

**HISTORY 2013- Section 006**  
**History of the American People, 1877 to the Present**  
**FALL 2009**  
**Meeting Time: Tuesday and Thursday 11:00-12:20**  
**LOCATION: Old Main 417**

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Instructor: **Prof. Alessandro Brogi**

Office: 403 OLD MAIN; Office Hours: Tuesday 9:00-10:30 am, Thursday 2:15-3:00 pm and by appointment at other times on both days.

Phone: (479) 575 5888 - e-mail: abrogi@uark.edu

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course provides an overview of American history from the Gilded Age to the present, including all the major social, political, and foreign policy issues. A major course objective will be for students to develop skills for the critical evaluation of historical evidence and arguments. For example, one way to do this is to find elements of continuity and change throughout the period under examination. Students will also be invited to challenge labels commonly attached to certain “eras” of US history (such as “the Roaring Twenties” or “the Complacent Fifties”). Given the extreme relevance of the debate on America’s image abroad, some attention will be devoted to how other countries have viewed developments in American society, politics, and foreign policy. Finally, this class is also intended to show how knowledge of 20th century history helps us to understand the present.

**Core Courses in History: Goals**

History is the study of the past. As an academic discipline, History embraces every aspect of the human experience, including warfare, political institutions, the economy, religious practice, technology, and artistic endeavor. History asks students to analyze empire and revolution, genocide and humanism, enslavement and liberation, sexuality and gender and to do so from the perspective of both social scientific and humanistic inquiry. There is no field more diverse than History and none more individualistic. History can be as long ago as the excavated texts and artifacts of ancient China or as recent as mass-produced newspapers from the twentieth-century American West.

**Objectives of Core Courses in History:**

By the end of the semester, you will have an understanding of the following issues:

- \* The role played by diversity in shaping human experience
- \* The operation of large-scale forces responsible for causing change over time, such as politics, economics, technology, and religion
- \* The challenges mounted by an increasing reliance on technology
- \* The changes caused by the increasing interconnectedness of today's world

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

A) **Mark C. Carnes and John A. Garraty, American Destiny: Narrative of a Nation** vol. 2 - Since 1865 (third edition, 2008)

B) **INFOLINK material:** Four essays from Carl J. Guarneri. *America Compared: American History*

*in International Perspective*. Vol. II: Since 1865; a copy of the book will be made available on reserve and internet copies of the essays through the Library's **infolink**.

- 1) Robin W. Winks, "American Imperialism in Comparative Perspective," pp. 139-153
- 2) Robert Sklar, "Americans, Europeans, and the Movies," pp. 227-243
- 3) Frances Fitzgerald, "The Vietnam War as a Clash of Cultures," pp. 337-351
- 4) George M. Fredrickson, "Resistance to White Supremacy in the United States and South Africa," pp. 354-369.

C) **INFOLINK material**: set of SHORT readings drawn from Gerald Michael Greenfield and John D. Buenker (eds.) *Those United States: International Perspectives on American History* (Vol. II: *From the Gilded Age to the Present*)

- 1) Kurt R. Spillman, "American and European Visions of Peace," pp. 117-121
- 2) Urs Schwartz "The United States' Peculiar Conduct of War" pp. 197-201
- 3) Asada Asado, "Japanese vs. American Perceptions of the A-Bomb" pp. 201-205
- 4) D. W. Ellwood, "The Marshall Plan and American Affluence" pp. 213-217
- 5) Tom Mboya, "Africa and Afro-America" pp. 224-227
- 6) Rob Kroes, "Rap Music and American Street Culture" pp.287-290
- 7) Ray Mosley, "The Clinton-Lewinski Affair" pp. 290-292

#### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Lectures plus quizzes and videos: occasionally, one of the weekly lectures will be shortened to allow for quiz time. Attendance will **not** be taken, but students will be held **responsible for all the materials** covered in them. You should **notify** the instructor of a **prolonged absence** (at least two consecutive lectures) as soon as possible to determine what you've missed. So while not enforced, attendance does matter.

**HOW TO DO THE READINGS:** You must keep up with the assigned readings. Materials from the readings on **INFOLINK must be done**, sorry no choice on that. Material from **Carnes and Garraty's book COMPLEMENTS** the lecture material: if you attend regularly, you may read the book with more ease, perhaps even skimming some pages. Viceversa, the book also helps you follow the lectures better: I suggest to read the book chapters assigned for each week by Tuesday, so you come to class prepared. Carnes and Garraty's book can also be a useful tool in your review sessions before each test: in that case you may want to give it a more thorough reading. So the amount of reading depends on several factors: how much background knowledge you already have on these topics, how closely you follow the lectures, and how well you strategize your study sessions, picking topics you think you might have the option of answering in the exams (more tips on the possible essay questions for the exams will follow in the course of the semester).

#### TESTS: ONE MID-TERM, ONE FINAL, AND FOUR QUIZZES.

Both the mid-term and the final exams will consist of a number (four or five) of **short identification questions (IDs)** (you will be given a choice among 10-12 IDs) and **one essay** (ca.

three-four pages on a large blue-book) (you will be given a choice between two essay questions). The final is **NOT comprehensive** but it will cover the entire second half of the lecture and reading material, that is, from the mid-term to the end of the lecture series.

The quizzes are all in the **multiple choice** format (generally one choice out of four, with **partial credit** given to wrongs in a scale from 3 to 8 points, depending on how much the wrong answer approximates the right one, which counts 10 points). Ten of such multiple questions will appear on each quiz, generally divided between 5 or 6 questions on lecture material and 4 or 5 on the Infolink supplemental reading.

### **GRADING:**

Mid-term: 35-40 % of the course grade

Final exam: 45-50 %

Quizzes: 10-15%

NB: these percentages are shown as “range” between a lower and a higher percentage because the mid-term, the final, and the quizzes grades will be weighed so as to give the highest possible credit to a student’s performance. For ex.: if you received a B in your mid-term while your overall performance in the quizzes is worth an A-, the mid-term will count 35% toward your final grade and your quizzes grade will count 15%; viceversa, if you have an A- in your mid-term and a B average in your quizzes, the mid-term will count 40% and the quizzes will count 10%. I will pay special attention to **consistent improvement**: for example, if your first two quizzes are in the C+ range but then receive a B/B+ in the midterm and a full A in the final, your third and fourth quizzes are fine, and you also have good participation/attendance in class, then you’ll end up with an A in the class.

### **MAKE-UPS**

Students who have to miss an exam should notify the instructor in advance, providing a satisfactory excuse; make-ups will be scheduled at the instructor’s convenience. In exceptional cases, the student may notify the instructor of the need to reschedule after he/she missed the exam, but this notification should be received via e-mail or in person no later than three days after the missed exam. Failure to do so will result in failing grade for the exam. Make-up exams offer less choice of questions than regular exams.

### **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

University rules require me to inform you that academic misconduct, which includes cheating on exams and plagiarism (from *both* the internet and printed sources) can result in an ‘F’ grade in the course and, in the worst cases, in dismissal from the University. See the Catalog of Studies for further information.

### **FURTHER NOTES:**

Students with disabilities should contact the Center for Educational Access to find out about their rights and obligations.

Do not arrive late. Turn off all cell phones at the beginning of class.

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**CLASS SCHEDULE (Please pay attention to announcements in class for possible changes: KEEP YOUR EMAIL BOXES ALWAYS AVAILABLE).**

### **WEEK 1 - August 25-27**

Readings: *American Destiny* pp. 445-459 and 482-509

Lectures:

- Introduction. Modern America: Its Meanings.
- The Gilded Age: Its Meanings.

### **Week 2 - September 1-3**

Readings:

- 1) *American Destiny* pp. 460-481 and 510-564
- 2) Infolink: Werner Sombart, "America is Capitalism's Land of Promise," pp. 9-15

Lectures:

- Cities, Immigrants, Lifestyle - Post-Reconstruction South (Or the South "From Riches to Rags")
- West and Indian Wars - The Politics of Stalemate and the Exciting Presidencies of the Gilded Age (1877-1890)

### **Week 3 - September 8-10**

Readings: *American Destiny* pp. 565-611

Lectures:

- What Foreign Policy? (1865-1890) - The Populist Revolt (1890-1900)
- Progressivism (1900-1917)

### **Week 4 - September 15-17**

Readings:

- 1) *American Destiny* pp.612-669
- 2) Infolink: "American Imperialism in Comparative Perspective" From *America Compared*, pp.139-154.

Lectures:

- Progressivism: Conclusions - American Imperialism (1898-1914)
- The Great War and American Neutrality - Over There: American Intervention - Over Here: Curbing Dissent - The End of Progressivism

### **Week 5 - September 22-24**

Readings:

- 1) *American Destiny*, pp. 670-709 and 746-747
- 2) Infolink: Kurt R. Spillman, "American and European Visions of Peace"
- 3) Infolink: "Americans, Europeans, and the Movies" From *America Compared*, pp. 227-244

Lectures:

- Versailles and the 'Battle for Peace' The Lessons of World War I: Foreign Policy, 1919-1937 -
- Roaring Twenties? "Normalcy" in Politics and Society - America's Cultural Renaissance

### **Week 6 - September 29 - October 1**

Readings:

1) *American Destiny*, pp. 710-728

Lectures:

- The Stockmarket Crash - The Great Depression
- The Elections of 1932 and FDR's First One Hundred Days - The First New Deal

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### **Week 7 - October 6-8**

Readings: *American Destiny*, pp.729-755

Lectures:

- The Second New Deal. Life and Culture in the 1930s
- The Road to World War II: FDR's Interventionism

### **Week 8 - October 13-15**

Readings: *American Destiny*, pp. 755-775

Lectures:

- World War II: The "Good War" (Abroad and at Home)
- Thursday OCTOBER 15: MID-TERM EXAM (bring Blue-Books) (cover all material to the end of World War II)**

### **Week 9 - October 20-22**

Readings:

1) *American Destiny*, pp. 775-795

2) **Infolink:** Urs Schwartz "The United States' Peculiar Conduct of War"

3) **Infolink:** Asada Asado, "Japanese vs. American Perceptions of the A-Bomb"

4) **Infolink:** D. W. Ellwood, "The Marshall Plan and American Affluence"

Lectures:

- The Spoils of Peace - All You Wanted to Know about the Origins of the Cold War But Never Dared to Ask (part 1)
- Origins of the Cold War (part 2). Who Lost China? - Korea: The Now Remembered War -

### **Week 10 - October 27-29**

Readings: *American Destiny*, pp. 787-788 and 795-805, 808-811, 840-847

Lectures:

- Truman's Fair Deal - The Affluent Society - McCarthyism
- Ike's "New Look." Eisenhower's Foreign Policy - The Emergence of the Third World
- Ike: Holding the Line at Home - JFK and his Best and Brightest

### **Week 11 - November 3-5**

Readings:

1) *American Destiny*, pp. 805-807, 811-819, 848-852

2) **Infolink:** “Resistance to White Supremacy in the United States and South Africa,” *America Compared*, pp. 354-369.

3) **Infolink:** Tom Mboya, “Africa and Afro-America”

4) **Infolink:** Rob Kroes, “Rap Music and American Street Culture”

Lectures:

- JFK’s New Frontier - On the Brink: Crises in Cuba and Berlin
- Civil Rights Movement: The Origins - The Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s and Beyond

### **Week 12 - November 10-12**

Readings:

1) *American Destiny*, pp. 819-832

2) **Infolink:** “Vietnam as a Clash of Cultures,” From *America Compared*, pp. 337-351

Lectures:

- LBJ’s Great Society (when the U.S. truly started Welfare) - Vietnam: America’s Longest War (1945-1968)
- Vietnam: It’s not Over yet (1969-1975) - Nixon, Kissinger, and Detente

### **Week 13 - November 17-19**

Readings: *American Destiny*, pp. 832-839, 852-873

Lectures:

- The Student Movement- The Counterculture - Feminism -
- Nixon at Home - Watergate - Ford, the Caretaker Presidency - Carter: the Lean Years

### **Week 14 - THANKSGIVING BREAK ONLY on THURSDAY NOVEMBER 26**

**Lecture for Tuesday November 24:**

- Carter and Detente - The Reagan Revolution at Home and Abroad

### **Week 15 - December 1-3**

**Readings:** *American Destiny*, pp. 873-901

Lectures:

- The End of the Cold War - Bush Sr. and Gulf War I - Clinton: It’s the Economy Stupid!
- “In Search of a Grand Strategy”: Clinton, and the New World Order

### **Week 16 - December 8**

Readings:

1) *American Destiny*, pp. 901-925

2) **Infolink:** Ray Mosley, “The Clinton-Lewinski Affair”

Lecture:

- Bush II and the War on Terrorism - Clinton, Bush and the New Reform Agendas (From the Left and From the Right)

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**FINAL EXAM**  
**CHECK SCHEDULE ON ISIS (two-hour exam - same classroom)**  
**(Based on All Material from 1945 to the Present)**

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