

HIST 2112 – American History Since 1865 – Summer 2008

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“The past is never dead. It’s not even past.”
 -- William Faulkner

Course Description

This course surveys American history from the end of the Civil War to the present. Course lectures present a framework for understanding the nation’s modern past, while in-class workshops and at-home writing assignments encourage critical thinking and debate about historical problems.

The Course’s Five Main Goals

- 1) **Curiosity:** This course aims to spark your interest in modern American history and encourage long-lasting curiosity in how the past has shaped the present.
- 2) **Knowledge:** This course aims to broaden and deepen your knowledge of some of the most important events, people, developments, and issues in modern American history.
- 3) **Discernment:** This course aims to sharpen the following skills of critical and historical thinking:
 - 1) reading for the main point
 - 2) analyzing sources
 - 3) constructing sound arguments

Equipped with such skills, you will learn to exercise discernment when confronting the many claims people and politicians make about modern American history. In addition to learning how to “think like a historian” and “do history,” you’ll also learn why it makes sense to want to do so.

- 4) **Point(s) of View:** This course aims to help you develop your own point(s) of view on the nation’s modern past and learn how to recognize, understand, and critique other points of view.
- 5) **Rhetorical Skills:** This course aims to improve your ability to express yourself persuasively, not only about modern American history but also about the world around you.

Course Texts

The only required text for this course is a documents reader. It can be purchased at the University bookstore, an off-campus bookstore, or online at Amazon.com, BN.com, or Half.com.

- Victoria Bissell Brown and Timothy J. Shannon, *Going to the Source: The Bedford Reader in American History, Volume II, Since 1865*, 2nd Edition (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2008).
 10-digit ISBN: 0312448236

Be sure to buy the *exact* edition listed. It is *your responsibility* to get the required text in time to complete course assignments.

There is no assigned textbook for this course, but if you think you may need one for the sake of reference, I recommend “Hypertext History: The Online American History Textbook,” available at:

http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/database/hyper_titles.cfm

This site has a number of timelines, mini-narratives, and multimedia selections that might prove helpful for addressing questions related to course material.

Course Website

I will use the following website for the posting of information about the course. You should check this website often for updates: <http://deg.myweb.uga.edu/hist2112/>

Course Design

This course is similar to the 300+ student survey course regularly offered by the department in the fall and spring. Like these larger classes, it will explore the subject of modern American history in a generally predictable fashion, alternating between lecture days and workshop days. Here’s some more information about what to expect:

Lecture Days

On lecture days, I will lecture about the various political, economic, and cultural forces that have shaped modern American history. In addition, I will address matters of historical and moral meaning, as well as relevance. PowerPoint slideshows, film selections, and handouts will supplement my lectures. Since you will be held responsible for the material presented during my lectures, I expect you to pay attention, take notes, and offer your thoughts when prompted.

Workshop Days

On workshop days, you will have the opportunity to examine relevant documents from the second edition of Victoria Bissell Brown and Timothy J. Shannon, *Going to the Source: The Bedford Reader in American History, Volume II*. Whereas my lectures aim to spark curiosity and expand your knowledge of American history, the purpose of the workshops is to develop your discernment, point(s) of view, and rhetorical skills – in other words, train you in how to “think like a historian” and “do history.” Via a Source Analysis, you will show that you have given these documents a critical reading and prepared carefully for the workshop.

Assignments

Source Analyses

By term’s end, you will turn in ten (10) Source Analyses of the documents contained in *Going to the Source*. Each analysis is worth three (3) points. These analyses have two parts, *each of which you will complete before class and then bring to class on the day we’re having a workshop about the readings*. By completing each part as follows, you will prove to me that you have given the readings a critical assessment:

Part I: At the beginning of each chapter is a Source Analysis Table. Make a copy of this table with a photocopier. Then complete the Source Analysis Table (Note: By photocopying it first,

the original copy stays clean, thus making it eligible for resale at the end of the term). Fill this out with as much information as possible from the documents you read. Write legible notes in each box. Don't write in large letters (if you naturally write in big letters, write smaller). Photocopy machines are in the library, SLC, Kinko's, and (probably) your nearby gas station. Put your name at the top of this copy and then do Part II.

Part II: Answer ONE of the questions listed at the end of the chapter. **Type** out an answer of between 300-600 words. STAPLE it to your copy of Part I, and bring to class. *I will not accept anything but typed responses.* These responses will not be graded for grammar or style and, thus, can be in semi-formal English. Still, don't use this allowance as an excuse for sloppy, confusing, or simplistic reasoning and writing. I honestly don't care what format, font, or color ink you use. Just answer your question with a well reasoned, well supported, and well written response.

These analyses will be evaluated according to how closely and critically you read the documents. Points will be awarded in increments from zero (0.0) to three (3.0), as per the following:

2.7-3.0 points – Excellent analysis. Part I has detailed, accurate, and insightful notes. Part II has a direct answer provided, supported with details from the table and/or quotes/references from the documents.

2.4-2.7 points – Good analysis. Part I shows generally detailed, accurate notes, but it might have missed some details or misinterpreted the documents. Part II has an answer provided, but it may lack consistent or convincing support from the table's details or documents (e.g. only one or two quotes used, only a few specific references to the documents, etc.).

2.1-2.4 points – Adequate analysis. Part I shows partially detailed, accurate notes, but it missed some important details or misinterpreted the documents. Part II has an answer provided, but it definitely lacks consistent or convincing support from the table's details or documents (e.g. no quotes used, only one or two specific references to the documents, etc.).

1.8-2.1 points – Poor analysis. Part I lacks detailed, attentive notes, or doesn't fully complete each box in the table. Part II shows an incomplete, inconsistent, or non-existent answer, one that remains inattentive to using details from the table and/or the documents.

0-1.8 points – Failed analysis. The final product shows little to no effort to meet assignment requirements, or no analysis was provided for evaluation.

Please Note: On workshop days, your Source Analysis is your ticket to class. *If you come to class without your Source Analysis in hand, you will be asked (politely) to leave and will not receive credit for attendance.* Also, you **MUST** bring the assigned readings to class on workshop days.

Late Source Analyses: *You may turn in a late copy of any analysis in the case of a documented family tragedy or hospitalization.* See the "Attendance" section below for a definition of what does not constitute "family tragedy" or "hospitalization." With proper documentation, you will also be allowed to turn in ONE – and only one – late analysis due to sudden illness or injury. All other analyses **MUST** be turned in on their respective due dates. Source Analyses may **NOT** be turned in via e-mail.

Examinations

Three (3) exams will be given over the course of the term so I can figure out what you've actually learned. Each exam is worth twenty (20) points of your final grade. Both my lectures and the sourcebook will be "game" for examination.

Each exam will consist of two essay prompts, of which you'll choose one to write about. In your essay you will have to show *why* American history unfolded as it did, using specifics drawn from my lectures and the sourcebook.

The first and second exams will be given approximately 1/3 and 2/3 of the way through the term. The third exam will be given – after a lecture on post-9/11 America – on the Final Exam day and will not be comprehensive. Bring a blue book to class for each exam (these can be found at the UGA bookstore or any off-campus bookstore).

Make-ups: *Make-up exams are available for documented cases of family tragedy or hospitalization.* Again, see the "Attendance" section below for a definition of what does not constitute "family tragedy" or "hospitalization." With proper documentation, you will be allowed to make up ONE – and only one – exam due to sudden illness or injury. All others MUST be taken on their respective exam dates.

Extra Credit

To allow room for "rookie mistakes" on any of the Source Analyses or examinations, you may earn up to five (5) points of extra credit. Immediately after you complete the third exam on the Final Exam day, you can write another in-class essay that addresses the following prompt:

Ol' Billy Faulkner once asserted, "The past is never dead. It's not even past." Given what you've learned over the term, how does this comment apply to your life? In other words, how has America's post-1865 history shaped who you are, what you believe, where you live, how you vote, what you buy, who you associate with, and what you spend most of your time doing?

In addressing this prompt, you *must* use specific examples from my lectures and the sourcebook. If you wish to outline your answer beforehand, you may do so and bring this outline to class. Use an additional blue book for completing this extra credit assignment.

Attendance

Just like some laws are on the books to protect you from yourself, I have an attendance policy to ensure that you're not undercutting your intellectual potential by inattendance. Each student in this course begins with five (5) attendance points. You may miss up to three (3) classes without penalty, but for each absence after that you will be penalized one (1) attendance point. Since you can miss up to three classes, this should make room for minor illnesses, broken alarm clocks, flat tires, stolen cars, etc. If you lose all five of your attendance points, you will be docked a letter grade per each subsequent absence.

Attendance will be recorded via a sign-up sheet that I will pass around and collect within the first five minutes of each class. If you sign the sheet, you get credit for attendance. If you don't, you don't. No if's, and's, or but's. As far as I'm concerned, ALL ABSENCES ARE UNEXCUSED ABSENCES. If you arrive late to class and don't get to sign the sheet, then tough cheese.

These consequences may be waived only in cases of family tragedy or hospitalization, both of which will require documentation. If you miss class for anything other than family tragedy or hospitalization, then it's your responsibility to get caught up on material and assignments (as per the assignment guidelines

above). Know that showing me a note about an illness or injury from the University Health Center or a local doctor does NOT qualify as either a “family tragedy” or “hospitalization;” neither does mourning the death of your hamster, having a tiff with your roommate, feeling sad or stressed out, celebrating your 21st birthday, getting in trouble with the Georgia State Patrol, staying up too late playing Guitar Hero, or any other student-defined “reasons” for missing class.

Participation

Concerning participation, I *strongly* recommend that you to offer your thoughts when I open the floor for discussion. Active participation can earn you up to five (5) points toward your final grade, according to my discretion. If you’re reserved by nature and concerned about participating in class, see me as soon as possible and we’ll work out a game plan for overcoming your trepidation.

Grading

- (30 points) 10 Source Analyses
- (60 points) 3 Examinations
- (5 points) Attendance
- (5 points) Participation
- (0-5 points) Extra Credit

Numerical values of your final grade will correspond with the University’s plus/minus system in the following fashion: A = 100-93 points, A- = 92-90 points, B+ = 89-87 points, B = 86-83 points, B- = 82-80 points, C+ = 79-77 points, C = 76-73 points, C- = 72-70 points, D = 69-60 points, F = 59 points and below. All fractions will be rounded up or down (87.5 will be an 88; 87.4 will be an 87). Only decimals of ten will be considered when rounding.

All grades are final. Only blunders in arithmetic will be revised. *Know that is your responsibility to contact me about any questions or concerns you may have about the assignments, the materials, and/or your performance.* Also, if you’re concerned about losing your HOPE scholarship or graduating on time, **DO NOT WAIT** until the last few weeks of the term to bring this up.

A Culture of Honesty

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. All academic work must meet the standards detailed in “A Culture of Honesty,” which can be accessed online at:

http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm

Each student is responsible to inform themselves about the university’s standards before performing any academic work. Ignorance of the policy’s standards will not suffice as a defense. Any student or students suspected of academic dishonesty in any form will be turned over to the Office of the Vice President for Instruction.

Courtesy Policy

I don’t expect your in-class behavior to be an issue since, presumably, someone has taught you about good manners. But just for the record, here’s my policy concerning common in-class courtesies. During any class session, any behavior that could be considered disruptive or disrespectful to me or anyone else (rude comments, reading a newspaper or magazine, doing crossword puzzles or Sudoku, doing work for

another course, talking on your cell phone or text messaging, chatting, passing notes, etc.) *will adversely affect your grade*. I reserve the right to awaken any napping student and give them a stern, condescending look and/or comment. Laptops are allowed for note-taking purposes, but *not* for playing games, browsing Facebook, or other GPA-lowering activities. Other than Cheerwine and Moonpies, drinks and snacks are likewise not allowed. Regarding your cell phone, I don't mind it ringing as long as you don't mind me answering it. Concerning tardiness, I understand that you might miss a bus from time to time, but please don't make a habit of showing up late to class.

Dropping the Course

If you wish to drop this course without receiving a W, you must do so before the end of drop/add. After that time, you will receive a W or a WF for withdrawals made until the midterm withdrawal deadline, depending on your performance in the course. Students who drop after the midterm withdrawal deadline will receive a WF. I also reserve the right to “instructor initiated withdrawals” for any students who mysteriously stop attending class or handing in required assignments.

ADA Accommodations

In compliance with The Americans with Disabilities Act, any student with a disability is guaranteed equal access to educational facilities and instruction. If you have a documented disability requiring accommodation, speak with me as soon as possible, before the first assignments are due.

Office Hours and E-mail

If you would like to meet with me, please stop by my office during the posted office hours or contact me to set up an appointment. Of course, you can also talk with me after class or contact me via e-mail whenever you have a pertinent question or concern. Please, however, *consult the syllabus* before writing and, if you decide to send me an e-mail, be direct and attentive to etiquette. Likewise, please send your e-mail between regular “business” hours of M-F, 9am-5pm if you want me to read it that day. I cannot guarantee that I will reply to your e-mail on the same day that it is sent, but I will always reply within 48 hours.

Credit Where Credit's Due

An old professor of mine once said, “The only time plagiarism is okay is with pick-up lines and pedagogy.” Still, I want to give credit where credit is due. Most of this course's philosophy, design, and assignments were informed by (or unabashedly copied from) the following sources:

- Patrick Allitt, *I'm the Teacher, You're the Student: A Semester in the University Classroom* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005).
- David F. Labaree, *How to Succeed in School Without Really Learning: The Credentials Race in American Education* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).
- Bryant Simon, “Self Defense for Your Mind,” *Georgia Magazine* 78:2 (March, 1999), online at <http://www.uga.edu/gm/399/FeatDef.html>.
- John G. Turner, “HY136 – American History Since 1877,” University of South Alabama, online at <http://www.southalabama.edu/history/faculty/turner/>.
- Samuel S. Wineburg, *Historical Thinking and Other Unnatural Acts: Charting the Future of Teaching the Past* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001).

Course Contract

Note: I must receive this signed contract before I will accept and evaluate your first assignments. So, read it, sign it, detach it, and turn it in to me as soon as possible.

I have read the syllabus and understand the goals, assignments, and demands of this course. I also understand how I will be evaluated in this course, and I accept sole responsibility for my attitude, performance, and intellectual growth. In addition, I have read the University's Academic Honesty Policy, fully understand its terms, and will adhere to them.

PRINT NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to alteration at my discretion, but I will be sure to inform you of any changes. As noted above, *always bring the assigned readings to class on workshop days.*

Introduction: America According to Marvin Gaye, Merle Haggard, and Bruce Springsteen

- Th: June 5 – Lecture

Strange Fruit: The New South

- F: June 6 – Lecture – Course Contracts due (from pg. 7 of this syllabus)
- M: June 9 – Lecture – Course Contracts due (from pg. 7 of this syllabus)
- T: June 10 – Lecture and Workshop #1: *Going to the Source*, ch. 1 – Source Analysis #1 due

How the West Was Won, How the West Was Lost: The New West

- W: June 11 – Lecture
- Th: June 12 – Lecture and Workshop #2: *Going to the Source*, ch. 2 – Source Analysis #2 due

Welcome to *The Jungle*: The New North

- F: June 13 – Lecture
- M: June 16 – Lecture and Workshop #3: *Going to the Source*, ch. 3 – Source Analysis #3 due
- T: June 17 – Lecture
- W: June 18 – Lecture and Workshop #4: *Going to the Source*, ch. 4 – Source Analysis #4 due

Revolts and Reforms: Workers, Farmers, Progressives, and the New American State

- Th: June 19 – Lecture
 - F: June 20 – Lecture
 - M: June 23 – **EXAM #1**
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Into the World: American Imperialism and the First World War

- T: June 24 – Lecture
- W: June 25 – Lecture and Workshop #5: *Going to the Source*, ch. 6 – Source Analysis #5 due

Wrestling With Modernity: American Fundamentalisms in the 1920s

- Th: June 26 – Lecture
- F: June 27 – Lecture

Woody Guthrie's America: The Great Depression and the New Deal

- M: June 30 – Lecture
- T: July 1 – Lecture
- W: July 2 – Lecture and Workshop #6: *Going to the Source*, ch. 8 – Source Analysis #6 due

“The Best War Ever”: World War II in Europe, in the Pacific, and at Home

- Th: July 3 – Lecture
- F: July 4 – NO CLASS – UGA CLOSED
- M: July 7 – Lecture
- T: July 8 – Lecture and Workshop #7: *Going to the Source*, ch. 9 – Source Analysis #7 due

The Scorpion and the Tarantula: The Making of a Cold War World

- W: July 9 – Lecture
 - Th: July 10 – Lecture
 - F: July 11 – **EXAM #2**
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Civil Rights and White Flights: The Black Freedom Struggle and American Suburbia

- M: July 14 – Lecture
- T: July 15 – Lecture
- W: July 16 – Lecture and Workshop #8: *Going to the Source*, ch. 11 – Source Analysis #8 due
- Th: July 17 – Lecture

The Things We Carry: Vietnam

- F: July 18 – Lecture
- M: July 21 – Lecture

To the Left, To the Right: New Liberalism and New Conservatism

- T: July 22 – Lecture and Workshop #9: *Going to the Source*, ch. 13 – Source Analysis #9 due
- W: July 23 – Lecture
- Th: July 24 – Lecture

Morning in America?: Reagans and Anti-Reagans

- F: July 25 – Lecture
- M: July 28 – Lecture and Workshop #10: *Going to the Source*, ch. 14 – Source Analysis #10 due

Searching for Purpose: America Before and After 9/11

- T: July 29 – Lecture
 - TBA: Final Exam Day – Lecture – **EXAM #3** and **EXTRA CREDIT** (optional)
-