COURSE DESCRIPTION

An educated citizenry is crucial to the success of our nation. In order to better understand the present, educated persons must have an understanding of the past, of where they have come from, of how they have lived, and of why things developed the way they did. Historian Henry Steele Commager put it this way: “A people without history is like a man without memory: each generation would have to learn everything anew -- make the same discoveries, invent the same tools and techniques, wrestle with the same problems, commit the same errors.”

As such, this course seeks to provide you with a basic knowledge of the development of American history from the end of the Civil War to the present. The period witnessed a radial reconstruction of ideas on race and gender, the formation of national, issue-oriented political parties, the evolution of a powerful industrial-capitalist economy, and the emergence of U.S. influence on the international stage. More importantly, the age saw a deliberate and on-going effort by millions of Americans to express, support, and expand notions of democracy and republicanism for everyone in the United States.

Clearly then, the history of this era is very complex. A survey of American history moves quickly and covers only a portion of these questions. We will focus on the major themes and events in United States history after 1865 but will not be able to cover every event with the time and attention it deserves. As such, I encourage you to engage with the material outside of class as well as to offer thoughtful analysis and questions inside of class while we struggle to explain the cultural, social, economic, and political developments that have shaped our current reality.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through essay exams, a critical essay, and weekly assignments, 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

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Please read the course requirements listed below with care. It is important that there are no misunderstanding regarding these requirements, so if you have any questions concerning them, be sure to ask. I will operate under the assumption that you are aware of and understand these requirements.

Lectures and Attendance -- The lectures are designed to be the foundation for the course. As such, **regular class attendance is essential if you hope to pass the course**. I assume that when you sign up for the course, you are committing yourself to be in class on a regular basis. Furthermore, it is essential that you pay close attention and take good notes when you are here. **The PowerPoints are just an aid, and merely copying what is on them will not be enough.** I do not take daily attendance grades but instead will judge attendance based on a series of reading quizzes and short answer questions given during the semester. When you attend class I expect you to pay attention and take notes, not text, watch Netflix, or carry on a conversation with your classmates. I do reserve the right to ask you to leave class if you are distracting your classmates or myself.
Textbook – The History faculty has adopted Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty! An American History* (brief 4th edition), as the standard text for all 1301 and 1302 courses. With the lectures as a foundation, you should use this text to provide additional material to fill in the gaps. Don’t do the reading in a vacuum; first, scan the reading before the lectures to get a few main points and a general sense of the subject matter covered. Then go back and do the reading more carefully. After the lectures, go back over the reading, with an eye toward supplementing and building upon the issues and events we discussed in class. Don’t try to remember every detail (you won’t be able to do this anyway); instead, try to determine what is important. The assigned readings often include materials not specifically covered in class, so it is absolutely essential that you read the assignments in order to succeed in this course. Refer frequently to the relevant materials on the review guides, and to the lists of terms that you’ll be responsible for that we don’t cover in the lectures.

Supplemental Reading – Eric Foner, *Voices of Freedom*, Vol. 2 (4th edition). You’ll use this book to supplement and complement, rather than duplicate, the class lectures. Each chapter in this reader includes two types of materials: interpretive essays written by historians about how different figures influenced, and were affected by, key issues in American history; and additional primary source documents. In reading the interpretive essays, you should focus on identifying and understanding the argument (or theme, or thesis, or conclusions – pick whichever word you feel most comfortable with) that the author is trying to make. You should also know the evidence he/she uses to do this. It is okay to disagree with the author’s conclusion, but you need to be able to understand and explain how and why the author made this argument. As you’re reading, also try to think about how the subject matter of each essay affects your life. When reading the primary source documents, focus on linking them to the themes explored in the interpretive essay.

***You should familiarize yourself with the readings BEFORE class. The weekly quizzes will cover material from the day or week’s reading assignment so it is essential that you read the material before you come to lecture.***

Quizzes – The quizzes will be scheduled and related to the assigned readings for that week. These quizzes cannot be taken after the assigned due date. The final quiz grade will be determined by a cumulative average of your quiz scores over the term. I will drop the two lowest quiz scores from this average (including missed quizzes).

Examinations -- There will be four exams in this course. In order to do well on the exams, it is essential that you attend class regularly, take good notes, and read your assigned materials. Each exam will consist of the following:

Chronologies (20%) – One section of each exam will include a series of chronological sequencing questions, in which you will be asked to place a series of names, events, or things in their proper historical sequence. Materials in this section will come from the lectures and the assigned readings. Subjects from the readings will be drawn from the lists provided to you.

Matching (30%) – The second section of each exam will include matching questions, drawn from the lectures and the assigned readings. As is the case for the chronologies, the subjects from the readings on this section of the exam will come from the lists provided to you.

In-class essays (50%) – Essay questions will comprise the third section of each exam. The essays, which will ask you to describe, explain, and analyze assigned readings as well as materials covered in class, will be drawn from a pool of 4 questions handed out before the exam. The focus of these essays will come from lecture materials, but you will also be expected to supplement the lecture materials with relevant information from your assigned reading. You should write your in-class essays as if you were writing to a college-educated reader who is not a specialist in history; in other words, do not expect the reader to “know what you are thinking.” Explain the issues and give as much supporting evidence as you can.

In order to do well on the exams, it is essential that you attend class regularly, take good notes, and read your assigned materials. There are no short-cuts to academic success. It demands energy and effort on your part.
ASSESSMENT
Quizzes 20%  Fourth Exam 15%
First Exam 15%  Writing History Essay 20%
Second Exam 15%
Third Exam 15%

Important Dates
Wednesday, January 25th  Last day to register/add a class
March 13th-17th  Spring Break—NO CLASSES
Friday, April 7th  Last Day to Drop a Class
Monday, May 1st  Last day to withdraw from the University
Tuesday, May 2nd  Last day of classes
Wednesday, May 3rd  Reading Day—No Classes
May 4th-10th  Final Exams

Late Work
Late work will NOT be accepted. Because daily grades are essentially your attendance and participation in class, there will be no make-ups for missed daily grades. If you are going to miss a deadline for a major assignment (exam or essay) you must contact me 48 hours in advance to request an extension. At that time we will discuss the reason why you are going to miss the deadline and set a time and place for you to submit your assignment. You will only be given one extension per assignment and must provide documentation that proves you were granted an extension. If you have any questions about this policy please see me BEFORE the assignment is due.

NO ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED OVER EMAIL. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Electronic Device Policy
Use of electronic devices for class purposes (taking notes, look up a word, find an article to support an argument, etc.) is allowed. However, using electronic devices to peruse Twitter, Instagram, Vine, etc. is distracting to not only you, but also to your instructor and peers and will not be allowed. Electronic device policy will be discussed more thoroughly in class.

Academic Honesty
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possessions of examinations or examination materials, forgery, or plagiarism.

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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

DISABILITY SERVICES
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 call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.
GRADE APPEALS

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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. 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures (available at http://academicaffairs.tamu.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C2.01_student.grade.appeal.procedure.pdf). For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamu.edu/about/student-resources.html. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.

Dropping a Class

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. Friday, April 7th is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Rights, Responsibilities, and Civil Discourse

In this course we will engage in active learning including frequent group activities and interactions. We will be exploring real world topics that may at times result in contentious discussions as we meet the objectives of the course. To meet these many significant learning objectives, we must ensure a class dialogue where no one individual dominates the discussion and where the diverse opinions of others is respected. Students are expected to read and follow the University Code of Conduct Student Handbook, and state and local laws.

Respect for Diversity

We are the most diverse campus, in terms of self-disclosed ethnic identity, in the Texas A&M system. This means that we are all meeting and working with people who are different from ourselves in terms of identity, whether that is defined by race, ethnicity, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, and/or religion. Respecting and accepting people different than you is vital to your success in the class, on campus, and as a future professional in the global community.

Course Schedule: TBD