Course Description and Prerequisites
This course is a survey of the political, social, economic, military, cultural and intellectual history of the United States from 1865 to the present. Rather than attempt to exhaustively cover all aspects of U.S. history from the period in question, this course focuses on moments of conflict that are either little known, often misunderstood, or which help to inform ongoing debates in the United States and beyond. Each week you will read a mix of scholarly and popular writing about the nation’s past alongside primary source material. I will lecture very little—mostly about collections of images that illustrate weekly themes—but the bulk of the class will focus on active learning, historical thinking, and reflecting on the ways in which people choose to remember the past.

Learning Outcomes or Course Objectives
Students who successfully complete this course will:
1. Demonstrate critical thinking by combining, changing, or reapplying existing information, gathering and assessing information relevant to a question, and analyzing, evaluating, and synthesizing information.
2. Develop communication skills by interpreting and expressing ideas through written, oral, or visual communication.
3. Demonstrate personal responsibility by evaluating historical choices and actions, and relating consequences to decision making.
4. Develop social responsibility by identifying intercultural competence and civic responsibility in past regional, national, and global communities.

Instructor Information
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Office Location: FC 253E
Office Hours: M 2-3 pm; W 1-3 pm; T/Th 11 am-12 pm

Required Course Texts

Other readings are available online and hyperlinked in the digital version of this syllabus that is available on Blackboard. In addition, it may be useful to refer to *The American Yawp*, which is a collaborative U.S. history textbook available online for no cost.
You should come to every class having completed the day’s reading, and you MUST also be able to refer to the day’s reading in class. In some cases, excellent notes might suffice. But most likely you will need to be able to access to the internet in class. If this will be a problem for you, please talk to me as soon as you can.

**Technology in the Classroom**
Following the above directive, technology in the classroom is essential. You will need internet access every class. A phone will be okay, but a laptop or tablet will make your life easier. Still, while technology is essential, it is also a possible distraction. Use good judgment. For example, browsing a Wikipedia article about the history of salt is okay; watching a YouTube video of a fight at Whataburger is not okay. Your computer speakers should always be muted and headphones are not allowed in class. There should be NO telephone conversations during class and you should avoid distracting others by text messaging. Phones should be on silent or vibrate, and you should only answer your phone outside of class.

**Assignments**
**Attendance, quizzes, in-class work: 50%**
This course is a cooperative enterprise. Rather than acting as receptacles-of-knowledge, you will actively contribute to the course content. In other words, your participation is essential to the success of the class. There will be short lectures, but the bulk of class will be active learning and that only works if people are in class and participate. I will take attendance many days. If you are in class, you will receive one point. If you are not in class, you will not receive zero points. If you are absent from class due to university business or religious reasons, you must notify me in advance and you will receive neither a point nor a zero. On most class days, we will have quizzes or in-class work. Failure to take an unscheduled quiz or complete an in-class assignment will result in a zero. However, if you miss a quiz or in-class assignment for whatever reason, please talk to me in person and I can give you an alternative assignment to make up the points you missed. You must submit this make-up work within seven calendar days of the date of the missed work.

**Reading responses: 25%**
You will read two full-length books this semester. This is not a capricious decision on my part, nor do I mean to make you suffer. Rather, I think reading—especially deep engagement with texts—yields important results at the level of both the personal and the social. To this end, we will talk about what it means to be a reader and the strategies you might adopt to make it through these two books and even enjoy them. An analysis of these two books is due during week eight and finals week, but throughout the semester I will ask you to reflect in writing on your progress reading. Therefore, the points for this assignment are an aggregate of twelve weekly reflections. I will provide you with additional guidelines in class for reflecting on your experience reading these books as well as a prompt to help you begin to think about what we can learn from their different perspectives on historical events. Please note: you will receive a separate reading schedule and guide for your two books during week two.

**PechaKucha Project in Groups: 25%**
A PechaKucha is a very short presentation that requires much preparation and skill. For the purposes of this course, PechaKuchas will present historical content and demonstrate historical analytical skills in a fun, engaging way. We will watch examples of PechaKuchas in class, and
several class days are dedicated to preparation of your presentations. Please note: you will receive a separate prompt for this assignment during week three.

**Grading Scale and Late Work**
A = 90-100  
B = 80-89  
C = 70-79  
D = 60-69  
F = <60

**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.

**Academic Integrity Statement and Policy**
There are strong arguments for and against intellectual property. That said, the work you do in this course must be your own. If I suspect the work you submit is plagiarized, you will receive an F on the assignment—perhaps even an F in the course—and I will report you to the Office of the Associate Dean of Students. Please see the TAMUCC Academic Misconduct website for more details about how this all might go. We want very much to avoid paperwork, adjudication, and negative outcomes. Therefore all students are required to submit a written statement by the end of the second week of class verifying that they have reviewed and understood the TAMUCC Center for Academic Student Achievement Writing Center’s presentation on “Plagiarism and Misuse of Sources.”

**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. **The last day to drop a class for the spring semester is April 10, 2020.**

**Grade Appeals**
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, 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.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf).

**Schedule**
All readings are to be completed in order by the date listed.

**Week 1: Introduction and Questions of History, history, Memory, and Myth; American Exceptionalism**
**Wednesday:** No reading
**Friday:** Read Kirsten Silva Gruesz, “America” from *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. 2012.
Read Donald Pease, “Exceptionalism” from *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*. 2012.

**Week 2: Reconstruction**
**Monday:** Read “Reconstruction” from *The American Yawp*.
**Friday:** TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: [Reading Reflection #1](#) for *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*

**Week 3: Borders**
**Monday:** Introduction to the PechaKucha
**Wednesday:** No reading
**Friday:** TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: [Reading Reflection #2](#) for *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*

**Week 4: Empire**
**Monday:** Read Albert Beveridge, “The March of the Flag.” 1898.
Read Mark Twain, “The War Prayer.” 1904.

**Wednesday:** No reading

**Friday:** TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: Reading Reflection #3 for *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*

**Week 5: Evolution**

**Monday:**
- **A:** Read excerpt from George William Hunter, *A Civic Biology*. 1914.
- **B:** Read “The Butler Act,” March 1925.
- **C:** Read John Roach Straton, “The Most Sinister Movement in the United States” from the *American Fundamentalist*. December 1925,

**Wednesday:** No reading

**Friday:** TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: Reading Reflection #4 for *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*

**Week 6: Migration**

**Monday:**
- Read Alain Locke, “Enter The New Negro” from *Survey Graphic*. 1925.

**Wednesday:** Read "Up in Harlem Every Saturday Night" from *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*.

**Friday:** TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: Reading Reflection #5 for *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*

**Week 7: Roar and Crash**

**Monday:** Read “The New Era” from *The American Yawp*.

**Wednesday:** Read "Strange Fruit" from *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*.

**Friday:** TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: Reading Reflection #6 for *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*

**Week 8: Spring Break**

**Monday:** No class

**Wednesday:** No class

**Friday:** No class

**Week 9: War and Interventions**


**Friday:** TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: Reading Reflection #1 for *As Long as Grass Grows*
Week 10: Rights
Monday: Watch *Brother Outsider* in class.
Wednesday: No reading
Friday: TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: **Reading Reflection #2** for *As Long as Grass Grows*

Week 11: Rights II
Wednesday: No class
Friday: TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: **Reading Reflection #3** for *As Long as Grass Grows*

Week 12: The Cold War in Africa
Wednesday: No reading
Friday: TBA

Week 13: Conservatism
Monday: Read "The Unraveling" from *The American Yawp*.
Friday: TBA

Due by 6 pm on Sunday: **Reading Reflection #4** for *As Long as Grass Grows*

Week 14: HIV/AIDS
Monday: Read William F. Buckley, Jr., “Reservations About Dr. Koop’s Advice.” 1986.
Wednesday: No class
Friday: TBA

Week 15: Making Historical Sense of the Present
Monday: Read Susan Jeffords, “War” from *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*
Wednesday: No class
Friday: TBA

Week 16: PechaKucha
Monday: Begin PechaKucha presentations
Wednesday: Continue PechaKucha presentations
Friday: Continue PechaKucha presentations

**Week 17: PechaKuchaFinals Week**
Finish PechaKucha presentations

***Please note: this syllabus is subject to revision. In the case of changes, a revised syllabus will be posted to Blackboard and students will be notified via e-mail. It is your responsibility to keep your university e-mail address up to date.***