

Spring 2003

Syllabus

History 212-08 The United States Since 1865

Time: T-Th 12:30-1:45 Room: McIver 226

Instructor: Mark Moser

email: mamoser@uncg.edu

Office: McIver 223

Office Hours: T, TR 10:00 - 11:00 (and by appointment)

Texts:

Joseph R. Conlin. *The American Past: A Survey of American History, Vol II Since 1865*, (Sixth Edition). *

Dee Brown. *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West*.

Upton Sinclair. *The Jungle*.

John Kenneth Galbraith. *The Great Crash: 1929*.

Jo Ann Gibson Robinson. *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It: The Memoir of Jo Ann Gibson Robinson*.

Carl Bernstein and Robert Woodward. *All the President's Men*.

Course Objectives:

This is a broad survey course designed to provide students with a general overview of the important political, social, economic, and cultural events which shaped the course of United States history since the Civil War. American history survey courses such as this cover a tremendous amount of information in a relatively brief period of time, consequently we move at a very rapid pace. It is absolutely essential that you keep up with your reading as it is very difficult to catch up once you fall behind. Students successfully completing this course will have obtained an understanding of key concepts and important individuals discussed in the textbook, lectures, and videos. Aside from the tangible evidence we will be examining in this course, we will also be approaching our study of the history of the United States since 1865 with three abstract questions in mind: *Who is an American? What rights and privileges should Americans be able to expect?* and finally *How has our response to the previous two questions changed over time?* Keep these questions in the back of your mind as we progress through the semester.

Attendance:

Punctuality and regular attendance are necessary in order for students to do their best in any college course--this course is no exception. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each and every class. I will allow **four (4) absences** during the semester with no academic penalty. A fifth absence will result in lowering your final grade. (example: from B+ to B, or from B- to C+, etc.) A sixth absence, unless incurred under very extenuating circumstances, will seriously affect your chances of receiving a passing grade in this course!!! (**Habitual tardiness will also result in lowering your final grade**) Students will be notified when they have reached four (4) absences and/or at such time when their tardies have become excessive. Dropping the class is your responsibility. Students who simply stop coming to class will **not** automatically be dropped. The last day to drop a class without academic penalty is Wednesday, March 19.

Grading:

Your final grade for this course is based on a 10 point scale and will be determined by your combined scores from the following:

Midterm Exam 15%
 Final Exam 20%
 Semester Project 25%
 Book Tests (5) 30%
 Class Participation 10%

Midterm -- On Tuesday, March 4, you will have a midterm exam that will cover all the information we have covered to that point. The midterm will consist of three (3) parts: multiple choice, matching, and short answer. About one week before the midterm I will provide you with a brief study guide that will contain several key names and terms that you should be familiar with. You will not be able to rely completely on this study guide, however, because it will not be exhaustive. Anything covered in the course--including your textbook, lecture notes, and videos we may have seen--is fair game for exam questions. You will not be tested on anything found exclusively in *Wounded Knee* or *The Jungle* since these books will be covered in separate tests.

Final Exam -- Your final exam will cover everything we have studied since the midterm. The format will be different from your midterm in that it will be essay only. I will give you more details about the final exam as the semester progresses.

Semester Project-- In this class we will be examining many of the key events which shaped the United States from the end of the Civil War to the present day. It should be obvious to you that history is being made everyday, that the world around us is constantly changing, and that the United States of the future may be vastly different from that of today. Your assignment as history students in this class will be to create a "scrapbook" of sorts, gleaned from the pages of prominent daily newspapers. I want you to title this assignment "Today's News--Tomorrow's History."

Beginning Sunday, January 19, and continuing through April 30, you are to read and select one significant news article (each and every day) that in some way pertains to the United States. The articles may focus on economic, political, military, social, religious, or cultural issues --or any combination of these. They may be international, national, or regional in scope, but they should be key, newsworthy articles rather than less serious pieces of journalism which abound in daily newspapers. The format of your "scrapbook" is entirely up to you, but whatever format you choose you need to stay with it throughout. You may actually cut your articles from the paper and paste them onto pages of a scrapbook or you may simply download and print your articles from a newspaper's website. If you choose the latter method, I would prefer that you place them--in chronological order--in a three-ring binder. Unless otherwise approved by me, only the following newspapers are acceptable as sources for you news articles: *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today*, *Greensboro News and Record*, *Winston-Salem Journal*, *Raleigh News and Observer*, *Charlotte Observer*. At least half of your articles **must** come from either the *New York Times* or the *Washington Post*!!!

(Note: You do not have to obtain articles during the week of Spring Break--Saturday, March 8 through Sunday, March 17)

The purpose of this exercise is not simply to get you to collect these articles, but to READ them! Therefore, for each daily article you collect, you must also answer the following five questions:

- 1) What is the main theme of the article?
- 2) Why is this information newsworthy?
- 3) Does this article introduce new information or is it a continuation of an ongoing story?
- 4) Do the events depicted in this article have short-term or long-term implications--or both?
What are they?
- 5) Why would future historians possibly find this particular information useful?

*These projects must be turned in May 1 and will be graded based on the quality and quantity of your articles. In order to receive the best possible grade they should also be well organized.
 (Projects will be reduced one-half letter grade for each day late!)

Book Tests (5) -- For each of the five (5) assigned books for this course, beginning with Dee Brown's *Bury My*

Heart at Wounded Knee, you will be given a ten (10) question, multiple-choice quiz that will test your basic knowledge of the book's central theme, key points, main characters, point of view, etc. Anyone who has thoroughly read the books should have no trouble passing these tests! I am well aware of the amount of reading I am asking you to do this semester, and I also realize that students have lives beyond the classrooms. But the information contained in these books will significantly augment your understanding of American history because each one illuminates a key period or event that we will be discussing during the course of the semester. The purpose of these quizzes, then, is to encourage students who might be tempted to skim or avoid reading one or more books altogether to read them carefully. As an additional incentive to thoroughly read these books, there will be a serious penalty involved for any student who scores less than 50% on any of the five tests. For each such occurrence a student will have to complete a 7 to 8 page research paper on a topic of my choice. All research papers, if required, must be completed in a satisfactory and timely manner in order for any of your other book test scores to be counted toward your final grade!

Class Participation -- In order to receive a good grade for class participation students should always come to class prepared and on time. Being prepared means having read the textbook chapter or chapters prior to coming to class. This will make the lectures and class discussions more meaningful. Being prepared for this class also entails keeping up with your "Today's News--Tomorrow's History" project on a daily basis. It will be necessary for you to bring your project with you each and every time you come to class because I will randomly call on everyone in the class at least twice during the semester and have them briefly discuss a recent article they have read. I will also take up (unannounced) your projects at least twice during the semester in order to ensure that you are maintaining it on a daily basis. Students who demonstrate an interest in the class, pay attention, and who voluntarily contribute to class discussions can also improve their class participation grade.

Course Outline:

Week One: January 14, 16

January 14 --- Course overview and explanation of syllabus, requirements, etc.

January 16 --- Continue reading *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*

Week Two: January 21, 23

January 21 --- Continue reading *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*

January 23 --- Continue reading *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee*

Week Three: January 28, 30

January 28 --- Reading: *American Past* Ch 31 "The Last Frontier"

January 30 --- ***Test/Discussion of *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee***

Week Four: February 4, 6

February 4 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 32 "Stressful Times Down Home"

February 6 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 33 "In the Days of McKinley"

Week Five: February 11, 13

February 11 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 34 "Theo. Roosevelt and the Good Old Days"

February 13 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 35 "Age of Reform"

Week Six: February 18, 20

February 18 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 36 "Victors at Armageddon"

February 20 --- ***Test/Discussion of *The Jungle***

Week Seven: February 25, 27

February 25 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 37 "Over There"

February 27 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 38 "Over Here"

Week Eight: March 4, 6

March 4 --- * **Midterm Exam** (Bring blue books)

March 6 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 39 “In the Days of Harding” and Chapter 40 “Calvin Coolidge and the New Era”

***** SPRING BREAK---** (No class March 11th or March 13th)

Week Nine: March 18, 20

March 18 --- ***Test/Discussion of *The Great Crash: 1929***

March 20 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 41 “National Trauma”

Week Ten: March 25, 27

March 25 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 42 “Rearranging America”

March 27 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 43 “Headed For War Again”

Week Eleven: April 1, 3

April 1 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 44 “America’s Great War”

April 3 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 45 “Anxiety Time”

Week Twelve: April 8, 10

April 8 --- ***Test/Discussion of *The Montgomery Bus Boycott and the Women Who Started It***

April 10 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 46 “Eisenhower Country”

Week Thirteen: April 15, 17

April 15 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 47 “Consensus and Camelot”

April 17 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 48 “Years of Turbulence”

Week Fourteen: April 22, 24

April 22 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 49 “Presidency in Crisis”

April 24 --- Reading: *American Past* Chapter 50 “Morning in America”

Week Fifteen: April 29, May 1

April 29 --- ***Test/Discussion of *All the President’s Men***

May 1 --- Review for final and turn in projects

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, May 8 12:00PM - 3:00PM (Bring blue books)

Requests to take a missed test must be made *prior* to the next class meeting time! You may email me, leave a note in my faculty mailbox, or stop by my office during office hours. I will consider all such requests on an individual basis and determine whether or not your absence warrants your being allowed to take the missed test.