

Course: United States History

Instructor: Dr. Pamela Smith

Academic Year: 2008-2009

Texts: Boyer, Paul. American Nation. New York: Holt, Reinhart and Winston, 1988.

Davis, Kenneth C. Don't know Much About History: Everything You Needed to Know About American History But Never Learned. New York: Harper Collins, 2003.

Course Description

Historical survey of American history from the Columbian Exchange to the present day.

Course Objectives and Philosophy

A wise man once said, "He who knows only his own generation remains always a child." Understanding the past, in other words, helps you prepare for adulthood and for the future. The study of American history will promote an understanding of the historical forces that both limited and created options for people in the middle section of the North American continent that became the United States. You will explore the diversity of experiences among its many and varied peoples and explain the relationship of group interaction in the developing American culture—one that is both a melting pot and a salad bowl. You will identify major physical features and explain how they shaped various aspects of American society such as Native American life, slavery, frontier life farm life, industrialization, etc. This course will introduce you to a variety of Americans, some famous some not-so-famous, and their role in the ideas that have helped shape this nation. These objectives will be accomplished by becoming familiar with the types of sources or evidence that historians use to develop a historical perspective. From colonial outpost to powerful world leader—welcome to United States history.

Course Requirements

1. Text
2. Large 3-ring binder
3. Work done in blue or black ink
4. Materials for research project visual (poster board, for example)

Grading Procedure

Your trimester grade will be determined by the following combination of assessment measures.

Trimester Exam: 25%

Tests: 45%

Research Project: 20%

Homework: 10%

Grading Scale

A- to A+ 90-100 D- to D+ 60-69

B- to B+ 80-89 F 0-59

C- to C+ 70-79 FA Failure due to absenteeism

Homework Policies

Homework is a very critical component of the learning process. The following policies are necessary to remain in good standing in this class.

1. There are usually daily homework (reading/writing) assignments.
2. The trimester research project is done in 5 parts over a period of approximately 5 weeks: topic selection, bibliography, outline, paper, and presentation with visual. As a class we will spend 1 class period in the library each trimester. Otherwise you are responsible for making time in your schedule to prepare the research project. Directions for each component of the research project will be provided in a separate handout.
3. Whether working on a short-term or extended assignment, it is imperative that you do so on a daily basis.
4. Short-term assignments will be checked simply to see that they have been completed. Failure to do so results in assignment to Academic Help. A homework collection of these assignments should be stored in your 3-ring binder. This will be submitted for a more thorough evaluation after a test that covers the material. The school's grading policy regarding late or missing assignments, as outlined in the student handbook, will be strictly enforced.
5. Since class time is limited, all the material in the syllabus cannot be covered during lectures and class discussions. Students are responsible for all material assigned as textbook readings.
6. All submitted assignments must begin with the student's name, the date, the class title, and the period. Those assignments must be neat, complete, and written in blue or black ink. Of course, typed assignments are welcomed, but proper format must be followed. The research paper must be typed.
7. When returned, homework and tests are to be stored in your 3-ring binder.
8. Study groups can be effective. However, when a student submits an assignment, she is stating that the material submitted has been fully comprehended. Therefore, joint submissions and plagiarism are unacceptable.

Classroom Policies

1. Daily prepared attendance is mandatory.
2. You are solely responsible for any material covered or announcements made during your absence.
3. The school's attendance policy will be strictly enforced.
4. Inappropriate, disrespectful, or dishonest behavior is unacceptable.
5. Cheating or plagiarism will result in a zero for that assignment.

Welcome to the classroom. Please do not hesitate to ask questions—regardless of how simple you may perceive them to be. I am here to help. Work hard and take pride in all that you do.

Tentative United States History Schedule

First Trimester

Week Chapters Sections Topics

- 1 1 All World by 1500
- 2 2 1,2 Test; Empire of the Americas
- 3 2 3,4 Empire of the Americas; Test
- 4 3 1,2 English Colonies
- 5 3 3,4 English Colonies
- 6 4 1,2,3 Independence
- 7 4 4,5 Independence; Test
- 8 5 1 Confederation
- 9 5 2,3 Federal Union; Test
- 10 Oral Presentations
- 11 Review and Study Groups Exam

Second Trimester

Week Chapters Sections Topics

- 1 6 All Jeffersonian Democracy; War of 1812
- 2 7 1,2 Test; Nationalism
- 3 7 3,4 Jacksonian Democracy; Test
- 4 8 1,2 Separate Societies; North and South
- 5 8 3 Separate Societies; Test
- 6 10 1,2 Territorial Expansion and Conflict
- 7 10 3,4 Territorial Expansion and Conflict; Test
- 8 11 All Troubled Decade
- 9 13 All Test; Civil War and Reconstruction
- 10 14 All Winning the West; Test
- 11 15 All Oral Presentations; Growth of Business
- 12 16 All Immigration; Gilded Age Politics

Third Trimester

Week Chapters Sections Topics

- 1 17 All Progressive Movement
- 2 19 All Imperialism; Test
- 3 20 All World War I
- 4 22 All Jazz Age; Test
- 5 23 All Great Depression
- 6 24 All New Deal; Test
- 7 26 All World War II
- 8 28 All Cold War; The Fifties; Test
- 9 29 All The Sixties
- 10 30 All Oral Presentations; War in Vietnam
- 11 Modern Times
- 12 Review and Study Groups Exam

United States History Outline

I. Beginnings

A. The World by 1500

1. Peopling the Americas
2. Native American Cultures
3. Europe in the Middle Ages
4. Asia and Africa in the Middle Ages
5. Lure of trade and exploration

B. Empires of the Americas

1. First contact
2. Conquest of the mainland
3. The Spanish settle the Americas
4. The English in North America

C. The English Colonies

1. New England colonies
2. Slavery and the Southern colonies
3. The colonies after the Revolution
4. The frontier and the struggle for land

II. Creating a Nation

A. Independence

1. Seeds of unrest
2. Mounting tensions
3. The shot heard round the world
4. Independence declared
5. An American victory

B. From Confederation to Federal Union

1. The Articles of Confederation
2. Drafting and ratifying the Constitution
3. The Constitution: a living document

C. A Strong Start for the Nation

1. A federal government is established
2. Dealing with a dangerous world
3. The nation expands
4. The coming of the War of 1812

III. Growth and Change

A. Nationalism and Economic Growth

1. Rise of nationalism
2. Challenge of growth
3. Rise of Jacksonian democracy
4. Jackson's policies define an era

B. Separate Societies: North and South

1. The North and Middle West

2. The cotton kingdom
3. The slave system
- C. Working for Reform
 1. Religious zeal and new communities
 2. Movements for social reform
 3. Crusade for abolition
 4. Cause of women's rights
- D. Expansion and Conflict
 1. Lure of the West
 2. Mexican War
 3. Far West
 4. Rush for California

IV. War and Reunification

- A. Slavery and Expansion
 1. An uneasy balance
 2. Compromise comes to an end
 3. On the brink of war
- B. The Civil War
- C. Reconstruction
 1. Presidential Reconstruction
 2. Congressional Reconstruction
 3. The New South
- V. The Nation Transformed
 - A. The Western Crossroads
 1. Native American resistance
 2. Western farmers
 3. The cattle boom
 4. A mining boom
 - B. The Transformation of America
 1. Industry's golden age
 2. The new immigration
 3. Urban life
 - C. Politics and Protest
 1. Restoring honest government
 2. Labor strives to organize
 3. Farmers, Populism, depression

VI. A World Power

- A. The Progressive Movement
- B. America and the World
 1. War and Spain
 2. Expansion in the Pacific
 3. Expansion in Latin America
 4. Conflict with Mexico

C. World War I

1. World War I breaks out
2. The United States goes to war
3. The war at home
4. League of Nations

VII. Prosperity and Crisis

A. The Jazz Age

1. Boom times
2. Life in the Twenties
3. A creative era

B. The Great Depression

1. Prosperity shattered
2. Hard times
3. Hoover fails

C. The New Deal

1. Restoring hope
2. New challenges
3. Life in the New Deal era

D. World War II

1. Early difficulties
2. The Home Front
3. Defeat of the Axis powers

VIII. Postwar America

A. Decade of Contrasts

1. Cold War fears
2. The affluent society
3. Voices of dissent

B. The Sixties

1. The New Frontier
2. Johnson's Great Society
3. Civil Rights movement
4. Culture and counterculture

C. War in Vietnam

1. Background to conflict
2. The war escalates
3. Americans divided
4. The cease-fire and after

IX. Modern Times

A. From Nixon to Carter

B. Reagan, Bush, and Clinton

C. America in today's world