HIST 1301, Triad C, U.S. to 1865, fall, 2013

Time: MWF 9 – 9:50 AM
Place: Center for Instruction (BH), Rm. 103
Instructor: Prof. Pat Carroll
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Office Location: Faculty Center 280
Office Hours:
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: Scholars have long realized that who we are today is in large part the result of who we were in the past. Put another way, there are three interrelated time dimensions to the human experience in any setting, a past, a present, and a future. This course will use lectures, readings, visual illustrations, and class discussions to consider a wide spectrum of U.S. experiences during the period from pre-European contact with North America to 1865. We do all this to better understand how we came to be who and what we are today as a nation. The four themes most emphasized in this course are the same as those emphasized by the authors of your text, Created Equal – Diversity, Class Systems and Power, Globalization, and Environment.

Diversity celebrates the racial and ethnic diversity of U.S. women and men, from pre-European contact Native American ethnic groups, to multiple European, West African, and Asian peoples who contributed to the make-up of our present population. As “Americans” we are descended from all of these groups, and each of them made critical contribution to the evolution of our nation and our national identity over time.

“Taken as a whole, “Class Systems and Power” are the most elusive of the four themes we shall explore in the course. Class usually refers to socio-economic identity and privilege ranking defined by wealth and occupational prestige. The authors of your text, however, seem to define “Class”, as some broader category that includes multiple social, political, and gender categories, as well as economic traits/conditions which determine access to individual and corporate power. We define “Power,” in turn, as the exercise of influence over others.

Globalization simply means emphasis on the area we now politically define as the U.S. taken within the context of world development. We apply this perspective throughout U.S. history, from pre-colonial through the Civil War periods. This approach underscores the continuity of these social, economic, and political conditions (national and international) in shaping our history.

The text’s Environmental theme stresses the importance of American physical conditions, land, climate, mineral resources, navigable waterways, and the like in defining the parameters (boundaries) of U.S. development over time. The mix of people, land, internal, as well as external economic, social, and political forces provide us with a comprehensive overview of past, present U.S. development, and possibly insights into our future national experience. These future potential insights derive not from our observation of change in the U.S. experience, knowledge which better allows us to understand our past and present, but continuity in the U.S. experience which helps us to rationally speculate about our future course of development.

The breadth of our historical lines of inquiry should help you to sharpen your critical thinking (analytical) skills, abilities which go a long way toward defining the difference between your college and high school educational experiences. Put another way, in high school you were asked to learn when and what happened in U.S. history, with some beginning exploration into why things happened. This course will place greater emphasis on why things happened, and add another even more significant question, “How” things happen. This last question is the most important of all. It focuses on an understanding of the “processes” involved in shaping the human experience anywhere at any time. All of these inquiries will be set in comparative sectional, or regional, perspective – the Southern, the Northern, and the Western regions of the U.S. leading up to and culminating in the Civil War. We shall do all of the above in order to arrive at a better understanding of our past, our present, and our future national experiences.

COURSE CONTENT:

1. Consideration of the impact of Old and New World contact on Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans.
2. Consideration of the importance of physical, demographic, economic, social, and political differences on regional development.
3. Consideration of conditions on both sides of the Atlantic leading up to the U.S. Revolutionary War.
4. A review of the regionally and nationally based economic, social, and political trends during the
early national and 19th century ante-bellum periods;
5. The identification of possible causes of the Civil War in both the North and the South.
6. The evolution of U.S. economic, social, and political national identity to 1860.
7. Considerations of the relevance of past processes of development on present and future national development (the continuity in the U.S. experience).

Desired Student Learning Outcomes:
The overall objective of this course is to arrive at a better understanding of U.S. development; as well as the development of critical thinking and communication skills. To do this we shall:

1. Explore the four themes emphasized in the Created Equal text as a means to understanding U.S. development over time.
2. Develop critical thinking skills by identifying connections between historical facts and by fitting those facts and the connections between them into a larger narrative of U.S.
3. Construct persuasive essays using sound logic and concrete examples.
4. Expand written and oral communication skills.
5. Engage in “Collective Learning/Transference,” or interdisciplinary perspective.
6. Raise consciousness the processes of collective and individual identity construction over time.

We measure all of the above by performance on exams, quizzes, and in class discussions.

REQUIRED TEXT Available at both TAMUCC and the Islander Bookstores:


GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

Native Americans and identity construction ................................................. 5%
Mid-Term Exam (Mar. 10) ................................................................. 20%
Triad C mid-term and final portfolios ...... (5% of the course grade each) ....... 10%
7 quizzes, of which five highest grades will count, each worth worth up to 5%) . 20% 1
Participation in Class Discussion and Analysis of Assigned Primary
Document analysis ................................................................. 20%
Final Exam (May 10, 11AM-1:30 PM) .................................................. 25%

TOTAL .......................................................... 100%

You can earn 1 point extra credit toward your total course grade by attending a lecture by renowned scholar, Dr. José Limón of the Mexican American Studies program at Notre Dame University, and writing a one paragraph explaining how you think Dr. Limón’s talk helped you to understand who we are collectively in South Texas. His presentation takes place on Sept. 20th, from 5-6 PM in CI 138.

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1 Each quiz will consist of ten multiple-choice questions.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Please read the following with care. If any of the information below is unclear, please ask questions about it during class or during an individual meeting with the professor. In the absence of questions I shall assume that you have read and understood the following:

Lectures: Approximately 75% of the material that you will be responsible for will be presented in the lectures, and class discussions (the remainder is covered in the assigned readings). It follows that you must attend class and take good notes on a regular basis in order to earn passing grades in the course.

Note-taking: We expect and encourage you to take notes during class lectures and discussions. If you want to tape record the lectures that is O.K. too. Since some of the material covered in lecture will not be found in the assigned texts, it is imperative that you take good and complete notes. The computer presentations (PowerPoint slides) illustrate and emphasize the main points on the large screen. They should assist in your note taking. However, it is not enough to simply copy the information “bullets” that you see on the screen, as these are but topic headings in the main. You are expected to take notes on the lecture information that explains and amplifies the bullet entries.

Readings: Readings are assigned to supplement the lectures, not to replace them. You will be expected to write in-class Mid-Term and Final Exams. Part 2 of each of these tests will require you to write an essay that integrates lecture, class discussions, and assigned reading materials. You should take notes, and read with this goal in mind. For this reason it is a good idea to leave a blank page or two in your notebook to insert notes from your reading material for that week. I would also encourage you to highlight important passages in your text explaining events and make marginal notes on the pages of your text to tie highlighted information to developmental questions. Readings for each meeting are to be completed by that meeting. These strategies will both help you to understand historical connections, and to later prepare for your tests, quizzes, and in class exercises in primary document analysis.

Exams: There are two closed-book, no access to notes exams in the course, a Mid-Term and a Final. The Mid-term will cover material presented between Jan. 11 and Mar. 8. It will comprise 20% of your final course grade. The Final will cover material presented between Mar. 22 and Apr. 28. The Final exam will comprise 35% of your course grade. The Mid-Term exam will have two parts. Part 1 will consist of 10 multiple-choice questions, each worth ½ point. Part 2 will include two possible essay questions. 

You will be asked to choose one of these questions and write a 250-350 word essay on your selection. Your essay on the Mid-Term will count for up to 15 points. The Final Exam will also have 2 parts, and cover all material presented after the Mid-Term. Part 1 will consist of 20 multiple-choice questions, each worth ½ point. Part 2 of the Final Exam will also consist of 2 essay questions, and again we shall ask you to choose one of these options and write an essay on it. This essay, however, will be longer in length than the one on the Mid-Term, somewhere between 350-and 450 words in length. In your Final Exam essay we expect you to provide more supportive evidence for the general statements you make and the conclusions you draw from them, than we expect in the Mid-Term Exam essay. The Final Exam essay will be worth 25 points. We will provide you with an “Essay Guide” a week prior to each exam. It will include 6-7 potential essay questions. At the end of the scheduled exam review session the class will throw out one question, reducing the number of potential essay questions to 5 or 6. Since you receive the questions in advance, it is highly recommended that you read and study the course material with these questions in mind.

Quizzes: There will be 7 unscheduled quizzes. You will be able to drop your two lowest quiz grades, thus 5 quizzes will count toward a total of 25% of your final grade, or 5% each. The quizzes will begin
during the second week of the course. Each quiz will cover course material from the previous quiz or exam up through the date of the new quiz. Since you are allowed to drop two quiz grades you may not make up a missed quiz. Quizzes are designed to reward students who regularly attend class and do the reading.

Analysis of Assigned Primary Documents: Read and analyze the document. “Analyzing” the document requires you to answer five basic questions. First, what are the document’s main points? Second, when and for whom was the document written? Third, what conditions existed at the particular time and place which inspired the writing of the document? Fourth, imagine yourself part of the audience for whom the piece was written. How do you think it would have affected you? Fifth, what relevance do you think the document might have for describing or addressing present conditions that exist in Corpus Christi, Texas, the nation, and/or the world? Come to class prepared to answer each of these questions on the dates that class discussions of them are listed in the Tentative Class Schedule section of the syllabus. The instructor will call on students to provide answers to each of these questions, and the student will be graded on the quality of her/his response.

COURSE POLICIES:

Make-ups for the Mid-Term and Final Exams: Only students with a valid reason (verified illness, accident, family crisis, etc.) may make up these Exams. In order to take a make-up you must contact the instructor as soon after your absence as possible to determine if you are eligible for a make-up. The instructor reserves the right to refuse a make-up exam if, in his judgement, the excuse does not justify it.

Make-ups (quizzes): Again, since you can throw out your two lowest quiz grades there are no make-ups for quizzes.

Extra Credit: Attendance at Dr. Limón’s presentation is voluntary. Those that do attend and write a one paragraph explanation of how his talk helped you to understand who we are in South Texas as a regional community will earn 1 point extra credit toward their course grade total.

Grade Appeals: It is our goal to maintain fair standards with regard to grading. If you feel, however, that you have received a grade that does not reflect the quality of your work, if you do not understand why you received a particular grade, or if you do not understand the written comments, you have the right to ask for further explanation. You may even wish to appeal your grade. The first step in this process is to consult with the person who graded your work. If I graded it come directly to me; if the TA graded it go to them first. If, after consulting with the TA you still believe your work was mis-graded, or you still do not understand the justification for the grade you received, please feel free to bring the matter to my attention. If your question regards multiple-choice questions on the quizzes please see me directly because I am the only one who constructs all of the graded exercises. Do not be shy about this. I take grading very seriously, but I am capable of making mistakes. If you feel that your grade is unfair, talk to one of us; we shall listen with an open minds.

Office Hours: Office hours are designed to make a course like this one less impersonal and less intimidating. Please take advantage of them. Office hours are scheduled times in which professors and TAs are available to see students. Please come by with any questions or comments you may have, or just to say hello. You are not bothering us; it is our job (and our pleasure) to meet you on a more personal basis, and to discuss course material, or to answer any questions you may have.
Freedom of Speech: Please feel free to raise your hand with a question or a comment. Part of the advantage of having a live professor in the classroom (vs. online instruction) is that you can ask questions. Remember: THERE ARE NO “DUMB QUESTIONS.” It may well be that other students are wondering about the same thing. All questions will be answered as time permits. You may also challenge and otherwise disagree with the instructor. Lively debates enhance the learning experience. However, while all opinions are welcome, this classroom must remain a comfortable place for everyone. Please express opinions without recourse to derogatory language or remarks.

Academic Honesty: Cheating or plagiarism will result in one or any combination of seven penalties (at the instructor’s discretion) listed on pp. 40-41 of the 2009-2010 University catalog. If you have any questions about academic honesty ask the instructor or consult the Undergraduate Univ. catalog.

Academic Advising: The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

Notice to Students with Disabilities: Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me.

Who Should You Contact for More General Problems Beyond this Course? For questions about what office you should contact call: (825-5263 or TALK 2 ME). This is for students who are having any type of problem; this is the number of a question clearing house run by Dr. Patricia Hill.

Final note: Unforeseeable events sometimes occur. Thus, the instructor reserves the right to change the syllabus at any point during the semester. In that event I will notify the class as soon as possible.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE & Required Readings & ASSIGNMENTS:

Sept. 4, 6. Class Orientation, Introductions, Jones, Graded Exercises, Course Policies. Read Jones, et al, Preface, pp. xviii – xiv; Course Description, p. 1 of the syllabus. Discuss the five questions we shall apply to our analysis of each assigned primary document, the class exercises related to this analysis, and how your answers will be graded.


13 The establishment of Spanish, French, English, and Dutch colonies in North America, Jones, et al, pp. 31-42.


27. Begin our examination of development in the Massachusetts Bay area, the cradle of the English American Northern colonies, pp. 44-50.

30. Continue our discussion of Massachusetts Bay development, and, by extension, the northern “Middle Colonies,” Jones, et al, pp. 44-50.

Oct. 2, 4. Finish our discussion of the Massachusetts Bay’s and the Middle Colonies’ development.


25. **Mid-term Exam.**


30. We shall then address the U.S. transition from Confederation to Nation and the drafting and ratification of a Constitution, Jones, et al, pp. 207-214.


15. An application of our five question analysis to a primary document to “Thomas Corwin, Against the Mexican War (1847),” on Blackboard.


22. An application of our five question analysis of a primary document to “Frederick Douglas’s Independence Day Speech,” on Blackboard.


29. Thanksgiving Holiday, no class.

Dec. 2, 4. Emancipation Proclamation, Union March to Victory, and Post-War Struggles of African Americans to

6, 9. Review for Final Exam.

Dec. 16. Final Exam, covering the founding the new republic through the Civil War, 8-10:30 AM, in the classroom.