The History of the United States since 1865
History 1302.002, fall 2013

Instructor: Adam Costanzo
Email: adam.costanzo@tamucc.edu
Office: Faculty Center 253
Office Hours: MWF 9am-11am
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(Note: Email is by far the most efficient way to contact me.)

Course Meeting Time and Place
M, W 3:30 – 4:45pm, CI 109

Course Description and Primary Themes
In this course we will examine United States History since the end of the Civil War in 1865. Together, we will investigate the lives of ordinary people as well as the actions of national leaders. Along the way, we will encounter a number of important themes. Some of these themes have run as currents throughout American history while others have emerged during the last 150 years to help shape the nation we know today. In particular, we will focus on the interplay of individual freedom and social authority, of prosperity and poverty, and of power and dispossession. We will discuss a wide variety of topics in the class including the changes to the nation that resulted from the Civil War; the development the nation’s overseas empire; the settlement and expansion of the American West, American relations with the wider world in an increasingly interconnected 20th century; the efforts of various populations within American society to achieve political and social equality, the global order established in the aftermath of the Second World War and the Cold War that dominated geopolitics for much of the century; and the environmental, economic, and political forces that continue to influence the nation.

The course will also develop your abilities to analyze historical evidence and make historical arguments based on that evidence. Finally, we will work to develop your writing and analytical skills in both papers and class discussions.

Student Learning Outcomes
Students who successfully complete this course will:

- demonstrate critical thinking by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information, gathering and assessing information relevant to a question, and analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information;
- develop communication skills by interpreting and expressing ideas through written, oral, or visual communication;
- demonstrate personal responsibility by evaluating historical choices and actions, and relating consequences to decision making;
- develop social responsibility by identifying intercultural competence and civic responsibility in past regional, national, and global communities.
**Expectations & Responsibilities**

You can expect the following from me as an instructor. I will:

- Create and foster a safe and stimulating learning environment in which students can take intellectual risks;
- Facilitate intellectual inquiry;
  - I will not lecture at you, force my opinions upon you, or provide the absolute "right answer."
- Clarify expectations, provide assignment examples, provide you with the tools and skills needed to complete assignments, and help you prepare for the exam; and
- Assess student work in a fair and timely manner, providing suggestions for improvement and affirmation when work is done well.

I will expect you, as a student, to:

- Share ideas and listen to others;
- Respect our learning environment, your peers, and the instructor.
  - If you are late, please enter quietly and take the nearest seat so that you disturb as few people as possible.
  - Silence your cell phone and fight the urge to call, text, tweet, or video chat with others during class about what a great time you are having in our class;
  - Feel empowered to tell others if their behavior inhibits your ability to learn;
  - If you don’t feel quite that empowered, feel free to let me know if there are any such issues in the classroom;
- Come prepared to learn and participate;
- Read assignments before coming to class;
- Bring the book or books being discussed, lecture notes, study material, and any assignments due that day; and
- Alert me to any concerns you may have and seek help when needed.

**Required Reading**

The following books are available at the TAMUCC bookstore or at any number of local or online retailers.


**Supplementary Reading**

Handouts or links distributed in class, via email, or via Blackboard and selections from the Online Textbook, Digital History [http://tiny.cc/US_History](http://tiny.cc/US_History)

**Required Supplies**

The in-class exams for this course will require bluebooks. The papers and online assignments, meanwhile, will require consistent access to
word processing software, the internet, Blackboard, and other online resources.

**Grading**
Grades are based upon your performance on the following:
Class Participation: 10%
Reading Response Discussion Board Posts: 15%
Historical Cover Letter: 15%
Argumentative Historical Essay: 20%
Midterm Exam: 20%
Final Exam: 20%

**Attendance and Participation Policy**
Attendance and participation in our discussions counts for 10% of the course grade. In addition, covering half of American history in a semester forces us to move at a very rapid pace. Students who miss classes will fall behind and find the exams and assignments much more difficult. Participation means coming to class each class period ready to discuss that week’s reading and any documents we may read or examine in class. You will have the opportunity to share your thoughts in both small group chats and in large class-wide discussions. Asking questions, offering your ideas and opinions, and building upon the ideas offered by others all count as participation in our class.

**Exams**
The course includes two exams, a midterm and a final. Each will cover material for half of the course. Both tests will consist of identification terms that you will define and explain their historical significance and short essays that require you to offer an argument about a historical question and use the information you’ve learned in the course to support your argument. Each test will be taken in class and written in blue books. Before each test I will circulate a list of possible essays so that you can prepare yourself to write them on the exam day. If you are going to miss an exam you must get in touch with me right away to explain your situation and, if warranted, work out a time that you might make it up or an assignment you might complete in lieu of the exam.

**Writing Assignments**
There are three types of writing assignments due for this course, responses to the weekly readings, a historical cover letter, and an argumentative historical essay. See the schedule below for due dates.

For the **reading responses**, we will utilize the “Discussion Board” tool in Blackboard. Each week you will be responsible for posting your thoughts about that week’s reading from either Contending Voices or our other readings. I’ll lay out questions each week to prompt discussion. You’ll also be responsible for commenting on at least one post by another student. These posts and comments will be due by 11pm Sunday each week.

For the **historical cover letter** assignment. You will write a job application cover letter for someone who ran for president during the
timer period we are studying. A sheet describing the assignment in
great detail will be posted to Blackboard. That document will include
a sample written by a previous U.S. History student who received high
marks on the assignment. The letters will be due in week four as you
can see in the detailed listings below.

The **argumentative essay** will be broken into three parts. A thesis
statement and outline of evidence will be assigned will be due in week
five. The full paper will be due in week ten. Once you have seen my
comments on your paper, you may do a rewrite to improve your grade.
Rewrites of the paper will be due in week thirteen. Like the cover
letter, I will provide ample detail and a sample to follow for this
assignment.

**Citation, Plagiarism, and Academic Honesty Policies**

All work that you turn in for this class must be your own creation and
based upon your own ideas. The “Academic Honesty” policies described
in the TAMUCC Undergraduate Catalog apply to all assignments and exams
in this course. Per that policy, students who turn in work that is not
their own risk failing the assignment, failing the course, or even
expulsion from the university.

In class, we will discuss different types of plagiarism and academic
dishonesty as well as how to avoid them. If you have any questions
whatsoever about how to complete an assignment or how to properly use
or cite information from our course materials, library resources, or
the internet, let me know and I’ll be happy to help. For the papers
you write in this class we will use Chicago Style footnotes to provide
citations. I’ll provide information in class and via Blackboard about
how to create these correctly.

**Late Policy**
The paper and letter assignments are due uploaded to Blackboard by 5pm
on the Monday of the week they are due. Papers turned in after 5pm
lose five points. Papers lose five additional points for each 24-hour
period that passes after the due date. Comments in our online
discussions are not accepted for credit after their due date and time.

**Communication Policy**

Other than visiting my office hours, email is the best way to get in
touch with me. It is my goal to respond to inquiries and comments
received via email in a prompt and reasonable amount of time. That
said. You and I might have different opinions as to what constitutes
reasonable. If you send me an email and do not get a response within
two business days, you should feel free to send a follow up email.

Before writing to me, please make every effort to answer the question
on your own. For example, information on this syllabus is always
available to you since it is posted on Blackboard. Similarly, your
campus email is capable of saving all messages you might receive about
the course. Emailing me to find out what the reading is for a given
day or what building my office is in would be quite inefficient (not
to mention a bit inconsiderate.)
Hurricane Policy
In the event of a hurricane, I will follow the published policies of TAMU-CC. If the campus remains officially open during the time that our class normally meets then class will proceed as scheduled (including all graded events). If the university closes campus then, of course, we will push the course requirements to the next official class meeting. If an exam date is cancelled, the exam will be held during the next official class meeting. If we will be deviating from the above policy in any way, I’ll announce it to the class via email.

Academic Advising
Academic advisors are available to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. Each college has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisors. In our college the undergraduate advisor is Linda Miller (825-3466, Linda.miller@tamucc.edu). The graduate advisor is Rachelle Stanley (825-3466, Rachelle.stanley@tamucc.edu). Both are located on the second floor of Driftwood. Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information please call (361) 825-5931 or log on to http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

Americans with Disabilities Act
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services Office at 825-5816 or visit their office in Driftwood 101.

Grade Appeal Process
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the student may take the steps below.

1. Presentation of grievance to instructor. (This step must be taken within fourteen calendar days after the beginning of the next term.)
2. Appeal to department chair or area coordinator.
3. Written appeal to the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
4. Preliminary review and advising by an ombudsman appointed by the Provost.
5. Submission of file by department chair to the chair of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
6. Review of file by committee chair and submission of case to committee.

7. Proceedings of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee. (Committee holds hearing, reviews data, presents findings to all parties, and makes recommendation to Provost.)

8. Decision by Provost.

9. Final appeal in writing to the Provost if student or instructor thinks appropriate procedures have not been followed.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

**Lecture, Reading, and Assignment Schedule**

The following schedule describes the reading and writing assignments for the class as well as the lecture topics to be covered each day. In order for you to best understand the details of the lectures, each reading assignment should be completed before the class meets. The reading load for this course averages out to about 40 pages per week between the textbook and the primary source reader. Beware of falling behind on reading. If you haven’t read the week’s reading when we discuss it in class, you won’t be able to take part in our discussion and earn participation credit. Note that the dates below are for planning purposes and may change depending on events that occur throughout the semester.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Subject(s)</th>
<th>Reading Due</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9/4-9/7</td>
<td>Course Introduction Reconstruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9/8-9/14</td>
<td>Reconstruction</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch15</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>9/15-9/21</td>
<td>The Gilded Age Innovation in Business and Technology</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch16 Contending Voices Ch1</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>9/22-9/28</td>
<td>Challenges to Government and Corporate Power</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch17 Contending Voices Ch2</td>
<td>Historical Cover Letter (5pm Monday)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>9/29-10/5</td>
<td>The 1890s</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch18 Contending Voices Ch3</td>
<td>Essay Outline and Thesis Due (5pm Monday)</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>10/6-10/12</td>
<td>The Progressive Era</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch19 Contending Voices Ch4</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/13-10/19</td>
<td>World War and Revolution</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch20 Contending Voices Ch5</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>10/20-10/26</td>
<td>The Roaring 20s</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch21 Contending Voices Ch6</td>
<td>Cover Letter Rewrite (optional) (5pm Monday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10/27-11/2</td>
<td>The Great Depression</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch22 Contending Voices Ch7</td>
<td>Midterm Exam (day during the week TBD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11/3-11/9</td>
<td>America in a Global War</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch23 Contending Voices Ch8</td>
<td>Essay Due (5pm Monday)</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>11/10-11/16</td>
<td>Postwar America: Growth and Fear</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch24 Contending Voices Ch9</td>
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<td>The Civil Rights Movement Gathers Momentum</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>11/17-11/23</td>
<td>The Vietnam Era</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch25 Contending Voices Ch10</td>
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<td>Social Change and Social Conflict</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>11/24-11/30</td>
<td>From Nixon to Carter</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch26 Contending Voices Ch11, 12 and 13</td>
<td>Optional Essay Rewrite Due (5pm Monday)</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>12/1-12/7</td>
<td>Ronald Reagan’s America The Cold War Ends</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch27 TBD</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>12/8-12/14</td>
<td>Post-Cold War America</td>
<td>Created Equal Ch28 Contending Voices Ch14</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>12/15-12/21</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Final Exam ( Wednesday Dec. 18 1:45pm-4:15pm)</td>
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