

HISTORY 2112-A
THE UNITED STATES SINCE 1877
SPRING SEMESTER 2017

Instructor:

Dr. Matthew Hild

Office: Old Civil Engineering Building, room G-17

Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-3:00, Fridays, 10:00-11:00, or by appointment

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Required books:

David Shi and George Tindall, *America: The Essential Learning Edition*, vol. 2 (W.W. Norton, 2015) ISBN 978-0-393-93803-6

Julian E. Zelizer, *Jimmy Carter* (Times Books, 2010) ISBN 978-0-8050-8957-8

Course description:

This course will utilize lectures, reading assignments, and occasionally films to examine the social, political, and economic history of the United States since Reconstruction.

Topics will include American industrialization, two world wars, the Great Depression and the New Deal, the Cold War, the civil rights movement, and the United States at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Learning outcomes:

Area E Approved Learning Outcome: Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior. To demonstrate that they have met this learning outcome, students will also be able to describe and analyze the role of diverse interests and groups in shaping the history, politics, society, and institutions of the United States. Achievement of these learning outcomes will be measured through the examinations discussed below.

Course Learning Outcome: Students will identify the major themes in United States history since 1877, and will analyze the roles of men and women of different races and ethnicities in shaping American culture, the processes of conflict and accommodation involved in building a democratic society, and the global context in which the history and culture of the United States has evolved.

Exams and grading:

--There will be three multiple choice examinations in this course, including a non-comprehensive final exam. Each exam will consist of fifty questions, and each exam will constitute one quarter (25 percent) of the course grade. Makeup exams will only be given to students who can provide documentation verifying a valid excuse (such as illness, a car accident, court summons, or death in the family) or an excuse note from the Dean of Students. Makeup exams will be written rather than multiple choice.

--There will also be a written exam covering the biography of Jimmy Carter. This will constitute the remaining 25 percent of the course grade.

--During a class period (or perhaps two consecutive class periods) shortly before the first two exams and the final exam, a film will be shown pertaining to some topic(s) in United States history relevant to the era being covered by that exam. Any student who writes an acceptable paper of about 600 words (typed and double-spaced) summarizing that film in his or her own words will receive up to five bonus points on that exam. The paper must be turned in (in hard copy) no later than the class period on the date of that exam.

--Your course grade will be determined according to the following scale, with no exceptions: 89.5 or above=A; 79.5 or above=B; 69.5 or above=C; 59.5 or above=D; below 59.5=F.

Class attendance:

Due to the large size of this class, attendance will not be taken. However, students are urged to attend class regularly if they wish to do well on the exams. Furthermore, if a student misses a film, then he or she will not be able to turn in an extra credit paper for that exam. There are no “make-ups” for the extra credit opportunities.

Classroom etiquette:

All participants in this class (students and instructor alike) will be expected to refrain from rude or disruptive behavior in class, to keep their cell phones turned off in class, and to stay awake in class. All participants in this class will also be required to abide by the Georgia Tech honor code. (<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/content/2/the-honor-code>)

Schedule of topics, reading assignments, and exam dates:

This schedule presents a plan for the course, but changes may become necessary as the semester progresses. If the instructor makes any changes to this schedule, these changes will be announced in class and on t-square.

The weekly reading assignments listed below refer to the textbook (*America: The Essential Learning Edition*). The biography of Jimmy Carter is to be read before the exam on April 17.

Week 1 (January 9, 11, and 13) Topics: Course introduction; Reconstruction
Reading assignment: Chapter 15

Week 2 (January 18 & 20) Topics: Big Business and Labor in the Late-Nineteenth Century
Reading assignment: Chapter 16

Week 3 (January 23, 25, and 27) Topics: The New South and the New West; Gilded Age
Politics and Culture
Reading assignment: Chapters 17 & 18

Week 4 (January 30 and February 1 & 3) Topics: The Birth of American Imperialism; the
Progressive Movement
Reading assignment: Chapters 19 & 20

Week 5 (February 6, 8, and 10)

Exam # 1, Monday, February 6 (covers material from weeks 1 through 4)

Topic for Feb. 8 & 10: World War I; reading assignment: chapter 21

Week 6 (February 13, 15, and 17) Topics: The Roaring Twenties; the Beginning of the
Great Depression
Reading assignment: Chapter 22 plus pp. 827-841

Week 7 (February 20, 22, and 24) Topic: FDR and the New Deal
Reading assignment: pp. 841-865

Week 8 (February 27 and March 1 and 3) Topic: World War II
Reading assignment: Chapter 24

Week 9 (March 6, 8, and 10)
No reading assignment

Exam # 2, Friday, March 10 (covers all material since Feb. 8)

Week 10 (March 13, 15, and 17) Topics: The Cold War and the Baby Boom
Reading assignment: Chapter 25 plus pp. 965-983

Week 11 (March 20-24) SPRING BREAK

Week 12 (March 27, 29, and 31) Topics: Cuba, Camelot, and Civil Rights
Reading assignment: pp. 984-1033

Week 13 (April 3, 5, and 7) Topics: The Vietnam War, Watergate, and the
Downfall of Two Presidents
Reading assignment: pp. 1034-1087

Week 14 (April 10, 12, and 14) Topics: "Stagflation," Malaise, and the Reagan
Revolution
Reading assignment: pp. 1087-1117

Week 15 (April 17, 19, and 21)

Jimmy Carter exam on Monday, April 17

Topic for April 19 & 21: The End of the Cold War and a New World Order;
America at the Dawn of a New Millennium

Reading assignment: *America*, pp. 1118-1157

Week 16 (April 24)

No reading assignment

Final exam, Monday, May 1, 11:30 (Exam will be on the material covered since the second exam.)