

HIST 177: United States History since 1877
Spring 2016, Sections 1 and 2
Section 1: T/TH/F 9:00-9:50, CCC 227
Section 2: T/TH/F 10:00-10:50, CCC 321

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Office Hours: T/TH 2-3:30pm and by appointment

Course Summary

This course is a general survey of the United States from 1877 to the present. During the semester, students will analyze, discuss, and consider how the United States developed from a nation divided by civil war into a global superpower. In doing so, this course emphasizes some fundamental themes in American history regarding political power, international affairs, freedom, and definitions of citizenship. In particular, we will focus on questions regarding the diversity of our nation. How has the American experience differed based on race, gender, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status? Which groups have been marginalized, and how have they negotiated these conditions to better their circumstances? And how has diversity shaped the very fabric of American identity? Students will address these issues while considering the evolving meaning of American nationhood over the past 150 years.

GEP Learning Outcomes

Students taking History 177 will develop skills necessary for basic historical understanding and analysis, focusing on the GEP requirements of Historical Perspectives and U.S. Diversity. Upon completing these requirements, students will be able to:

- Describe events from past cultures, societies, or civilizations.
- Recognize the varieties of evidence that historians use to offer diverse perspectives on the meaning of the past.
- Identify the role of human agency in shaping events and historical change.
- Explain historical causality.
- Evaluate competing historical claims that frequently inform the present.
- Describe the various dimensions of diversity and marginalization within the United States.
- Explain the means by which one or more persistently marginalized groups in the U.S. have negotiated the conditions of their marginalization.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify major events, developments, and themes of United States history from Reconstruction to the present.
- Develop an argument about the past and use evidence to support those claims.
- Recognize, summarize, and interpret historical documents representing a diversity of perspectives.
- Compare the experiences of marginalized groups and explain how American diversity has shaped the development of the nation.

Required Materials

Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*, Seagull 4th ed., vol. 2 (rental)

Eric Foner, ed, *Voices of Freedom: A Documentary History* 4th ed., vol. 2 (available for purchase at the bookstore. If you choose to buy a copy elsewhere, make sure it is the correct edition)

Clicker, available for lease (\$8) from the UWSP Help Desk, 027 LRC (library)

Assignments

Participation: Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class. There are a number of in-class assignments, including small group discussions, short essay prompts, and debates. In order to fully participate, please bring your clickers and *Voices of Freedom* to every class. I will grade any in-class assignments on a plus-check-minus system. A check-plus indicates exceptional work, a check represents basic competency, and a check-minus signals incomplete, inaccurate, or substandard work. Students who are absent will receive a zero for their participation grade that day and will not have an opportunity to make up the missing work. Students can drop their two lowest in-class assignments and can miss up to four classes before their grade begins to drop. Missed classes beyond that will result in two points subtracted from your final grade for each additional absence. Alternatively, students who miss one or fewer in-class assignments will receive two extra credit points added to their final grade. Arriving late or leaving early from class will be counted as one-half an absence. Students who forget their clickers will also be penalized with one-half an absence. Students facing extenuating circumstances affecting their attendance (such as serious health issues, UWSP athletics, the birth of a child, military service, etc.) are encouraged to talk to me.

Exams: There are three midterm exams and one final exam over the course of the semester. The exams include multiple choice questions, term identifications, short answers and/or essay questions based on the lectures and assigned readings. With a valid, documented excuse, students may take one missed regular exam on Reading Day, May 14 (time and location TBD). You must contact me by email in advance of Reading Day to schedule the makeup exam. The final exam is cumulative and consists of multiple choice questions, term identifications, and essay questions that will ask you to draw conclusions from the material covered throughout the course. There is no makeup for the final exam, so make sure that you are available the date the final is scheduled (Wednesday, May 18 for section 1 and Thursday, May 19 for section 2).

Assessment Breakdown

Exam 1: 15%

Exam 2: 15%

Exam 3: 15%

Participation: 25%

Final Exam: 30%

Grading Scale

A: 93-100

A-: 90-92

B+: 87-89

B: 83-86
B-: 80-82
C+: 77-79
C: 73-76
C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69
D: 60-66
F: 59 and below

Classroom Policies

This class uses “Clickers” to do interactive polling and attendance. You are required to lease a clicker from the UWSP Help Desk in room 027 LRC, located in the basement of the UWSP Library. You will need your UWSP Student ID to get your clicker. An \$8 semester lease fee will be automatically added to your UWSP student bill. Your clicker may be used in any class that requires clickers for the semester. Clickers must be returned to the UWSP's IT Help Desk before the end of finals. Students with unreturned clickers will be billed a late fee and/or may be billed the replacement cost of the clicker.

Students are expected to arrive on time and to be attentive and engaged during class. This means you are not sleeping, reading/working on other materials, using electronic devices, talking to your neighbor, or disrupting class in any way. Students will raise their hands for questions and be respectful of fellow students and the professor. You may disagree with another person’s comment or position, but do so with courtesy and respect. For more information on classroom expectations, see: <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/Academic-Misconduct.aspx>

All forms of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, fraud, and unauthorized access to tests and assignments are strictly prohibited. Any words or ideas borrowed from another person or source, whether through a direct quotation or through paraphrasing, must be cited properly to avoid plagiarism. Please familiarize yourself with what constitutes plagiarism and how to avoid it. Violations of the university’s code of conduct are subject to sanctions ranging from a failing grade for an assignment to disciplinary hearings or potential failure of the course. For more information on academic dishonesty, see: <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Documents/CommunityRights.pdf>

If you have a learning or physical challenge that requires accommodation, please contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center as early as possible. They will then notify me privately of the accommodations that will facilitate your success in the course. Their office is located on the 6th floor the LRC (library), Voice: 715-346-3365, TTY: 715-346-3362.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law requiring educational institutions to provide reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. For more information about UWSP’s policies, see: <http://www.uwsp.edu/dos/Pages/ADA.aspx>

Tips for Success

Students often ask me how they should prioritize lecture materials and course readings when studying for exams. Here are some suggestions for optimizing your study habits. Lectures are important. Students should take copious notes and utilize the outlines and slides posted on D2L. The *Give Me Liberty!* textbook is great for supplementing the information we cover in class and serves as a helpful study resource. However, the textbook is not an adequate substitute for lecture, which is why attendance is so critical to your success in the class. Equally important are the short readings assigned in *Voices of Freedom*. The excerpts typically take less than 5-10 minutes to read and serve as the basis for in-class responses, group discussions, and exam questions. Make sure to complete the readings and to bring *Voices of Freedom* to every class.

Computers and other electronic devices are not allowed in class without getting permission from me in advance. Studies have shown that students learn more and perform better by writing down the main ideas of lecture versus typing them. For more information, see the article in *Scientific American* entitled “A Learning Secret: Don’t Take Notes with a Laptop” (<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>).

For each lecture I provide an outline of the main ideas that you can locate on D2L. Feel free to print the outlines prior to coming to class and use them as a template for taking notes. I post lecture slides after each class. The outlines and slides are helpful resources as you prepare for exams.

I hold regular office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2-3:30pm (461 CCC). During this time, my priority is to talk to students about any questions or concerns they may have. I truly enjoy meeting with you to hear about how things are going. If you are struggling, stop by and let’s chat. If you are unable to meet during office hours, email me and we will set up an alternative time.

Please note that the syllabus is subject to change and additional assignments may be added.

Schedule

Week 1:

January 26: Course introduction: Legacies of the Civil War

January 28: Reconstruction, *Give Me Liberty!* (hereafter GML) Chapter 15, pp. 554-590; *Voices of Freedom* (hereafter VOF) A Sharecropping Contract, pp. 11-13

January 29: The New West, GML Chapter 16, pp. 602-616

Week 2:

February 2: Industrialization, GML Chapter 16, pp. 592-602; VOF A 2nd Declaration of Independence, pp. 36-38

February 4: The Gilded Age, GML Chapter 16, pp. 616-634

February 5: Populism, GML Chapter 17, pp. 658-664

Week 3:

February 9: The New South, GML Chapter 17, pp. 648-657;

February 11: "Without Sanctuary" (in class)

February 12: Redefining Citizenship, Chapter 17, pp. 658-664

Week 4:

February 16: Imperialism, Part I, GML Chapter 17, pp. 664-678

February 18: Imperialism, Part II VOF Emilio Aguinaldo, pp. 68-70 and Rudyard Kipling,
pp. 70-72

February 19: Urbanization, GML Chapter 18, pp. 681-694

Week 5:

February 23: Social Progressivism, GML Chapter 18, pp. 694-706; VOF Charlotte Perkins
Gilman, pp. 77-80

February 25: Political Progressivism, GML Chapter 19, pp. 706-722

February 26: Exam #1

Week 6:

March 1: World War I Abroad, GML Chapter 19, pp. 725-737

March 3: World War I on the Home Front, GML Chapter 19, pp. 737-744; VOF Eugene Debs,
pp. 110-114

March 4: Wilson, GML Chapter 19, pp. 744-766

Week 7:

March 8: The 1920s, GML Chapter 20, pp. 768-798

March 10: Great Depression, GML Chapter 20, pp. 798-804; VOF John Steinbeck, pp. 161-163

March 11: The New Deal, GML Chapter 21, pp. 807-847; VOF WEB Du Bois, pp. 182-186

Week 8:

March 15: World War II Abroad, GML Chapter 22, pp. 850-861

March 17: World War II on the Home Front, GML Chapter 22, pp. 861-892

March 18: US Diversity: Special Assignment (on D2L Dropbox)

Week 9:

March 22: No Class (Spring Break)

March 24: No Class (Spring Break)

March 25: No Class (Spring Break)

Week 10:

March 29: The Cold War, Part I, GML Chapter 23, pp. 894-916; VOF NSC-68, pp. 216-220

March 31: The Cold War, Part II, GML Chapter 23, pp. 916-927

April 1: Exam #2

Week 11:

April 5: 1950s Politics and Culture, GML Chapter 24, pp. 929-957

April 7: The Civil Rights Movement, GML Chapter 24, pp. 957-970 and Chapter 25, pp. 972-978; VOF Southern Manifesto, pp. 254-256 and MLK, Jr. pp. 263-267

April 8: Kennedy, GML Chapter 25, pp. 978-981

Week 12:

April 12: Johnson, GML Chapter 25, pp. 981-993;

April 14: *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* (viewing)

April 15: *The Pruitt-Igoe Myth* (discussion)

Week 13:

April 19: Vietnam, GML Chapter 25, pp. 993-1000; VOF Paul Potter, pp. 288-290

April 21: Social Movements of the Late 1960s, GML Chapter 25, pp. 1000-1018; VOF The International 1968, pp. 298-300

April 22: Nixon, GML Chapter 26, pp. 1020-1033

Week 14:

April 26: 1970s Politics and Culture, GML Chapter 26, pp. 1033-1047; VOF Brochure on the ERA, pp. 301-303 and Phyllis Schlafly, pp. 316-318

April 28: Exam #3

April 29: The Reagan Revolution, GML Chapter 26, pp. 1047-1058

Week 15:

May 3: The End of the Cold War and George H.W. Bush, GML Chapter 27, pp. 1061-1068

May 5: Clinton, GML Chapter 27, pp. 1068-1094; VOF Bill Clinton, pp. 326-328 and Declaration for Global Democracy, pp. 328-330

May 6: George W. Bush, GML Chapter 27, pp. 1094-1100

Week 16:

May 10: Global Terrorism & the US, GML Chapter 28, pp. 1103-1105; VOF National Security Strategy, pp. 341-344

May 12: The Wake of 9/11, GML Chapter 28, pp. 1105-1119

May 13: Review for the Final Exam

Final Exam:

Section 1: Wednesday, May 18, 12:30pm-2:30pm, 227 CCC

Section 2: Thursday, May 19, 2:45pm-4:45pm, 321 CCC