

**HIS 212-07 Syllabus
The US Since 1865
University of North Carolina at Greensboro**

Science Building: Room 200
Monday: 7:00 PM – 9:50 PM

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and by appointment

A copy of this syllabus is contained in Blackboard under HIS 212-07

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND THE SCOPE OF THIS COURSE

This is a United States survey course; it is designed to provide a general overview of historical events from 1865 to the present. The course will not only provide an overview of history's major events and the significant figures of historical importance, it will also provide background on historical concepts and scholarly interpretations that allow for an understanding of cultural, social, political and economic history.

The study of history requires more than memorization of dates, names and events, although such facts are important. Understanding history means peeling back the layers of time to expose cultural, social, political, and economic conflict among various groups of ordinary folk – people who represent a cross section of America. Appreciating history also requires examination of how historians perceive, interpret, and write about the past – not all scholars agree and their assertions present a mosaic that constructs a picture of the past in a context that allows for a better understanding of America's development.

COURSE GOALS

- Comprehend the major events in US History since the Civil War and identify their causes, outcomes and the participants
- Evaluate the processes of change in the development of American society and culture from 1865 to the present
- Compare and contrast the experiences of different groups of people based on factors such as race, class, gender, religion, ethnic origin, and regional variation
- Understand how to evaluate historical texts and documents in order to draw conclusions about the past

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Required Texts (available in the University Bookstore)

The American Journey: A History of the United States, Vol. 2., 3rd edition.
David Goldfield...et al.

- Readings, class preparation, and class participation

This course will require you to read and understand the various themes of history covered in the required text. As such, you will be held to the assigned readings for each class meeting, which means you should make notes during your readings, you should formulate questions about the various arguments, facts and material covered, and you should consult outside sources if you have difficulty understanding some aspects of the texts. Outside sources are easily available from the Jackson Library and in many cases, the Internet. **Please, don't come to class unprepared or with a total lack of ideas, questions, or comments.**

- Class Participation

It is imperative that you participate in class discussions each and every class meeting. I welcome dissenting views, comments, and I will expect you to discuss your ideas and interpretations of the assigned materials for each class. Believe me, class will go smoother, faster, and be far more enjoyable if everyone is prepared and can intelligently discuss the material – why not participate? The alternative: a lecture for a full period, a long drawn out class, and in all probability a lack of real understanding of the material. To help you along, here's what I will require for each class period:

- A 3x5 inch index card with your name at the top, the date, and the topic of the respective class. Underneath, you should have two (2) questions that you can present to class that evolved as you read the texts. As well, any comments or observations about the readings that sparked a thought or required a response from you.
- I will ask for your index cards periodically throughout the semester. Thus, you must be prepared, each and every class to submit them.

In addition, I will occasionally bring copied articles for you to read about a specific topic – I will provide you with the copied article and it will become part of the assigned reading for the next class meeting. As with all readings, I will expect you to read the article, which will be used to supplement the text. In such cases, you should include questions, comments and thoughts on the index card that pertain to the supplemental material.

- Attendance

We only meet once a week, as this is the case, I will expect you each class unless you have an exceptional circumstance. If you find yourself unable to attend, then you need to e-mail me or better yet, give me a call, and let me know you will be absent and the reason why. It is your responsibility to let me know if you are going to be absent. I will allow for one excused absence during the semester. Since we have a broad range of time and material to cover, it is imperative that you attend class. Being late to class is also a bad practice, if you enter class late, please enter as quietly as possible and see me at the end of the class period so that I can appropriately mark your

status on my roll for that day. Consistent absenteeism and or tardiness will be reason enough for me to impose a **grading penalty**; so don't put you or me in that position.

- Tests and Exams

During the semester there will be four (4) unit tests that will consist of multiple-choice questions, definitions, and one (1) essay question. The last unit test will be the final exam and will be the same format as the other unit tests. The final test will cover the last chapters covered in the semester (not cumulative); however, the essay on the final test will be a cumulative essay. The final essay will thus, be your opportunity to exhibit your overall knowledge of US History between 1865 and the present.

Note sheets: For all unit tests, you may bring one (1) sheet of notebook paper with handwritten notes, front and back, to class. I will allow you to use this note sheet for your tests. However, you must submit your note sheet along with your test upon completion. Note sheets are not to be typed and must be in handwritten note form.

- Library Assignment and Book Reviews

During the semester you will be required to submit **two** (2) book reviews. The book reviews must be written, based on your reading of two scholarly books. I will require one book review on a topic from the nineteenth century and one book review from the twentieth century. You may select a book that covers a topic from a list that I will provide. Book reviews are to be a **minimum** of three (3) pages, double-spaced; with a cover page that provides the book's title, the author, date of publication, and your name. You will be required to locate your selected books from the Jackson Library and you will submit the book's title and author to me in advance of submitting your book reviews.

Book reviews are not overly complicated. You should read the book and make a determination about what the author is arguing: his or her thesis. Once you have determined what the author is arguing about the topic, then you should look for several things, for example:

- Does the author provide evidence to prove his or her argument?
- Does the author provide enough sources to prove his or her argument?
- Does the author convince you of his or her argument?
- Is the author's argument clear and easy to understand?

After reading a book, you should be able to make specific determinations about the author, the topic, the argument, and the book. You should include your observations, analysis, and conclusions about the book in your book review.

I will cover book reviews in more detail after the first or second class. I would recommend however, scanning through the topic list in order to locate a topic of interest and move forward with finding a book or two that you can begin to read. Procrastination is your worst enemy; "putting it off" will only result in a book review that is shallow with few details.

COURSE GRADING

- Unit Test 1 20%
- Unit Test 2 20%
- Unit Test 3 20%
- Library Assignments / Book Reviews 20%
- Unit Test 4 (Final Exam) 20%

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

Reading assignments are specified below, you are responsible for the reading prior to class from the text and from any handouts, which will be given out prior to the next class meeting. The required text is:

The American Journey: A History of the United States, Vol. 2., 3rd edition.
David Goldfield...et al.

- January 10 Class orientation: Syllabus – Class Introduction
- January 17 **No Class:** Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday – Read Chapter 16 (Reconstruction) from text (The American Journey)
- January 24 Reconstruction, 1865-1877
- January 31 Chapter 17 in American Journey: A New South
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- February 7** Chapter 18 in American Journey: Industry, Immigrants, and Cities
FIRST UNIT TEST
- February 14 Chapter 19 in American Journey: Transforming the West
- February 21 Chapter 21 in American Journey: The Progressive Era: 1900-1917
- February 28** Chapter 23 in American Journey: American and the Great War, 1914-1920
SECOND UNIT TEST *(Submit Book Review Title, Subject, etc.)
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- March 7 No Class: Spring Break
- March 14** Chapter 25 in American Journey: The Great Depression and the New Deal
1ST BOOK REVIEW DUE
- March 21 Chapter 26 in American Journey: World War II
- March 28 Chapter 27 in American Journey: The Cold War
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- April 4** Chapter 28 in American Journey: The Confident Years, 1953-1964
THIRD UNIT TEST *(Submit Book Review Title, Subject, etc.)
- April 11 Chapter 29 in American Journey: Shaken to the Roots 1965-1980
- April 18** Chapter 30 in American Journey: The Reagan Revolution
2ND BOOK REVIEW DUE
- April 25 Chapter 31 in American Journey: Complacency and Crisis 1993-2003
- May 2** **FINAL EXAM**

Book Review Topic List

19th Century:

- The Freedman's Bureau
 - The Ku Klux Klan, 1865-1880
 - Federal Reconstruction
 - Presidential Reconstruction
 - Radical Republicans
 - Andrew Johnson and impeachment
 - Southern Railroads
 - White Supremacy in the South
 - The Grange and other farmers' alliances
 - Booker T Washington
 - The Gilded Age
 - Industrialization
 - Thomas Edison
 - Labor Organizations and Unions
 - Immigration
 - Indian Wars
 - Cowboys and the Wild West
 - The American Indian Reservation system
 - Wounded Knee Massacre
 - Westward Expansion
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20th Century:

- The Progressive Era
- Women's Suffrage
- Theodore Roosevelt
- Woodrow Wilson
- Sedition and Espionage Acts during WWI
- The First Red Scare
- General John J. Pershing
- The New Deal
- American Propaganda during WWII
- Women's roles and World War II
- Japanese Internment Camps
- T.V. and Film, 1950 – 1970
- The Second Red Scare
- McCarthyism
- Dwight D. Eisenhower
- Communism and the role of the FBI
- The Bay of Pigs
- Vietnam and the Tet Offensive
- Civil Rights Movements in the 1960's
- Youth and Counterculture of the 1960's and 1970's
- The Cold War