Course Description

This course surveys the history of the United States from the end of the Civil War (Reconstruction) to the most recent (President Obama’s presidency). The period witnessed a radical 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.

This course takes these noble aspirations seriously; asking where and how Americans defined these concepts, whether or not they were met, and how the major social movements both reflected and forced the broader economic and political changes of the era. 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. Measuring how well students learn this material is not an exact science, yet historians agree that developing certain analytical skills are essential. The graded components of this course are designed to strengthen these analytical skills.

Required Readings

The following textbooks are required and will be available at the university bookstore. They will also be on reserve in the library.


Other readings may be assigned at the instructor’s discretion. Handouts or links distributed in class, via email, and via Blackboard may also be required.

Required Supplies

This class will require consistent access to email, word processing software, Bell Library, Blackboard, and other online resources. **Recommended obtaining: The Elements of Style / 4th Edition.** William Strunk and E. B. White. (approximate cost for the book is $5 on amazon.com)
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.

Graded Assignments

Two Exams (60% of final grade) will ask you to identify the historical significance and compose multiple well argued essays supported by evidence/argument. Formal exams require the use of a clean, unused BLUEBOOK. No other type of form will be accepted.

Exam 1=30%  (Mid-term exam)  
Exam 2 =30%  (Final exam will not be comprehensive).

Two Quizzes- Based on readings from Foner’s *Give Me Liberty!* and Hollitz’s *Contending Voices* (20% of final grade) (10% for each quiz)

Book Review on your choice of ONE book from our Library on US History in time period we will study. (20% of final grade). Details on how to write a book review (600 words) and expectations of your book selection will be given in class on first day. (10% for first draft) (10% for final draft).

Grading Scale

This course uses a standard grading scale: A=90-100; B=80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69; F=below 60.

Class Participation (10%)  
Exams (60%)  
Quizzes (10%)  
Book Review (20%)

Classroom Conduct

We will maintain a focused and serious learning environment in this class. Arriving late, leaving early, having side conversations, and using cell phones and the internet are distracting, and they demonstrate a cavalier attitude toward the course, the professor, and the other students. If you cannot adhere to these guidelines, do not come to class.
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. I will take attendance and we will participate in a variety of in-class writing activities in order to encourage discussion and writing practice. These activities will vary, but they will always be based on history readings and class lectures. **You must be present in class to participate in these activities and to receive attendance credit. NOTE: No make-ups will be allowed. Do not submit work for anyone else. That violates the Academic Honesty rules. Please do not sign-in for someone else.**

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.

Disabilities Accommodations

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 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.

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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. 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.
Grade Appeals

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, 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. 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.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at: http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Academic Dishonesty, Attendance, Class Policies

It is my experience that most students attend class regularly, behave as adults, submit assignments and take exams on time, perform well over the term, and do not cheat. Unfortunately, the following rules are necessary for the remaining few. The environment of the classroom demands that we conduct ourselves like adults and with respect for each other. As a result, the following guidelines will be followed:

• Always conduct yourself with respect and civility toward others. Abusive language or behavior will not be tolerated.
• Please turn off or set to vibrate all cell phones and pagers. If you must take a call, do so outside of class.
• Please be aware that talking, leaving early, arriving late, and other disruptive behavior affects your peer’s ability to learn the material. Excessive disruptive behavior will not be tolerated.
• Dozing-off sometimes happens (even in my electrifying lectures), but DO NOT come to my class to sleep.
• Please refer to the TAMU-CC Student Code of Conduct for a more complete treatment of your rights and responsibilities while in class.

Be absolutely clear: I will hold you responsible should your behavior negatively affect others in class. If this happens repeatedly, you will be removed from the class (even if it is the last week of the term). The penalty for academic dishonesty is clearly specified in the current Undergraduate Bulletin. I will follow these guidelines.

Academic Honesty/Plagiarism Definition

In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source. This definition applies to texts published in print or on-line, to manuscripts, and to the work of other student writers.

Most current discussions of plagiarism fail to distinguish between:
1. Submitting someone else’s text as one’s own or attempting to blur the line between one’s own ideas or words and those borrowed from another source.

2. Carelessly or inadequately citing ideas and words borrowed from another source. Such discussions conflate plagiarism with the misuse of sources. Ethical writers make every effort to acknowledge sources fully and appropriately in accordance with the contexts and genres of their writing. (Quoted from “Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices”) Plagiarism is a serious violation of departmental and University policies, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply.

Plagiarism includes:
- Using the work of another as your own,
- Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- Using resource materials without correct documentation,
- Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
- Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on MLA documentation rules and APA documentation rules is available at Purdue University’s OWL: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/, and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

In addition, students will be awarded zero points for any assignment in which cheating is detected. **Plagiarism** is considered by me and the University to be cheating. This is your first and only warning not to cheat in this class.

**Late Work**

If you have a **serious, documentable excuse**, please contact the instructor about making up any missed in-class work. Assignments received after their due time and date will be marked down 5% for arriving after the due time and 10% for each day late. Electronic copies of essays will not be accepted. You will need to turn in your late essay during class or during my office hours.

**Make-Up Exams Will Be Offered**

To students who inform me before test time of an excused absence. The questions on the make-up exam will not be harder but the exam will not offer optional questions. Make-up exams will be offered for one week after the scheduled date of the exam. A student may take only one make-up exam over the span of the term. Student who fail the mid-term exam are encouraged to schedule a meeting with me within one week of the return of the exam to discuss their work and ways to improve their performance.

All assigned papers must be turned in as a hard copy (printed on paper). No electronic submissions are accepted. All assigned papers will be lowered one letter grade for every calendar day that they are late. Even very late paper submissions will receive some credit. Failure to turn in any paper will result in a zero for that assignment. Individual grades can be reviewed with the instructor, grader, or seminar leader as appropriate.
Please wait at least 24 hours after receiving your graded work before meeting with the grader to discuss graded materials. All final grading decisions are made by me; the grading assistants are not responsible for any final grade decisions in HIST-1302.

The CASA Writing Center at TAMUCC

Located in Room 112 of the Glasscock Student Success Center, provides free help for students at any stage of their writing process. Writing Consultants are trained to support writers in planning, outlining, drafting, organizing, and/or revising their writing and are also knowledgeable in citing sources in various documentation styles used in academic writing. It offers both face-to-face and online appointments for both undergraduate and graduate students. The Writing Center works closely with faculty across the TAMUCC campus to understand writing in different disciplines and to help students meet these expectations. The Writing Center encourages students to make a 30-minute appointment; however, if Writing Consultants are available, they do accept walk-in appointments. Visit casa.tamucc.edu/wc.php to create an account using your @islander.tamucc.edu email address. Once you have an account, you can log-on to make an appointment.

Late Work/Extensions

If there is a crisis that prevents you from meeting a deadline or attending class, you can request an extension to turn the work in late without a penalty. The approval of an extension is entirely at my discretion and will depend on the reason for your absence, your record of completion of work, and attendance. All extensions must be confirmed by email.

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 required reading load for this course averages out to about 50 to 100 pages per week. 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.

Week 1: July 2nd (no class on Wednesday, July 4th)
Monday, July 2nd  Introduction to class- Reconstruction and Jim Crow- READ: Foner, Ch. 15

Tuesday, July 3rd  American Expansion- READ: Foner Chapter 16 and The Gilded Age READ: Foner Chapter 17

Wednesday, July 4th (no class) Happy Independence Day!

Thursday, July 5th  Quiz One (open notes- will discuss in class)
**Week 2: July 9th**
Monday, July 9th  The Age of Reform READ: Foner, Ch. 18

Tuesday, July 10th  The Great War READ Foner, Ch. 19

Wednesday, July 11th  Modern Times READ: Foner, Ch. 20

Thursday, July 12th  Hard Times READ: Foner, Ch. 21

**Week 3: July 16th**
Monday, July 16th  World War II READ: Foner, Ch. 22

Tuesday, July 17th  Origins of Cold War Foner Ch 23

Wednesday, July 18th  An Affluent Society Foner Ch 24

Thursday, July 19th  Exam One (first draft of book review due) – Blue Book required

**Week 4: July 23rd**
Monday, July 23th  The Sixties, Part 1 READ: Foner, Ch. 25

Tuesday, July 24th  The Sixties, Part 2  READ: Foner Ch. 25

Wednesday, July 26th  Conservative Backlash READ: Foner, Ch. 26

Thursday, July 27th  Quiz Two

**Week 5: July 30th**
Monday, July 30th  Postmodern America READ: Foner, Ch. 27

Tuesday, July 31st  The War on Terror READ: Foner, Ch. 28

Wednesday, August 1st  Final draft of book review due/Final Exam Review

Thursday, August 2nd  Reading day  (NO CLASS)

Friday, August 3rd  Final exam  (same classroom at 10am).