapixel.com/2013/06/16/how-the-other-half-lives-photographs-of-nycs-underbelly-in-the-1890s/>

AMERICA DOESN'T WORK

Week 4

Sept. 9, 11, 13:

TAY 20 -- The Progressive Era

Read: WFC -- Hull House in the 1890s

Week 5

Sept. 16, 18, 20:

TAY 22 -- The New Era

Read it all but focus on sections:

VII. The Culture War

VIII. Fundamentalist Christianity

IX. Rebirth of the Ku Klux Klan

Read: WFC -- Women and the Ku Klux Klan

Read: *The Great Crash 1929* -- pp. 1-42.

Week 6

Sept. 23, 26, 27:

FIRST PAPER DUE -- SEPT. 23

TAY 23 -- The Great Depression

Read: *The Great Crash 1929* -- pp. 88-127, 168-194.

Watch: Scenes from *The Grapes of Wrath*: “Who Do We Shoot?”; “Who Wants to Work?”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7JEYHczRar8>

Listen: Bruce Springsteen: “Ghost of Old Tom Joad”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ptWE8DAVI5E>

Listen: Roosevelt’s First Fireside Chat

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/93076/day-1933-fdr-gave-his-first-fireside-chat>

AMERICA EXPANDS

Week 7

Sept. 30, Oct. 2, 4:

TAY 17 -- Conquering the West

Read it all but focus on sections:

V. Western Economic Expansion

VI. The Allotment Era and Resistance in the Native West

VIII. The West as History: The Turner Thesis

Read: PS -- Frederick Turner: “Significance of Frontier”

TAY 19 -- American Empire

Read it all but focus on sections:
II. Patterns of American Intervention
III. 1898
IV. Theodore Roosevelt and American Imperialism
Read: PS -- Rudyard Kipling: "The White Man's Burden"

Week 8

Oct. 7, 9:

TAY 21 -- World War I and Its Aftermath
Read: Woodrow Wilson's Jan. 22, 1917 speech
<http://www-personal.umd.umich.edu/~ppennock/doc-Wilsonpeace.htm>
Read: PS -- Woodrow Wilson Requests War
Read: Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points
http://avalon.law.yale.edu/20th_century/wilson14.asp

Oct. 11: NO CLASS -- HOMECOMING

Week 9

Oct. 14, 16, 18:

TAY 24 -- World War II
Watch: Only Live News Report From Attack on Pearl Harbor
https://www.smithsonianmag.com/videos/category/history/the-only-live-news-report-from-the-attack-on_1/
Read: PS -- Harry Truman Announcing the Bombing of Hiroshima

Week 10

Oct. 21, 23, 25:

MIDTERM -- OCT. 21

TAY 25 -- The Cold War
Read: PS -- Truman Doctrine
Watch: PS -- Duck and Cover
Watch: "Point of Order"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wJHsur3Hqcl>

AMERICA AT HOME

Week 11

Oct. 28, 30, Nov. 1:

TAY 26 -- The Affluent Society
We will address the chapter in this order:
I. Introduction
II. The Rise of the Suburbs
V. Gender and Culture in the Affluent Society

VI. Politics and Ideology in the Affluent Society

Rise of the Civil Rights Movement

III. Race and Education

IV. Civil Rights in an Affluent Society

Read: PS -- *Brown v. Board of Education*

Read (optional): "The Court Comes Together"

http://www.abajournal.com/magazine/article/the_court_comes_together

Read: *The River of No Return* (pp. 1-110)

Week 12

Nov. 4, 6, 8:

TAY 27 -- The Sixties

We will address the chapter in this order:

III. Civil Rights Movement Continues

VII. Beyond Civil Rights

Read: *The River of No Return* (pp. 111-169, 253-267)

Read: Martin Luther King Jr.: "Letter From a Birmingham Jail"

https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

II. Kennedy and Cuba

IV. Lyndon Johnson's Great Society

V. Origins of the Vietnam War

VI. Culture and Activism

Listen: Bob Dylan: *The Times They Are A'Changin'*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=90WD_ats6eE

Listen: Brian and Thomas Owens: Sam Cooke's *A Change Is Gonna Come*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEXhZ8PwM-Y>

Listen: Sweet Honey in the Rock: *Eyes on the Prize*

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D_tcZAqQUAg

Week 13

Nov. 11: NO CLASS -- VETERANS DAY

Nov. 13, 15:

SECOND PAPER DUE -- NOV. 13

TAY 28 -- The Unraveling

Read: WFC -- Danielle McGuire: "It Was Like All of Us Had Been Raped"

Listen: The Rolling Stones: *Gimme Shelter*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RbmS3tQJ7Os>

Read: PS -- Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders

Watch: 1968 Democratic Convention

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YRC1WYa7-7k>

Watch: Watergate report

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZSGMMUC7FQ>

AMERICA NOW

Week 14

Nov. 18, 20, 22:

TAY 29 -- The Triumph of the Right

Read: WFC -- Michelle Nickerson: Moral Mothers and Goldwater Girls

Watch: Ronald Reagan's 1964 "Rendezvous With Destiny" speech

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2pbp0hur9RU>

Watch: Ronald Reagan's 1987 "Tear Down This Wall" speech

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WjWDrTXMgF8>

Watch: Patrick Buchanan's 1992 "Culture War" speech

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lstA7j5fmio>

Week 15

Nov. 25:

TAY 30 -- The Recent Past

Read: Ta-Nehisi Coates: "Letter to My Son"

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/07/tanehisi-coates-between-the-world-and-me/397619/>

Read: Future of Immigration -- Latinx America

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/racism-not-lack-assimilation-real-problem-facing-latinos-america-n974021>

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/magazine/2018/07/latinos-hispanic-power-america-immigration-future/>

<https://news.wjct.org/post/ne-floridas-latino-population-soars-politicians-struggle-monolith-myth>

Read: *Time* magazine: "Millennials: The Me Me Me Generation"

<https://time.com/247/millennials-the-me-me-me-generation/>

Nov. 27, 29: NO CLASS -- THANKSGIVING

Week 16

Dec. 2, 4: CLASS REVIEW

Final Project:

Write Your Own History

You have spent a semester studying history and reading cultural references that relate to the time.

For a final project, choose a recent or contemporary song, book, magazine article, movie, podcast, court ruling, etc., and show how it brings in the ideas we talked about in class:

What does it say about the present? How does it incorporate the historical ideas from class? For example, does it bring in ideas from the Progressive Movement? From post-Reconstruction?