

History 152: American History: 1877 to the Present
Spring 2021
Online

Dr. Brian Mueller
bsm@uwm.edu

Office Hours: Virtual

Teaching Assistant:
Ayodeji Obayomi

aobayomi@uwm.edu

Course Description

A century after its founding, the future of the United States remained uncertain. War had preserved the Union, but at a tremendous cost in terms of blood and treasure. Fissures still remained. Racial, social, economic, and political issues continued to divide much of the nation. African Americans, immigrants, workers, farmers, and myriad other groups struggled to make the United States “a more perfect Union,” as declared in the preamble of the Constitution. At the same time, the footprint of the United States grew, first westward across the continent, then to the farthest corners of the globe. As “We the People” took on a new, more expansive form and the size of the republic expanded, the U.S. government had to adapt, though not without controversy. This course will explore the interactions among these various groups, looking at how they viewed one another and how disputes between them came to change the role and functions of the national government.

Course Structure & Requirements

- 1.) **Discussion Posts: 25%**
- 2.) **Quizzes: 15%**
- 3.) **Essay Exams: 1st Exam (March 5): 15% / 2nd Exam (April 16): 20% / 3rd Exam (May 19): 25%**

Grading Scale

93-100 = A 90-92 = A- 89-87 = B+ 86-83 = B 82-80 = B- 79-77 = C+
76-73 = C 72-70 = C- 69-67 = D+ 66-63 = D 63-60 = D- 60 > = F

Discussion Post Requirements

To access the discussion forums, go to the Canvas course site, and then select the “Discussions” module. The current week’s discussion questions will be available under “Pinned Discussions.” Before participating in the discussions, I strongly encourage you to read the “Discussion Post Grading Rubric & Guide,” which you can reach by selecting “Modules” on the Canvas course site and looking under the Course Materials module.

The discussion forums are designed to prepare you for the type of thinking and analysis required on the essay exams. You will be asked to respond both to specific questions and to your classmates' responses. To receive full credit, your posts must meet several requirements.

During the weeks when discussions occur, you are required to submit **2** posts. Each post should contain a minimum of 100 words but no more than 150 words. The first post will be an answer to one question, out of several that I post for the week. All the questions must be answered before another student can post an answer to the same question. When all the questions have been answered by at least one student, it is possible to offer another answer to the same question, though you will need to focus on an aspect not covered in the original answer. Some questions have multiple parts, so this should allow you to provide a unique answer. The second post will be a response to another student's answer to a different question from a different primary source, when applicable. Each post is worth **5** points.

Discussion Post Deadlines:

1st Post: Wednesday @ 11:59 pm

2nd Post: Friday @ 11:59 pm

Guidelines

1. As in the essay exams, the posts involve more than merely regurgitating information. You still need to know who, what, where, and when about the historical events discussed in the secondary sources or documents, but you must also compose an argument using specific details from the secondary sources or documents. Therefore, it is likely that students will disagree over the answers to particular questions (This is why I require students to write one post as a response), which is fine, so long as you provide evidence from the secondary sources or documents to defend your analysis. In other words, do not simply write "I agree completely" or "I like your post" or "Yes" or "No," with a vague and general reference to the document. At the same time, do not rely entirely on direct quotes. You are allowed no more than one sentence of direct quotes. Put the arguments of the document in your own words by paraphrasing what is written.
2. Credit will not be given for late posts. Issues with your computer or internet connection are not valid excuses for failing to submit a post. Incomplete sentences will result in a substantially reduced grade. Quotations from sources other than the required primary documents are not allowed. Basic writing conventions apply to the posts. Frequent misspellings, lack of punctuation, and other writing errors will result in a reduced grade for the posts.
3. Even though you are required to make a discussion post only for two of the documents assigned for any given week, you must read every document on the syllabus in preparation for the essay exams. Doing well on the exams requires a clear understanding of how the documents "talk" to one another, or how they are linked thematically.

Quizzes

You will be required to complete **SIX** ten-question quizzes based on the weekly lectures posted on YouTube. The quizzes will include a mix of multiple choice and True-False questions. The quizzes will be opened for students to complete **FIVE** days prior to the deadline. Once begun, you will have 30 minutes to complete the quiz. Questions on each quiz are randomly selected from a bank of 50+ questions. These quizzes are automatically graded. For security reasons, and out of fairness to all students, quiz answers will not be provided to students following completion of the quizzes. Issues with your computer or internet connection are not valid excuses for failing to submit a quiz. The lowest quiz grade of the semester is dropped. NOTE: It is recommended that you complete and take notes on the readings prior to taking the quiz.

Essay Exams

There will be three essay exams. These exams are not cumulative. These exams are based entirely on the primary source documents. Answering the question, which will be given to you one week in advance, will require you to do the work of a historian. You must look through the wide-ranging set of primary source documents available to you in this course and formulate an answer using this evidence. In short, these exams will require you to *think*, as opposed to simply regurgitating historical facts, by analyzing the primary source documents and looking at the ways in which they interact with one another and makes it possible to develop a cogent argument to answer the exam question.

A Note on Sources

Since this is an introductory U.S. history course, it is necessary to understand the difference between primary and secondary sources. Success on the essay exams hinges on your ability to distinguish between the two sorts of sources.

Primary Sources (Readings found in *For the Record* & on Canvas)

The majority of books written by historians rely on these types of sources, which serve as evidence for a particular argument advanced by a historian. Historians interpret and evaluate these sources, which, on a much smaller scale, you will be doing with your discussion posts and on the essay exams. Primary sources are documents and artifacts created during the time under investigation by persons alive when the event occurred. Primary documents provide first-hand testimony and contemporary accounts of these moments in history.

Examples of primary sources, though not limited to, include:

- Diaries, speeches, letters, interviews, newspaper and film news coverage, autobiographies, and government and organizational records.
- Cultural sources like poetry, drama, novels, music, art, pottery, furniture, clothing, and movies.

Secondary Sources

These are historians' interpretations and analyses of various primary sources. Secondary sources also include discussion of other secondary sources, but mainly to challenge, affirm, or correct them by adding new information, using previously undiscovered or unused primary documents, or offering new perspectives (This is why, for instance, there are hundreds, if not thousands, of books on Abraham Lincoln and myriad other historical figures and events.).

Course Lectures

By Sunday of each week, I will post abridged lectures on YouTube. The lectures will provide you with the historical background needed to interpret and understand the primary source documents that we will be analyzing in class. The links to these videos are available under the "Modules" tab on Canvas.

Course Readings

1.) David E. Shi & Holly A. Mayer, *For the Record: A Documentary History of America, Volume 2: From Reconstruction through Contemporary Times*, Seventh Edition.

2.) Additional readings are posted on Canvas.

Deadlines

All deadlines indicated in the syllabus and on Canvas are Central Time (CST). Late work will generally not be accepted, though exceptions may be made due to the ongoing COVID outbreak.

Course Outline

Week of January 25: Introduction

*****Post Your Introduction by Friday, January 29 at 11:59 pm*****

*****Complete Quiz #1 Friday, January 29 at 11:59 pm*****

- Course Syllabus (Canvas)

Week of February 1: What Reconstruction? White Supremacy, the New South, & Jim Crow America

- Black Codes of Mississippi (FTR, 6-9)
- Louisiana and the Rule of Terror (Canvas)
- Klan Terrorism in South Carolina (FTR, 11-15)
- There Was a Right Side in the Late War (Canvas)
- The New South (FTR, 36-37)
- A Sharecropper's Contract (FTR, 37-39)
- Plessy v. Ferguson (FTR, 39-41)
- The Atlanta Compromise (FTR, 41-43)
- Niagara Movement Declaration of Principles (FTR, 113-115)

Week of February 8: Transcontinental Expansion, Modernization, & the Gilded Age
*****Complete Quiz #2 by Friday, February 12 at 11:59 pm*****

- Excerpts from 1885 Commissioner of Indian Affairs Report (Canvas)
- “Kill the Indian, and Save the Man” (Canvas)
- Excerpts from The Significance of the Frontier in American History (Canvas)
- Hinton Helper on Chinese Immigration (Canvas)
- Wealth (FTR, 22-24)
- What Social Classes Owe to Each Other (Canvas)
- Prize Tenements (Canvas)
- Our Country (FTR, 61-62)

Week of February 15: Discontent at Home and Abroad

- Preamble of the Constitution of the Knights of Labor (FTR, 25-26)
- The American Federation of Labor (FTR, 29-30)
- Outlook for Socialism in the United States (FTR, 32-33)
- Populist Party Platform (FTR, 77-79)
- The “Cross of Gold” Speech (FTR, 84-87)
- Declaration of War (FTR, 90-91)
- The March of the Flag (FTR, 92-94)
- Platform of the American Anti-Imperialist League (FTR, 94-95)
- The Roosevelt Corollary (Canvas)

Week of February 22: Progressivism & The War to End All Wars

*****Complete Quiz #3 by Friday, February 26 at 11:59 pm*****

- The Jungle (FTR, 107-108)
- The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlement (FTR, 103-106)
- 1912 Progressive Party Platform (Canvas)
- Appeal to the Women Voters of the West (Canvas)
- Declaration of War Against Germany (FTR, 138-140)
- George Norris Opposing U.S. Entry into World War I (FTR, 141-143)
- President Wilson Address on League of Nations (Canvas)
- The League of Nations Must Be Revised (FTR, 148-150)

Week of March 1: 1st Exam

*****1st Essay Exam Due Friday, March 5 at 11:59 pm*****

*****No Discussion Posts*****

Week of March 8: The Great Depression & The New Deal

- Government’s Role in Fighting the Great Depression (FTR, 201-203)
- First Inaugural Address (FTR, 203-205)
- Share Our Wealth (FTR, 208-209)
- Harry Hopkins Describes Social Security (Canvas)
- Roosevelt’s Second New Deal (Canvas)

Week of March 15: World War II on the Battlefield & Homefront

- Let Us Stay Out of War (Canvas)
- Address to America First Rally (FTR, 219-220)
- Navy Day Address on World Affairs (Canvas)
- Korematsu v. United States (FTR, 228-231)

Week of March 22: Spring Break

Week of March 29: Cold War Containment at Home & Abroad

- The Sources of Soviet Conduct (FTR, 242-243)
- A Critique of Containment (FTR, 243-244)
- The Truman Doctrine (FTR, 244-247)
- The Marshall Plan (FTR, 247-248)
- NSC-68 (Canvas)
- Statement on the Korean War (FTR, 249-250)
- Democrats and Communists (FTR, 251)
- The Black Silence of Fear (FTR, 252-254)
- The Theory of Social Balance (Canvas)

Week of April 5: The Great Society & the Vietnam War

*****Complete Quiz #4 by Friday, April 9 at 11:59 pm*****

- The Other America (FTR, 289-291)
- “Great Society” Speech (Canvas)
- The Senate Debates the Tonkin Gulf Resolution (Canvas)
- Cutting Our Losses in South Vietnam (Canvas)
- Recommendations of Additional Deployments to Vietnam (Canvas)
- Nixon’s Speech on “Vietnamization” (Canvas)

Week of April 12: 2nd Exam

*****2nd Essay Exam Due Friday, April 16 at 11:59 pm*****

*****No Discussion Posts*****

Week of April 19: The Rights Revolution

*****Complete Quiz #5 by Friday, April 23 at 11:59 pm*****

- To Secure These Rights (Canvas)
- Southern Declaration on Integration (FTR, 278-280)
- The Situation in Little Rock (FTR, 280-282)
- Letter from a Birmingham Jail (FTR, 292-295)
- Black Power (FTR, 307-310)
- *The Feminine Mystique* (FTR, 268-270)
- NOW Statement of Purpose (Canvas)
- Redstockings Manifesto (Canvas)
- The Myth of the Vaginal Orgasm (Canvas)

Week of April 26: The Conservative Backlash & The Reagan Revolution

- George Wallace Speech at Madison Square Garden (Canvas)
- The Revolt of the White Lower Middle Class (Canvas)
- What's Wrong with 'Equal Rights' for Women? (FTR, 333-336)
- Welcome to Fear City (Canvas)
- Gerald Ford on NYC Budget Crisis (Canvas)
- Reagan's Program for Economic Recovery (Canvas)
- The "Evil Empire" (FTR, 363-365)
- "Tear Down This Wall" (Canvas)

Week of Week of May 3: A New Era? A New Century & The Looming Threat of Terrorism

- Contract With America (FTR, 390-392)
- Clinton's End to Welfare (Canvas)
- A Manifesto for the Fast World (Canvas)
- George W. Bush Address to Nation (FTR, 394-397)
- 2001 USA Patriot Act Congressional Debate (Canvas)
- Vice President Dick Cheney Speech (Canvas)

Week of May 10: Too Big to Fail & Polarized Politics

***** Complete Quiz #6 by Friday, May 14 at 11:59 pm*****

- Henry Paulson Statement (Canvas)
- Sarah Palin Tea Party Convention Speech (Canvas)
- Barack Obama 2010 Commencement Address (Canvas)

Final Essay Exam Due Wednesday, May 19 at 11:59 pm

Students with disabilities. If you have a disability and need special assistance or accommodations, please see me within the first week of class. All student requests for accommodation must be made through the Accessibility Resource Center. Faculty may not grant disability accommodations without a written request. Information on accommodations can be found at <http://www4.uwm.edu/arc>.

As per UWS 17 of the University of Wisconsin Colleges Student Rights & Regulations, no form of harassment or discrimination is allowed in this class on the basis of identity, including but not limited to race, gender, class, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, immigration status, veteran status, gender identity, nationality, and/or ethnicity. While this class seeks to foster an environment in which ideas and beliefs can be challenged in the spirit of academic inquiry, such challenges must be respectful and civil so that all class members are welcome and empowered to participate in this learning process. For information on discriminatory conduct, please visit the website at https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S_47_Discrimina_duct_Policy.pdf

Academic misconduct. Cheating on exams or plagiarism are violations of the academic honor code and carry severe sanctions, including failing a course or even suspension or dismissal from the University. Information on academic misconduct can be found at <http://uwm.edu/academicaffairs/facultystaff/policies/academic-misconduct/>. I encourage you to familiarize yourself with it. If a student violates this policy in any way, I reserve the right to impose a sanction of failure on the assignment/assessment or failure in the course. If you have questions about appropriate citations, please ask.

The following link contains important additional information on the UWM course policies listed above and others: <http://uwm.edu/secu/wp-content/uploads/sites/122/2016/12/Syllabus-Links.pdf>

The instructor and the University reserve the right to modify, amend, or change the syllabus (course requirements, grading policy, etc.) as the curriculum and/or program require(s).

Academic Advising in History

All L&S students have to declare and complete an academic major to graduate. If you have not yet declared a major, you are encouraged to do so, even if you are at an early stage in your college education. If you are interested in declaring a major (or minor) in History, or if you need academic advising in History, please visit the Department of History undergraduate program web page at <http://www4.uwm.edu/letsci/history/undergrad/> for information on how to proceed.